

WRITINGS OF GILBERT BEEBE

by Gilbert Beebe

A collection of theological writings, sermons, and essays by Gilbert Beebe, compiled for study and devotional reading.

75 Chapters

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5. Oh Fools and Slow of Heart to Believe

Oh Fools and Slow of Heart to Believe From Signs of the Times—March 1, 1869.

Reply to our friend Isaac Stewart. Continued from our last number. by Gilbert Beebe

“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 [kept from or prevented; Ed.], 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,” (Song of Solomon 5:2). 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,” (Isaiah 45:15). 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," (John 6:63). 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," (1 Corinthians 2:15). "But God hath revealed them [the things of the Spirit] unto us by his Spirit," (1 Corinthians 2:10). 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; 1 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," (1 John 1:2). 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," (1 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," (1 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," (Matthew 27:42). 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 sepulcher, 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," (Luke 24:21). 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," (Isaiah 53:4) —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," (Php 1:29). 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," (Luke 24:47). 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 whether soever 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.

S. A Riddle

A Riddle by Gilbert Beebe NEW VERNON, N. Y., March 1, 1811.

WE have for many years been partially acquainted with the inmates of a house, whose history, if we were able to do justice to the work, would be interesting, and perhaps profitable to some portion of our readers. The house itself is fearfully and wonderfully made, and has stood in its present form a little more than forty years. The materials of which the house is made were originally very good, but now appear to be in rather a dilapidated and decaying state. It has been thought by good judges that there is contagion in the building; and this conclusion has been confirmed, by the appearance of "spots of leprosy in the walls, like fretting sores. Now what we wish to relate, is in reference to the tenants of this house. And what think you of two families occupying one house? You know that unless they agree pretty well, they must live very uncomfortably together. Well, we know this to be the case; for although the house is inhabited by but two individuals, it frequently seems to contain, as it were, "the company of two armies." We have known them to be engaged in such deadly strife, that without foreign interference they would certainly have destroyed each other.

It will answer our present purpose, without calling names, to designate these fighting neighbors, the Old man and the New man; for the eldest tenant of the house has in reality had possession of the premises ever since the house was built; but the other took his residence in the same house, some years afterward; having the consent of the builder and owner of the house. On the occasion of the New man's moving into the house, we shall never forget what a dreadful uproar took place. The Old man is not only old, but he is a strong man; and being armed, had kept his palace, and his goods were in safety, until that memorable struggle took place. No tongue can tell, nor pens describe, with what awful desperation that battle was fought. It was the most sanguine and dreadful conflict, between the most powerful disputants, and attended with the most thrilling and affecting circumstances that we ever witnessed. Incredible as our description of this scene may appear, we do assure our readers that the very heavens grew dark on that occasion! loud thunders shook the world, and vivid lightning's played around! The voice of words were heard, until the reeling walls of the disputed house seemed ready to be dashed into a thousand pieces, like a potter's vessel. The old man contended for the exclusive possession of the house, and set up the plea, that he had held a peaceable possession so long, it was his lawful property. Moreover, he found certain passages of the law, which he interpreted to mean, that no such tenant should be allowed to occupy any part of the premises; from ancient records he also showed that the house had been mortgaged to his king, whose name was Death; and by his will, he claimed the exclusive right to the house; but he was foiled by the Wonderful Counselor for the other, who proved beyond dispute, that the bond was canceled, and the property redeemed from all encumbrance, excepting that he, the old man, might, by the suffrage of the proprietor, remain in the basement story for a short time. He also contended that he was able to defend his right, and that he would never go out alive. But, as the result of that struggle has abundantly proved, the old man was mistaken; for one, stronger than he, came, and the old man was bound, and his goods were spoiled. The victorious

warrior, (for he was a man of war) who had made bare his arm in vanquishing this potent enemy, claimed the right to dispose of the premises as he pleased; and he assigned to the new man all the upper part of the house, to have and to hold from that date forth, during the pleasure of the landlord, or as long as the house should stand. When the new man entered his mansion, how different was the scene! The conflict was over, the old man was in chains; and it was whispered that he was dead; and the new man made great reckoning on having the house completely purged, purified, set in order, made pleasant, peaceable and beautiful; but scarcely had the work of reform and improvement commenced, when the new corner thought he could perceive signs of life in the carcass of the old vanquished foe; nor was he at all deceived in his apprehensions; for suddenly the old man revived, and in a most surly, insolent and quarrelsome manner, bid the new man leave the house. The new man trembled convulsively, at this unlooked for treatment—plead that he had been put in possession by the lawful owner of the Property; and that he had obtained liberty to hold possession of all the upper part of the house, as long as it should stand; and that when this earthly house should be dissolved, he had a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. But the old man disputed his plea, and insinuated that he was laboring under a delusion, in regard to having been put into possession of the house, or any part of it; and declared that the new man had not been put into the possession, and that he could not in justice be. Finally the artful language of the old man was such that the new man began to fear exceedingly, that he was truly under some dreadful delusion. Under these impressions, he wept and prayed, and fasted, and labored, and struggled, for many days; until his Lord again appeared for his deliverance, and gave him a renewed evidence of his goodness and mercy. After this conflict was over, things went smoothly on for some time; but after certain days, the old man brought home with him some old comrades, (among whom was a very celebrated, and ardently pious Mr. Charity, D. D., and a few of his neighbors, Good Works, Carnal Mind, Law Righteousness, and one very shrewd old fellow, called Human Reason, A. M.) and insisted on entertaining them in the upper part of the house, as they were all used to high living. At first the new man objected; but seeing that the company were all very pious, and being fond of religious company, and fearing that he would be thought uncharitable, if he should reject them, he consented; and they all came in, and seemed to enjoy a merry time; indeed, the old man himself began to be very religious; and he and his guests soon found occasion to chide the new man for backwardness, inertness, a want of zeal and activity, &c.; and he, poor fellow, began to feel something of his leanness and barrenness; he confessed the justness of their censure, and begged them to aid him in an attempt at reformation; to this, they being of the benevolent order, readily consented, and forthwith began a course of lectures, in which they told him that he was entirely too tight laced in his religious principles; that he was trusting too much to grace; and that he did not lay a sufficient stress upon good works; they read off to him a long chapter, upon duty religion, duty faith, duty prayer, &c.; and urged that he must be up and doing—that he must use the means of grace. They told him, moreover, that thousands, by tight b&cing, had become sickly; had brought on consumption, and even death. It was the unanimous opinion of the gang, that New man must make brick without straw; and when he complained, they told him he was idle; and they applied the lash until his groans and sighs became indescribably dreadful; and it is our sincere opinion, that these thievish imps would have worked poor, distressed New man to death, if it had not been for an interposition of his Lord; for they had already got him to consent to change apartments with his fellow tenant, and he had moved down stairs, quite into the cellar. The new

man had been persuaded to believe that for, and in consideration of his kindness in changing rooms with his neighbor, he would be exceedingly happy, and enjoy great peace of mind, &c. But to his mortification he found the room very dark, the light and warmth of the sun being shut out; and had only light enough to perceive that the room was dreadful filthy, and that it contained innumerable reptiles, serpents and scorpions. This exercise threw him into a cold sweat, and he was dreadfully tried in his mind, to account for his troubles; he made some vain attempts to man, these serpents with carnal weapons; such as good resolutions, large quantities of formal prayer, and many other weapons of the same kind, that he found among the lumber of the old man—all to no effect; for he found himself only beating the air. In this dreary condition he remained, until the next visit of his Lord and Master, who came to his relief, opened the prison door, took his feet out of the stocks, set him in a large place, thrust his old man down into the nether apartment, and raised him, (the new man) again to the enjoyment of former light, life and liberty.

We might continue our parable ad infinitum; for the old man and the new man cannot get along peaceably together; the new man having received an order from the court of the King's bench, to crucify the old man with his comrades; and in his attempting to execute this sentence, they have had some awful combats; and the old fox has often played the possum, and made his antagonist think he was dead; but as soon as a favorable opportunity presented, he would revive; and in many instances would bring the other into subjection to the law of sin, that was written on the walls of the, house. The new man, in some of his struggles, has been heard to – cry out, O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? But we are credibly informed, that he has received an assurance from his Lord, that a few more struggles will end the strife—when the old crazy walls of the disputed territory shall be thrown down, and he shall then inhabit an incorruptible building, far from the noise and rage of the old man.

Reader, do you understand the riddle?

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S. A Savor of Life and a Savor of Death

A SAVOR OF LIFE AND A SAVOR OF DEATH 2 Corinthians 2:15-16 Signs of the Times - June 15, 1855. by Gilbert Beebe

“For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one we are the savor of death unto death; and to the other the savor of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?” 2 Corinthians 2:15-16 The term “savor,” signifies literally, anything that affects the organs of taste or smell; a sweet savor, is that which has a pleasant odor or taste. The incense and perfumed offerings which were made under the law, were to signify such offerings as are acceptable to God, and things with which God is well pleased; and in this sense we understand it is used by the apostle in our text. In the preceding verse Paul says, “Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place: for we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ,” &c. As the members of Christ, as his apostles, standing in him, by whom the savor of his knowledge is made known in every place, the apostles, their gifts and labors in the gospel, are well pleasing to God, not only in the effect produced on them that are saved, but also on them that perish. In drawing the line between the living and the dead, in feeding, comforting and building up the saints, and in exposing the hidden things of dishonesty, they draw down on themselves the wrath and persecution of the enemies of God and truth. So that in every place where they were called to labor, whether men would hear or forbear to hear, whether sinners were converted to God, or enraged by the testimony, in all cases God caused them to triumph, or made their ministry effectual, either by bringing to light those who have an ear to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches, or in exposing those who were of the opposite character; in no cases were their labors in vain in the Lord. “We are unto God a sweet savor of Christ.” There was nothing in even the apostles, which was well pleasing unto God but what was of Christ. They, in themselves, were by nature children of wrath even as others, hence all that they possessed as the children of God, disciples of Christ, or apostles of the Lamb, was of Christ, and the savor of that treasure which was committed to them, as unto earthen vessels, was a savor of Christ unto God. Their election, their calling, their qualifications for the ministry, and their administrations, were acceptable unto God by Jesus Christ.

“To the one we are the savor of death unto death.” That is to the one class, for they are presented in our subject as two classes, them that are saved, and them that perish. To the latter class, the apostle says we are the savor of life unto life. But how are we to understand this declaration? Does he mean that the preaching of the gospel is to them who perish the cause of their damnation, or of their perishing? That the gospel proposes to them terms, conditions, and proffers, and their rejection of them, or failure to comply with them, is the cause of their eternal death? Certainly not, for such is not the truth. Neither the gospel itself, nor the preaching of the gospel, can possibly injure any one. The gospel has no more power to damn, than the law has to justify and save. Condemnation and wrath is by the law, justification and immortality is by the gospel. The law is the administration of death, but the gospel administers life only to them that are saved, for

those unto whom this life is administered cannot perish. Christ has said, I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall any pluck them out of my hands. How then, are these apostles the savor of death unto death in them that perish? We understand the matter thus, To them that are dead in trespasses and sins, the preaching of the gospel only comes in the letter, or external sound of it; it falls upon their deaf ears as a dead letter; it has no life in it to them, inasmuch as they being dead, cannot receive it in its spirit and life. Take a bird from the open air, and confine it in water, as its nature is not adapted to the water, this element is death to the bird, but it is life to the fish. But the water, although adapted to the nature of the living fish, can administer no life to the dead fish. So the preaching of the apostles was to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness. The word can only come to the dead, in the oldness of the letter, and not in the newness of the Spirit. To them it comes in word only, not in power, or in the Holy Ghost, or in much assurance, as it comes to quickened sinners; to them, Christ who is the substance of the gospel, is as a root out of dry ground, having no form or comeliness, and they have no desire for a knowledge of his ways, and the preaching of the cross is to them foolishness. It being spiritual, and they being carnal, they cannot comprehend it, they cannot feast upon it, nor can they derive vitality from it until they are quickened by the Spirit, and born of God; for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit- for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned. But to the other, that is to the living children of God, who possess life, the gospel is the power of God and the wisdom of God, it has life and comfort in it to cheer, sustain and animate that life that is in them. It is death to their carnal nature, to their outward man which perishes it has no life; but the inward man is by it renewed day by day. Every Christian must know in his own experience, that the gospel is full of life, joy and consolation to them; it is marrow and fatness', it is a feast of fat things, of wines on the lees and well refined. It is life to that life which is in them, for they live upon it; it is Christ, and him crucified, and it is therefore the bread of heaven unto them. When the apostles and primitive ministers of the word were preaching, in all the examples recorded in the New Testament, there were some who gladly received the word, who fed upon it, and there were others who had no relish for it, who could not receive it, and who resisted and blasphemed. They preached Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness, but unto them who are called, both Jews and Greeks, it was Christ, (and therefore life, for Christ is the Life) the power of God, and the wisdom of God. "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness- but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. "Not them which do not believe, it is death to them, but it is life to them that believe, because they have life; they are the sheep of Christ, and they hear his voice, and they know his voice; but a stranger they will not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers.

"And who is sufficient for these things?" Who is sufficient to discriminate between the living and the dead, between them that are saved, and them that perish? Who is sufficient to pour forth into the hearts of God's living children the streams of that river that makes glad the city of our God, to warm, revive, comfort and refresh them, while in their pilgrimage, and to bear the reproach, persecution, rage and violence of those unto whom the preaching of the word is foolishness?

Those, and those only, whom God sustains, whom he causeth to triumph in Christ, as he did the apostles, are sufficient for the work whereunto the Holy Ghost has called them. They can do all things, through Christ who strengthens them. Through him they can feed the flock of God, over the which the Holy Ghost has made them overseers, and through their God they can rush through a troop, and leap over a wall. But no part of the excellency of the power of the gospel is of them; it is of God, it is not a sweet savor of themselves unto God. But they are a sweet savor of Christ unto God, in them that are saved. The very fact that the gospel as preached by them does not feed, comfort or build up the unregenerate, that it is death unto death unto them that perish, is as irrefragable testimony that they are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, as when they are the messengers of joy and comfort to them that are saved. For the preaching of the cross, if preached in its purity, is just as sure to be foolishness to the ungodly, as it is to be the wisdom of God to them that are saved.

S. Absolute Predestination

Absolute Predestination by Gilbert Beebe The Old School or Primitive Baptists in former years have been very definitely identified and distinguished from all other religious or ecclesiastical organizations as Predestinarian Baptists, and as such have borne reproach and vituperation from those who hold more limited views of what we regard as the absolute and all pervading government of God over all beings, all events, and all worlds. With deep solicitude and painful concern we have witnessed in the preaching and writings of some of our brethren a disposition to so yield or modify the doctrine as to limit its application to such things as the carnal mind of man can comprehend or the wisdom of this world can approve. While some will concede that all things that they regard as pure and holy are ordained or predestinated of God, they deny that the absolute government of God does dictate by absolute decree the wicked works of wicked men and devils, for that, they say, would make God the author of sin. They therefore set up their judgment, and set bounds for Infinite Wisdom to be restricted to, and beyond which limitation He must not extend His government, without subjecting Himself to their censure as an unjust God and the author of sin. But how lamentable is the infatuation of poor, blind mortals, when "The vain race of flesh and blood Contend with their Creator, God; When mortal man presumes to be More holy, wise or just than He."

There are undoubtedly many of the dear people of God who feel jealous for the glory of God, and who, without any aspiring ambition to be wise above what is written in the sacred Scriptures, from inability to comprehend the two great parallel mysteries of godliness and of iniquity, have felt a commendable concern lest in our weakness we should impute to God aught that would reflect on His adorable perfections, or withhold from Him that which He has ordained for the manifestation of His glory. It certainly becomes us, as finite beings, to speak of Him and of His government with fear and trembling. He is the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, and His name is Holy. His attributes are veiled in that infinity which no finite being can by searching find out. He keepeth back the face of His throne, the place and power of His government, and spreadeth His cloud upon it. As the Heavens are higher than the earth, so are God's ways higher than our ways, and His thoughts higher than our thoughts. The standard of infinite purity and holiness is the will of God. There can be no higher law than the will of God, for only to the standard or counsel of His own will and pleasure does He Himself conform. "He worketh all things after the counsel of His own will (Ephesians 1:11)." "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure (Isaiah 46:10)." In this connection He said, "I am God, and there is none like me." And in the revelation of the Lamb, in whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwells, "The four and twenty elders fall down before Him that sat upon the throne, and worship Him that liveth forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created (Revelation 4:10-11)." "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of

the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor? or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen (Romans 11:33-36).

" When God created the Heavens and the earth no other power than His own was employed, no wisdom but His own was consulted, nor was there any other than His own will to dictate what, how, or for what purpose anything should be created. As a potter has power over the clay, it is his right to form his vessels as he please; and if he forms of the same lump vessels to honor and vessels to dishonor, who shall dispute his right to do so? The prophet says God is the potter and we are the clay; then, "What if God, willing to show His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared unto glory (Romans 9:21-23)." Dare any of us poor, finite worms of the dust dispute the sovereign right of God to do all His pleasure in the armies of Heaven and among the inhabitants of earth? "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" How appropriate and forcible are the words of Job, "Hell is naked before Him [God], and destruction hath no covering. He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing. He bindeth up the waters in His thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under them. He holdeth back the face of His throne, and spreadeth His cloud upon it. He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end. The pillars of Heaven tremble and are astonished at His reproof. He divideth the sea with His power, and by His understanding He smiteth through the proud. By His Spirit He hath garnished the Heavens; His hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo, these are parts of His ways: but how little a portion is heard of Him? but the thunder of His power who can understand (Job 26:6-14)?" Can we contemplate the awful majesty, profound wisdom, deep and unsearchable counsel, infinite goodness, unerring workmanship in all that He has condescended to let us know of His great and marvelous works, from the spreading abroad and garnishing of the wide Heavens, down to the formation of the crooked serpent, and still stand in doubt of His predestinating power and unrestricted government over all beings, all worlds, and all events? Are death and hell and all things naked before Him, and destruction uncovered to His all-seeing eye, and yet unlimited by His power and wisdom? Has He stretched out the north, and balanced the earth upon nothing, without any design, purpose or decree concerning their subsequent destiny? Has God bound up the waters in His thick cloud, and "given to the sea His decree, that the waters should not pass His commandment (Proverbs 8:29)," and yet left all to the vagary of chance? When He set His throne above the Heavens, was it to be the place of no power in controlling the destiny of all things in Heaven and earth and hell? For about six thousand years the sun, moon and stars have with exactness filled their respective orbits, and without the variation of a second of time from their creation made all their revolutions, in obedience to the decree of the Creator. Is it by chance that "The Heavens [thus] declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork?"

But, say some to whose minds the doctrine of the universal government is obscure, "We admit that God has predestinated some things, but do not admit that He has predestinated all things which come to pass." Let us see how this partial or limited government would accord with the Divine record. Suppose that in what we have been contemplating of the Heavens we should find the sun and moon, and all the stars but one, held firmly in their orbits by the irresistible will and decree of

God, and that one solitary star, without any fixed orbit, is allowed to range the infinity of space, wandering with more than lightning velocity, guided only by chance; where would be the safety of all the other stars? What would become of the predestination of those heavenly bodies intended to be preserved from hazard by the decree of God? To us it has been a comforting thought that God has set the bounds of our habitation on the earth, and the number of our months is with Him, and our days are appointed to us as the days of an hireling, who cannot pass His bounds; but what assurance of safety would that afford, if He has left murderers and blood-thirsty men or devils unrestricted by His predestinating decree? To our mind, either everything or nothing must be held in subjection to the will and providence of God. Even the wickedness of ungodly men is restricted by predestination, so that "the wrath of man shall praise God, and the remainder of wrath He will restrain."

"Pains and deaths around us fly Till He bids we cannot die; Not a single shaft can hit Unless the God of Heaven sees fit." For death and hell can do no more than His hand and counsel have determined shall be done. Does this make God the author of sin? or, in other words, does this make Him a sinner, or charge on Him an imputation of impurity? By no means. Against whom is it possible for God to sin? Is He amenable to any law above Himself? If so, by what law can He be indicted, in what court can He be tried or convicted? How preposterous! It is His eternal right to do all His pleasure, "Nor give to mortals an account, or of His actions or decrees."

It savors of atheism to deny that He is the self-existent, independent God who has created all things for His own sovereign will and pleasure. And if it be admitted that He had a right to create the world, and all worlds, it must then be also admitted that He had a right to create them according to His own will and pleasure. Worms cannot charge Him with error because He did not assign them a more exalted place in the creation, or for creating them worms instead of men. Men cannot justly charge Him for not creating them angels, nor angels because He did not make them gods. The world, with its infinite variety of living creatures, from the minutest insect to the most huge monster, as well as man, were all made for the pleasure of their Maker, and all must subserve the exact purpose for which they were made. Even the crooked serpent, as well as the harmless dove, all were pronounced good in their respective places; not good in the sense in which God is good, but good because they were precisely what He intended or predestinated them to be. Had the serpent been straight, or the dove crooked, or if the things made had been different from what the Creator intended, there would have been a defect in the workmanship. We cannot, with such exalted views as we entertain, think that God has ever failed to secure the perfect accomplishment of His own design or purpose in anything He has ever done. The entrance of sin into the world, and death by sin, which by the offense of one man has passed upon all mankind, was no unprovided-for event with Him, to whose eyes sin, death and hell have no covering. The eternal purpose which God had purposed in Himself before the world began was sufficiently perfect and comprehensive to include all that could and can possibly transpire, or He would not have declared the end of all things from the beginning. "Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world (Acts 15:18)." But there are many who admit the foreknowledge of God, and yet deny His determinate counsel, on which the certainty of all the events of time depends. Men may have a limited foreknowledge of things which God has made certain by His determinate counsel and irrevocable decrees, as it is said, "The living know that they must die;" but God's foreknowledge depends on nothing outside of Himself, for He has challenged the universe to tell

with whom He has taken counsel, or who has instructed Him. To us it seems perfectly clear that nothing could be foreknown that was undetermined, and that the foreknowledge and determinate counsel of God are inseparable.

It is also generally admitted that in the salvation of His people, "Whom He did foreknow, them He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son (Romans 8:29)." but that the well-beloved Son of God was delivered into the wicked hands of men to be crucified by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, is not so readily admitted. The wicked works of those who crucified the Lord of glory were not foreknown by His murderers; but it was foreknown and determined of God, Peter said, to those whom he charged with the wickedness of killing the Prince of life. "I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all His prophets, that Christ should suffer, He hath so fulfilled (Acts 3:17-18)." "For of a truth against Thy Holy Child Jesus, whom Thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever Thy hand and Thy counsel determined before to be done (Acts 4:27-28)." The wickedness of men in betraying and crucifying our Lord had been positively predicted from the days of Abel, in what God spake to the fathers by the prophets, and by what was signified by all the offerings which were made under the former dispensation. The pieces of silver for which He was betrayed were counted and declared hundreds of years before Judas was born; and the dividing of His garments, and the lot cast for His seamless robe, was determined of God and declared by the prophets. The history of Joseph, and the wickedness of his brethren, was in fulfillment of his dreams, and in accordance with the purpose in which Joseph said, God meant it for good.

It has been said by some that these great events which God has overruled for good were ordered of the Lord, but that the smaller matters, and the wickedness of men, were not predestinated. Our Savior has informed us that the determinate counsel of God in His all-pervading providence numbers the hairs of our head, so that not a hair can fall to the ground without Him; even the little sparrows are protected, and the ravens are provided with food by His determinate counsel. And Paul assures us that, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose."

It seems to us unreasonable, as well as unscriptural, to say that the government of God directs and controls some things, and that other things are left to the control of men or devils. If God's government extends only to the good deeds of men, then is His absolute government totally excluded; for "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one (Romans 3:10-12)." We would not limit the government of our God, nor, because we cannot comprehend His designs, dare to say He has no designs.

"He in the thickest darkness dwells, Performs His work, the cause conceals;

But, though His methods are unknown, Judgment and truth sustain His throne.

"In Heaven, and earth, and air, and seas, He executes His firm decrees; And by His saints it stands confess'd That what He does is always best."

Men act voluntarily when they commit sin; they have no more knowledge of or respect for the purpose of God, than Joseph's brethren or Potiphar's wife had in his case, for there is no fear of God before their eyes. It is even so with the princes of this world; if they had known Jesus, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But it was needful that Joseph should be cast into prison, and it was expedient that Christ should suffer, therefore that knowledge was withheld from the persecutors of Joseph and of Jesus, until they should fill up the cup of their wickedness. And it is thus in the wisdom of God that the world by wisdom shall not know Him. Yet such is the wisdom, power and righteous government of our God that He can and does set the exact bounds by which the wickedness of men and devils is limited, and beyond which they cannot go. Satan is bound a thousand years with a great chain, and after the thousand years he shall be loosed for a short time. With all his rage and malice he is restricted by the supreme power and decree of God, to do no more nor less than what God will overrule for the good of His people and for His own glory. And thus also, "God, willing to shew His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction," as in the case of Pharaoh and the Egyptians, hardening the heart of Pharaoh until all the plagues and judgments were accomplished, and His own almighty power and glory were then made known in delivering the Hebrews, and in overwhelming Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea. "Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth He yet find fault? For who hath resisted His will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that replies against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus (Romans 9:17-22)?" The Apostle, fully aware of the disposition of the carnal mind to cavil and reply against the sovereignty of God in the execution of His pleasure, did not attempt to apologize for God, or so to modify the doctrine as to render it less objectionable to the carnal mind; but he called attention to the infinite disparity between the infinitely wise, holy and omnipotent God, who holds our everlasting destiny, and by whose longsuffering we are permitted to live, and poor, finite, depraved, short-sighted man, and the daring presumption and extreme folly of questioning the justice or wisdom of God in working all things after the counsel of His own will. We regard it as a very serious matter to charge that God cannot govern the world, by His own determinate counsel, wisdom and power, according to the eternal and immutable design or purpose purposed in Himself before the world began, without subjecting Himself to the charge of being the author of sin. Sin is the transgression of a law under which the transgressor is justly held amenable, and to the penalty of which he is subject. But we have endeavored to show that God is under no law but that of His own will and pleasure, and therefore He doeth His pleasure in the armies of Heaven and among the inhabitants of earth. He could by no law be held under obligation to leave the affairs of this world or any part of them to be governed by chance, or by the will of men. As He is in one mind, and none can turn Him, His purposes are eternal, like Himself. His decrees being perfect from everlasting, admit of no improvement or change. If He had not the right to predestinate all things pertaining to the events of time before He created the world, we ask what right has He acquired subsequently to execute the orders of His throne? If it had been His pleasure to have prevented sin from entering into the world, can we doubt His power or wisdom or ability to have done so? If sin has entered this world in opposition to His will, or because He had not the wisdom and power to prevent its entrance, what assurance have we that it will not also enter the world to come? But it is to our mind far more consistent with what God has graciously made known to us of His being and attributes to believe that God had a purpose worthy of Himself, however inscrutable to us, in regard to the entrance of

sin, as well as in regard to all things else. He bids us "Be still, and know that He is God." To our feeble mind the conclusion is unavoidable, that the predestination of God either controls all things or nothing.

We look at a vast complicated machine, with its ten thousand wheels. We cannot comprehend or understand its workings, but we are told that the machinist has a perfect knowledge of all its parts save one; there is a definite use for every wheel and spring, but one is held in the machine which has no certain motion or definite use. How long could that machine run in safety, with the unruly part liable at any moment to throw the whole into confusion? We cannot see how any part of the government of God can be absolute and secure, if God has not the undivided government of the whole in all its parts; and if He has today the full control, had He not the same control yesterday and forever? If He has not the full control today, is there any certainty that He will have tomorrow or at any future period? If we admit that God absolutely governs all things according to the counsel of His own will, and that He is immutable, then we must admit that He has determined what shall and what shall not transpire in time or in eternity. But to deny His universal control of all things, including all principalities and powers, thrones and dominions, things present or to come, whether they be visible or invisible, is to deny that He is the God of the whole earth, and virtually deny His eternal power and Godhead. If He has not the power and wisdom to determine all events, how can He cause all things to work together for good to them that love Him? But while we hold that He is supreme in power, and that He works all things after the counsel of His own will, we are certain that He reigns in righteousness, and that there is no unrighteousness with Him. To admit the universal government of God is to admit the predestination of all things, from the falling of a sparrow to the dissolution of a world. In the absence of predestination, with what certainty could the Holy Ghost inspire the holy prophets and Apostles to foretell all that should ever come to pass? If it were undetermined in the purpose of God, how could the Apostles tell us of perilous times that should come in the last days, or apostasy from the faith, and spiritual wickedness in high places? But we will submit these remarks to the consideration of our readers, and desire that what we have written may be carefully tested by the infallible standard, the Scriptures, and received only so far as they are sustained by the word and Spirit of our God.

October, 1880

S. Absolute Predestination, A Dialogue

Absolute Predestination A Dialogue by Gilbert Beebe

Mr. Beebe:—In a former letter I requested your views on the absolute predestination of all things. I asked for information, and for nothing else; but I will excuse you for not answering me, for I know that I am not worthy of notice, but I am a poor unworthy worm of the dust. Your unworthy friend.

R.S.

Reply.—We assure our friend R.S. that our apparent neglect of this request was not owing to any want of respect for him, nor to any unwillingness to give him such views as we have on the important subject of his inquiry. Those who truly feel sensible that they are poor unworthy worms of the dust, and yet have a desire to be informed in regard to the universal government of the supreme God, of his prescience and irrevocable decrees, are the very persons above all others, whom we desire to serve to the full extent of the ability God may be pleased to give us.

Predestination, as a highly esteemed writer in the Signs once remarked, does not require to be qualified by prefixing to it the word absolute, as the predestination of God must of necessity be absolute in every particular. Jehovah is an absolute God, and all that he purposes or performs must be absolute. There can be no fiction nor anything merely nominal with him. Predestination is destination beforehand, and as nothing can be before hand, or subsequent with him, the term as it is used in the scriptures is used in reference to our finite state, as creatures of time; or rather as creatures of God, but for the present, in the time state of existence. God inhabits eternity, and all things are present with him. The progression of time and development of events can add nothing to his stock of knowledge. We his creatures may and we certainly do, live and learn. He has himself called our attention to the fact that he has declared the end from the beginning, saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. This declaration of the end from the beginning proves his prescience, so conclusively, that but few are so hardened in infidelity as to openly and in so many words, deny his foreknowledge of all events; for if he were deficient in knowledge he could not with unerring certainty declare the end from the beginning and from ancient times, the things which are yet to transpire. But there are those who while they admit what is called the foreknowledge of God, deny that his knowledge is based upon his own purpose and determinate counsel. They urge the following objections to predestination. It is fatalism, it destroys man's free-agency, and his accountability, and makes God the author of sin; and some there are who go still farther and say if the doctrine of predestination be true, God in predestinating the events of time, etc., has transcended his right and is unjust. Our friend R.S., we think, will agree with us, that it very easily becomes poor sinful dying mortals thus irreverently, not to say blasphemously, to question the eternal right of God to do what seemeth to him good, in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, or to set up their standards of justice and denounce their creator if he does not abide by their decisions. Let all such first meet the searching interrogative of the inspired apostle, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, to form one vessel to honor" etc.? The holy prophet of Jehovah, by inspiration, has informed us that God is the potter, and we are the

clay. Hence we must acknowledge his eternal right to dispose of all things, all events, and of all worlds according to his own pleasure. Let this be admitted and all murmuring against his predestination will cease. It is not our purpose to meet the objections urged by men to the doctrine of divine revelation, and by logical argument to put them to silence; nor do we design to attempt to make the doctrine palatable to the natural mind of man which is enmity against God, for all such attempts are without the least prospects of success. The enmity of the carnal mind is fully demonstrated in the objections which they bring, but we design rather to search out and call the attention of our inquiring friend to what God has revealed in the scriptures on the subject, and this we will do, if God permit, whether men will hear, or whether they forbear. The term predestination, as we have intimated, has reference to the order and succession of events in time, by which the eternal designs of God are brought to pass. And, so far as pass, predestination simply signifies that God had purposed, God's providence is concerned in bringing his designs to decreed, ordained, or destined the accomplishment of those things before they were, in order of time brought to pass.— Hence to us, it is predestination, with God it is destination, because his infinity connects and comprehends the end with the beginning, for he is himself the First and the Last, the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending.

Having, as clearly as we are able, defined predestination, we pass to enquire whether it be a Bible doctrine. If it be a Bible doctrine, we must admit it, or reject the Bible as a record of infallible and eternal truth, and take the open ground of infidelity. And who can trace the sacred pages of the holy book and say that it contains no testimony in support of the doctrine? In the absence of predestination how was it that the prophets of Jehovah foretold the events of ages, thousands of years before those events were actually fulfilled? Who, or what directed the prophetic vision of holy men of old, to look down the vista of intervening centuries, and in the name of the Lord Jehovah predict the things that should come to pass down to the end of time, and even the resurrection of the slumbering dead, and the judgement of the last day. If these things were not before determined of God, how were they known, and if they were unknown to God and man how were they foretold? And if they were foreknown of God, and he inspired holy men to foretell them, that knowledge and decision of God was what the Bible calls predestination. But we have no need of ifs in this investigation. The scriptures do most clearly and emphatically declare that "Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost"; that God spake to the fathers by the prophets, and also that the spirit of Christ, which was in the prophets, did testify beforehand of his sufferings and of the glory that should follow. This was and is predestination. God spake by the prophets, saying, "It shall come to pass." Do not these words imply a decree when uttered by him who speaks the word, and it stands fast, who commands, and it is done? How harmoniously do both testaments agree in this fundamental doctrine. Throughout the first, or Old Testament, God, by his prophets, declared the things that should come to pass. Apostles and inspired evangelists in the New Testament respond, saying, "And it came to pass." But perhaps some may demand, What came to pass? We reply, all that God by the prophets said should come to pass. First, in reference to the advent of the blessed Saviour, for he himself declared that all that was written of him in the law, and in the prophets and in the psalms must be fulfilled, and when dying on the cross of Calvary he exclaimed, "It is finished!" and in awful confirmation the retiring sun, prevailing darkness, the quaking earth, rending rocks, opening graves, rising dead, and rending vail gave ample demonstration. Daniel, in harmony with all the other prophets of the Lord, had predicted that at a specific time the God of heaven should set up a kingdom that should never be destroyed, that

the Messiah should come, should be cut off, should make an end of sin, and bring in everlasting righteousness. The whole New Testament is a record of the faithful fulfillment of these predictions. Long had the prophet slumbered with his fathers, before the accomplishment of his seventy weeks, but the word of our God could not die, it liveth and abideth forever. The predestination of our God also embraces all the heirs of immortality. "For whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified them he also glorified."—This predestinated people is blessed with "all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as he (God) hath chosen them in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. Having predestinated them unto the adoption of children, according to the good pleasure of his will. In whom we have received an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after (or according to) the counsel of his own will."

There are those who admit the doctrine of predestination, so far as it applies to the coming of the Savior, the work which he was to perform, the sufferings which he was to endure, and the glory which was to follow; and also in relation to the good works which God before ordained that his people should walk in; but reject the idea that his purpose and foreknowledge extends to the wicked acts of men and devils. But for ourself, it is our firm conviction that if a single event could possibly transpire from the creation of the world to the end of time, from the rise and fall of empires, to the falling of a sparrow, or a hair of our head to the ground, that such unforeseen and consequently unprovided for events would unavoidably endanger and render uncertain the execution of what is admitted to be ordained and decreed of God. How could it be otherwise? Can we consistently believe that it was predestinated that Christ should suffer on Calvary to redeem sinners, and yet that he did not foreknow that there would be any sinners to save? Did he decree that his dear Son should be delivered into the hands of wicked men; and yet not contemplate in that decree, either the existence of wicked men, or what they should do in condemning and crucifying him? But aside from all human reasoning, or vain speculation on the subject, God has informed us, by his inspired apostles, that Jesus was delivered by his determinate counsel, and foreknowledge, and put to death by wicked hands. And again, the inspired apostles break forth in praise to God, in devout acknowledgement both of the decree and of its accomplishment, that, "And when they had heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is; who by the mouth of the servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontious Pilate, with the gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." (Acts 4:24-28). Here let it be observed the holy apostles of the Lamb did not start back with horror, and exclaim, fatalism! this makes God the author of sin! or this destroys the accountability of man! They saw nothing in all this reflecting unfavorably on the character or purity of the supreme God; but they saw such harmony in the purpose, decrees, and actual accomplishment of the designs of God, as led them simultaneously and with one accord to lift up their voice in devout adoration and praise to the Most High God, whose providential government was so clearly manifested in controlling all events. The things which they now saw brought to pass were distinctly spoken of by David in his day, and

pointed out by the slaughtered lamb which Abel, by faith, offered to God some four thousand years before any of the actors in the crucifixion of Christ, were born. God had not only decreed what they should do, but he had also decreed what they should not do. "The enemy should not exact upon him, nor the son of wickedness afflict him." "A bone of him should not be broken." "He should not be holden of the pains of death." His soul should not be left in hell, nor should his flesh see corruption. Neither death nor hell could go beyond the purpose and decree of God. None but Judas could betray him, without involving a contradiction of the purpose and decree which was recorded in the scriptures; the pieces of silver for which he was betrayed were numbered and recorded in the decree of God, as published by the prophet hundreds of years before Judas was born. The parting of his raiment, and casting lots for his garments, was all a matter of ancient record, together with all the minute circumstances which occurred; all of which we are informed were done that the scripture should be fulfilled. The murder of the infants by Herod, brought to pass the decree published by the prophets six hundred years before. "Thus saith the Lord, A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children because they were not. (Jeremiah 31:1-40. See also, Matthew 2:18. The case also of Joseph and his brethren is a very clear and striking illustration of the overruling government of God, as embracing all events. And who shall dare to charge God with unrighteousness, because he retains in his own hand a supreme control of all beings and of all events; because he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Who has a right to infer that God is the fountain of sin or unholiness; when we are informed that men with wicked hands, do whatsoever his hand and counsel before determined should be done? Paul when declaring what God had said of Pharaoh, that for this purpose he had raised him up to make his power known in him, etc., anticipated the blasphemous out breakings of the human mind in opposition to the predestination of God. "Thou wilt surely say unto me, Why doth he yet find fault," or hold man as a responsible being, "for who has resisted his will?" But the apostle did not forbear to declare this doctrine because men resisted and blasphemed it; but says the apostle, "Nay, but who art thou, O man, that repliest against God?" etc. When the enmity of the human heart is subdued by the quickening power and grace of God in regeneration, then the heaven-born child is reconciled to God, and loves to contemplate the power and glory of Jehovah. Then is he prepared, with the inspired psalmist, to rejoice that the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth; that all power in heaven and in earth is vested in the blessed Savior. But if left to doubt his all-prevading power and providence for a moment, now sinks his spirit at the fearful thought that some wheel in the vast, and apparently complicated machinery of nature might be suffered to revolve unbound by the wisdom and foreknowledge of God. If one of the wheels could work without the power and providence of God, its effects might be to ungear the whole system of divine government, and worlds on worlds be dashed in irretrievable ruin. When the enlightened mind of God's dear children contemplates the glory of this subject, they fall down before God in admiration, and with the four beasts, and four and twenty elders, cry Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord, God, Almighty. They are filled with the most profound reverence for, and confidence in the God of their salvation.

One reason we have thought why some of the children of God have seemed to be unreconciled to this doctrine is that they have failed to discriminate between the overruling power and providence of God and the effusions of his Spirit. "Let no man say when he is tempted, that he is tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted, neither tempteth he any man." When men are tempted to sin they are tempted of their own lusts, and by the devil. But how hopeless and desperate would be

the condition of all who are tempted, if God had not the power and providence to control the temptation, and overrule its effect according to his eternal purpose and pleasure for the good of his tried and tempted children, and for the glory of his own great name. Our every temptation, though they flow not from God, are directed, and restricted and made serviceable to his saints, by him, is absolutely certain. Hence Peter assured the saints that God would control this matter. He will not suffer you to be tempted beyond that which ye are able; but will also with the temptation make a way for your escape. That glorious High Priest which becometh us, was himself tempted in all points as his children are, and knows how to succour them that are tempted. Soon after he was baptized, he was led up by the Spirit, unto the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. He was not led there by the devil; but by the Holy Spirit of the Lord God which was upon him. Neither was he tempted of the Spirit of God which led him into the wilderness; but he was tempted of the devil. The devil could neither afflict poor old Job, nor even drown the herd of swine, until he received permission of the Lord, and it is hard for us to think that any of the saints, however shy they may seem to be of the doctrine of predestination, really would wish or be willing that God should have less, or that sin or Satan should have more power. It is a blessed reflection to us that "Death and hell can do no more Than what our Father please."

Volumes have been written upon this subject, and volumes may still be written, it is too rich and boundless ever to be exhausted, but after all that we can say, it is the Spirit of the Lord alone who can present it in its beauty to the sons of men. He, the Spirit of the Truth, whom the world cannot receive, can slay the enmity of our carnal mind, and give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, shining in the face of Jesus Christ. May that spirit in all its quickening power and grace be with our friend R.S. and all others who earnestly desire a knowledge of the true God and eternal life.

Middletown, N.Y., Feb. 1, 1854 Editorials of Gilbert Beebe Volume III - pgs. 18-25

S. Atonement and Redemption

Atonement And Redemption by Gilbert Beebe

Dear Sir: – There are some who say that the atonement is general and that redemption is particular, and others who say that both the atonement and the redemption are general. If you will give your views, through the SIGNS, on this subject, you will very much oblige, and I hope instruct me. What I want to know is, can the two be separated? If the one is general is not the other? I hope you will give your views at some length, and oblige, A LOVER OF THE TRUTH.

Ulster County, N. Y., April 28, 1858.

The simple word atonement, or at-one-ment, signifies reconciliation, agreement, or restoration to favor, and when applied in a gospel sense, has reference to the mediatorial sacrifice of the Son of God, by which his people are reconciled unto God. That mediatorial work or sacrifice involved his suffering for them the penalty of the law which they had transgressed, bearing the curse which was due to their transgressions, putting away their sins by sacrifice of himself; being delivered up for their offences, and raised again from the dead for their justification.

Redemption signifies the buying back of that which has become legally involved and is held by another in captivity. For instance, a flock of sheep which has gone astray from the premises of their owner, and committed trespass on another, may be legally held by him who has sustained the injury, until the owner of the sheep shall come forward, prove property, pay the legal charges, and take them away. This is called redemption, or buying back the flock or property which belonged to him who redeems, before the trespass was committed. In this the payment of the damages is the atonement or reconciliation, for it satisfies the party who held the legal claim upon the flock, and the price paid for the satisfaction, or reconciliation, redeems or buys them back. So that the atonement and the redemption of the sheep are one and the same thing; they cannot be separated. None but the owner of the sheep has the right to redeem them. If he fails to redeem them, and they are sold to some other person for the damages they have done, they are not redeemed at all, because they are not bought back, or restored to the former owner, but pass into the possession of a new owner. The redemption of the people of God is thus described, Isaiah 53:6, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him [Christ] the iniquity of us all." That is, the whole demand of the law and justice of God, was demanded of that Shepherd whose own the sheep were, and who says, "I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." – John 10:11-12.

If Christ had not been the owner of the flock before they strayed, or went into captivity, justice could not have demanded satisfaction at his hands, the Lord would not have laid their iniquity upon him, nor commanded, saying, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the Shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will turn my hand upon the little ones." – Zechariah 13:7. Nor could Christ have claimed the right to

redeem them on any other ground. He was the Shepherd whose own the sheep were, and he plead and sustained his prior claim to, and right of property in them, saying, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me."

"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 mine, and I am glorified in them." And this glory he says he had with the Father before the world was. (John 17:5, John 17:7, John 17:10.)

Therefore he could in coming into the world to redeem them, confidently refer to the records of eternity: "Lo! I come, in the volume of thy book [the book in which all his members are written, Psalms 139:16,] it is written of me; to do thy will, O God." – Hebrews 10:7.

"And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he had given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." – John 6:39.

These Scriptures define very clearly the extent of redemption by Jesus Christ, and the principle of relationship and proprietorship on which that redemption is based. In this redemption he asked not or prayed not, for the world, but for them which his Father had given him out of the world. And this was the full extent of the will of the Father, according to which God worketh all things, that Jesus should redeem and save his people from their sins, and raise up again at the last day all that the Father gave him before the world was, and therefore it was that the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all. That is all of us who like sheep have gone astray. And he has accordingly "surely borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows."

"He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement our peace [or atonement] was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." – Isaiah 53:4-5.

"It pleased the Lord to bruise" and to "put him to grief." "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 he] justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities." – Isaiah 53:10-11. And we know precisely what will satisfy him; for he has graciously told us. "I pray not for the world, but I pray for them which thou has given me" out of the world. "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory." – John 17:9, John 17:24. This is his will, and the Father has pledged his veracity that he shall be satisfied. Nor is this any less the will of the Father than it is the will of the Son, for, "This is the Father's will which has sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

Thus we are instructed in regard to the nature and extent of the atonement and redemption which is in Christ Jesus. That it extends to all that the Father gave him, and to no others. That it embraces all that seed which Jesus should see when his soul was made an offering for sin, and which seed shall serve him, and be accounted to him for a generation, according to Psalms 22:30. But it extends to no other seed or people but that chosen generation, royal priesthood, holy nation, and peculiar people which shall show forth his praises. (1 Peter 2:9.) The atonement or reconciliation is just as extensive as the redemption, and the eternal salvation from sin, death and hell, is just as extensive in its application and its saving benefits as the atonement and redemption, and it can extend no further. All the murmuring, fault-finding and blasphemies of the children of men cannot extend it any further, nor remove one of Zion's stakes, nor break one of her cords.

After all the opposition manifested by the world to the definite extent of the atonement, there is not an individual on earth that really desires to be embraced in it but those who are made willing in the day of our Redeemer's power. All others prefer to rely on their own fancied free will, free agency and use of means, and to rely upon a chance system, which would give a chance to everybody, but in reality save nobody. God's redeemed people themselves were all of them opposed to his method of salvation until they were brought to an experimental knowledge of their guilty, lost and helpless condition, then they found it to be exactly suited to their case. And then being taught of God, they could not be satisfied with any uncertain, indefinite or chance system. Knowing their own total helplessness, they bless and adore God for that covenant which is well ordered and sure, for it is all their hope, and all their salvation.

Such a system of redemption as the Arminians contend for, if they could have it, would do them no good, for it would save nobody, and they are therefore just as well off in their present delusion on the subject, as they would be with a chance redemption, offered grace, and conditional salvation, while they are totally depraved, and dead in trespasses and sins. They are at war with God's plan of salvation, and it is impossible for them to be saved in any other. There we must leave them to perish forever in their delusion, unless they, by a divine power, over which they nor we have any control, shall be brought to know their need of a whole Savior, a sure redemption, and to rejoice in a perfect atonement and reconciliation to God, and to his way of saving poor, lost and helpless sinners. By Elder Gilbert Beebe Middletown, N. Y.

June 1, 1858.

S. Be Still and Know That I Am God

BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD From Signs of the Times—May 15, 1867.

“Be still and know that I am God.” Psalms 46:10 by Gilbert Beebe 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,” (2 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,” (1 Corinthians 1:15). The words of this text imply that a knowledge of God will check and silence our murmurings, and cause his children, like the Psalmist to say, “I was dumb; I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it,” (Psalms 39:9). Or, like Eli, “It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good,” (1 Samuel 3:18).

All who by experience and revelation know him who is "The true God and eternal life," (1 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. Author and professor of all conceivable and inconceivable perfections. High on his imperial throne; the "High and lofty One that inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy." Who has created all things for himself, and for whose pleasure alone all things are, and were, created. Who doeth his pleasure in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of earth. The scepter of whose authority he sways over all beings, all worlds, and all events, with irresistible power, and unerring wisdom and righteousness. Whose 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 heads 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 forever,” (Psalms 125:1). “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty,” (Psalms 91:1). And the psalmist says, “Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations; even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God,” (Psalms 90:1). 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.” 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 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 he that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." 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."

S. Be Ye Separate

Be Ye Separate Can we consistently hold with the hart and run with the hound? by Gilbert Beebe
Is it consistent for the Old School Baptist to take their stand against the corrupting abominations of the present times, and at the expense of our names and reputation, subject ourselves to the jeers, ridicule and calumny of the popular zealots of our day, and then so far countenance them in their iniquitous career as to invite their ministers to preach among us?

Hark! the word of God replies:

“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 works and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.”

(Romans 16:17-18) Brethren, in obedience to the divine command, certain characters are to be marked and avoided. Who are they? Not such as separate themselves from those who walk disorderly, for all the saints are expressly commanded so to do. But our text is sufficiently explicit; mark such as cause divisions, contrary to the doctrine taught the saints previously to Paul’s writing his epistle to the church at Rome. It is a well known truth that the only divisions which now agitate the church of God are such as have been made by the introduction of what are falsely denominated benevolent institutions; such as had neither been learned or even heard of when our apostle wrote; and yet, how strange to tell! many there are who think it very hard and uncharitable to obey the divine command of God concerning those who are constantly making divisions among us by setting up these abominations in Israel.

Others there are who, notwithstanding their conviction that these are the men alluded to by the apostle, and these the men and things to be avoided by the household of faith, tell us that they wish to act charitably towards these, their erring brethren; and if they will come among us as preachers, and agree to say nothing about their new divinity of the age elsewhere; and so by their course acknowledge them as the messengers of our Lord Jesus Christ, and aid them essentially to, by good words and fair speeches, deceive such of the simple as are looking to such inconsistent Old School Baptist for an example.

Brethren, we are either bound to reject these men, or we are not.

If we are not, why do we pretend to make any stand at all? But if we are, let us lay aside all our own nice, fleshly, worldly and (falsely called) charitable feelings, which war against the Spirit on this point, and buckle on our armor, and dispute every inch of the ground with the common enemy.
By Elder Gilbert Beebe

March 4, 1835

S. Behold the Lamb of God

“Behold The Lamb Of God”

“Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.” – John the Baptist. by Gilbert Beebe

WHILE in the faithful discharge of that duty to which he had been divinely called, John Baptist preached in the wilderness of Judea, and buried in the bosom of Jordan all such as gave him satisfactory evidence that they were prepared for that sacred ordinance. Jerusalem and Judea and all the regions around about Jordan came out to his baptism; and while in the act of immersing the repenting Jews, John saw Jesus approaching, and gave testimony that he was the Christ. Identifying his very person, he pointed him out amongst the multitude, on which occasion he made use of the words at the head of this article.

These words are full of meaning: not only because John saw and bore record that this was the Son of God, and thus fulfilled another grand design of his heavenly vocation; but the words employed in this case, as indited by the Holy Ghost, uttered volumes in this short sentence, Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. Throughout the entire ceremonial dispensation, and from the morning of time, from the early sacrifice of Abel, lambs were made use of for sacrificial purposes, as the most significant emblem nature could supply of him that was to come. Should we contrast the offering of a lamb by Abel with the product of Cain's system by works, that he obtained from the bowels of the earth, which was at that time groaning under the curse of God for man's sake, we might in the understanding of this subject contemplate the riches of God's grace, richly displayed in striking contrast with every system of religion, the existence of which was of earthly origin. The paschal lamb that was slain in Egypt preparatory to the emancipation of God's chosen tribes, whose blood was sprinkled on the door-posts of the dwellings of the Israelites, as a peaceful sign that God's avenging wrath, that night to be poured forth upon the pride of Egypt, should pass them by, and the flesh of which was to be eaten with bitter herbs, was all designed to set forth Christ and him crucified. The thousands of unblemished lambs that by the special appointment of God himself constantly teemed upon the Hebrew altars, uttered the same sentence that we have written as the foundation of these remarks.

Another striking example we have in the case of Abraham and Isaac. “God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering.” said the patriarch to the lad; and on the mountain which God showed Abraham, this prediction was more plainly illustrated in the offering of the ram that was caught in the thicket by his horns, and the release of the entire posterity of the free woman. What ample room we find for enlargement in the contemplation of the types and predictions going before and pointing, like John, to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. But alas! - “No blood of bird, nor blood of beast, Nor hyssop branch, nor sprinkling priest, Nor running brook, nor flood, nor sea, Could take our dismal stain away.

Jesus the Lamb, his blood alone Has power sufficient to atone; His blood can make us white as snow; No Jewish rite could cleanse us so.”

All the vast multitude of slaughtered lambs that were ever offered, were sacrificed at the expense of those by whom they were offered; but these could not put away sin, except in a figurative or ceremonial way; but in the person of him to whom the Baptist pointed we see the Lamb of God. “God gave his only begotten Son,” “God spared not his own Son,” and hence, from this consideration, he was emphatically the Lamb of God, and that in distinction from all that had ever been offered as typical of him. In this brief sentence, “Behold the Lamb of God,” those quickened Jews who heard John preach were called to turn away from all the previous expectations they had ever entertained of salvation by the deeds of the law; and by the same are all the redeemed of the Lord among the Gentiles now commanded away from every human device, from every earthly scheme and system ever invented by men, and look to God alone for salvation. But why behold or look to Jesus as the Lamb of God?

Because he taketh away the sins of the world. The sacrifices under the law were never designed to extend to any of the Gentile nations – they were only offered for Israel; but in the Lamb we have not only a propitiation for the sins of such Jews as were ordained unto eternal life, but also for the sins of the whole world. But it may be inquired, In what sense did Christ take away the sins of the world?

It is contended by Arminians and Universalists that Christ made an atonement for, or took away all the sins of all mankind.

If this position be correct, then there is not at this time a sinner on earth; for if the sins of all men were taken away by the atonement of the Lamb of God, those sins which he took away could not remain as they were before he took them away, or where would be the triumph of his cross? The truth is, salvation must be as general and as universal as was the atonement; for the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin. The Lamb that John bore record of taketh away the sins of the world. He did not open up a way whereby we might, by certain exertions, means, &c., be released from the guilt and consequences of sin, or bring the human family into a salvable state; or merely to so satisfy the law and justice as to purchase to himself the right to offer salvation conditionally to all mankind, and leave them to accept and be saved, or reject and be damned. The Lamb of God has finished the work that the Father gave him to do. This was a definite work, and well understood by our Lord, when he said, “Lo! I come to do thy will, O God.” What the Father gave him to do was fully comprehended in the execution of the Father’s will. And it either was or was not the will of the Father that he should save all mankind from their sins; if it was, then they are safe, for as we before quoted his words, “I have finished the work thou gavest me to do;” but if it was not the will of God to save all mankind from sin, then Christ did not come to save all men; for he came to do the will of him that sent him, and to finish the work. But we have dwelt thus far on the negative. The question returns, How, or in what sense, does he take away the sins of the world?

We understand by the expression no more nor less than this: He had a people among the Jews, and other sheep he had also that were not of that fold; them, he said he also must bring; and where Jews and Gentiles were included they were generally called the world. We might give many examples from the scriptures where the terms world and whole world, &c., are used in a very limited sense; as “If we let these men (the apostles) go, the whole world will go after them, and the

Romans will come and take away our place and nation.”

“And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.” Such passages are so common in the New Testament as to leave no room for caviling upon the subject. We are unavoidably brought to the conclusion that Christ either died for all the sins of all mankind, for part of the sins of all mankind, or for all the sins of all his people, they being but a part of the whole family of man. Now if he died for all the sins of all mankind, then all mankind will be saved, or else the death of Christ has failed to secure salvation to those for whom he died, and in that case none can be saved. To believe that all are included in the atonement of Jesus, and consequently are saved, will directly contradict what the scriptures assert, viz: that “the wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the nations that forget God;” and to believe that none will be saved is to disbelieve the oath and promise of our God, as recorded in the same sacred volume; and if to sustain any position, we are driven to the necessity of making the bible a book of contradictions, then we can no longer consider its testimony valid on any subject. Hence the position that Christ died for all the sins of all mankind is untenable.

If we take the ground that Christ died for the original sin of man, or in other words, for a part of the sins of all mankind, we are still in a wretched condition; for he that transgresseth the law in one point is guilty in all, and there would be on this ground no rational hope for the salvation of a single soul. But on the scriptural ground that he laid down his life for his sheep, that “He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works;” on this ground we find a solid basis for the consolation of God’s children, that he has saved them, and called them, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. With this scriptural view all the types are in harmony. Abel’s firstling of the flock was not offered for Cain. The passover lamb was not slain for, nor eaten by the Egyptians, nor did its blood prevent the destroying angel from executing the vengeance of God upon the first-born of the Egyptians. The ram that Abraham offered did not restore Ishmael to the family of Abraham. Not one of all the offerings that were made under the law were applicable to any other than the children of Israel. Now in all these types, an atonement exclusively for the elect of God is taught and demonstrated. Abel was a figure of God’s acceptable people, and he with his offering was respected of God, while Cain and his offering were disrespected. When Isaac was bound and laid upon the wood, and the command was given to slay him, and the dreadful knife was raised, Isaac described the state of the elect when under the sentence of God’s holy law; and when he was released, and the lamb that God had provided was offered in his place, and actually bore that suffering and death to which Isaac had been doomed, Isaac was an emblem of the spiritual children of the free woman. Now we, says Paul, as Isaac was, are “the children of the promise.” Nothing is more clearly established than that ancient Israel was typical of the election of grace. “If ye are Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” All the offerings therefore that were made for Israel under the ceremonial law, prefigured the offering of the Lamb of God, bearing the sins of his people in his own body, to expiate their guilt, and to bring in everlasting righteousness for them, and for them exclusively. The intercession of Christ is also founded on his atonement, and must agree in measurement therewith as exactly as did the mercy seat with the dimensions of the ark. And the intercession of Christ is on this wise. “I pray not for the world; I pray for those thou hast given me out of the world.”

Another argument equally irresistible in defence of the scriptural doctrine of the definite and exclusive design, nature and application of the atonement, is founded on the pre-existing relationship of Christ and his people. The right of redemption was founded on relationship, as the husband is alone the legal representative of his wife, the father of his child, &c. The life of all the church of God was given them in Christ, (not in themselves) before the world began. That church, in all its fullness, he has ever represented, and that church he ever will represent. This union and relationship existed before all time, extends throughout all time, and extends eternally. On this part of our subject we might enlarge, but we should swell this article to too great a length.

Finally, to every poor, desponding, quickened soul we reiterate the text, Behold the Lamb of God! As all that were bitten in the wilderness, when they looked on the brazen serpent, were healed, even so shall Christ be lifted up, or rather now has been lifted up, that whosoever believeth on him may not perish, but have everlasting life. Behold the Lamb, and that in connection with his work. He taketh away the sins of the world. Poor Gentile sinner, Jesus died for his people among the Gentiles as well as among the Jews.

Again, christians, behold your Lord, your King, your Leader, the Captain of your salvation; behold him as a lamb that has been slain, has accomplished all that heaven decreed, all that the Father gave him to do; and therefore fear not the powers of hell and death; they are vanquished foes. Behold his lamb-like innocence, humility, submission and harmless deportment, and strive to imitate his divine example. By Gilbert Beebe NEW VERNON, N. Y., January 15, 1841.

S. Cast Not Your Pearls Before Swine

Cast Not Your Pearls Before Swine by Gilbert Beebe

"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." Matthew 7:6 This text is found in the closing part of what is familiarly termed, "Christ's Sermon on the Mount," in which he taught them privately, and gave them lessons of instruction, which are the greatest importance to the saints in all subsequent ages. These instructions should often be examined and re-examined by the children of God, as they are given for their special benefit, and contain admonitions and precepts of the most vital importance. From the rich cluster of golden maxims and rules laid down for the observance of the disciples of the Redeemer in this sermon, we are requested to give our views on the text written at the head of this article, to which we will call the especial attention of the readers.

"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs." The things which were holy under the ceremonial law were the things which were especially consecrated, or sanctified (set apart) for holy purposes, as were the tabernacle, the ark, the altar and the consecrated things of the inner temple of the Lord in Jerusalem, The tribes themselves, being solemnly set apart from all the families of mankind, were ceremonially holy, and forbidden to intermingle with the other nations of the earth, and as a consecrated and holy people they were to live on consecrated and holy food; they were forbidden to eat that which was common or unclean. Of all the beasts of the field, none but those which divided the hoof and chewed the cud were set apart by the special enactment of the Lord as the consecrated or holy sustenance of the consecrated tribes of the Lord, and these consecrated things must not be polluted by contact with other things which were not set apart; no mixture with anything else was allowed. All this was undoubtedly to signify to us that God's chosen and redeemed people, who are born of God, receive from him spiritual and immortal life, which must be fed and sustained on spiritual and immortal food. This lesson is taught us in all the types and shadows going before. For instance, when God had created man out of the dust of the ground, He provided that the food necessary for man's subsistence should grow out of the same dust of the ground. His nature and composition being of the earth, earthy, his subsistence must, to be adapted to the support of his earthly nature, be also earthy; and when man had transgressed the law of God and fallen under the curse, the earth out of which he was to subsist was also cursed for his sake, that it might be still adapted to his nature as a fallen, sinful earthy man. So in the figure, we are taught that in the spiritual creation in Christ Jesus, they who are born of the Spirit of God must be sustained on spiritual things-, as their spiritual life is in God, so is all their spiritual food and sustenance. The productions of the earth cannot feed and sustain the inward man, nor can all the joys of the Spirit, which do feed and sustain the new man, prevent the old man, the earthy nature, from requiring its earthly nourishment. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that flesh is of the earth, earthy, and cannot be sustained without that food which is produced from the earth, and he that is born of God, although he might possess all the produce of the earth, would starve if he were not fed on that bread which cometh down from heaven. Except we eat the flesh

and drink the blood of Jesus, we have no spiritual life in us, for spiritual life can live on nothing else. Those who are thus born of God are a "chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people," etc., chosen, consecrated and set apart, "sanctified by God the Father," "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit," etc., cleansed and washed, purged and justified, they shall be called the holy people, and as a holy, consecrated people, they are made partakers of the divine nature, and qualified to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man, who is the true bread which came down from heaven.

Then the things which are holy are appropriated exclusively to a holy people, a people whom God has cleansed, and which, we are forbidden, to call common. This sanctified people are called sheep, lambs and doves, and by many other figurative names, but they are never called dogs or swine. A dog is a very different kind of animal from a sheep or lamb; he neither divides the hoof, nor does he chew the cud, he is therefore unclean. His disposition is also very unlike that of the sheep or lamb; he is ferocious, quarrelsome, vicious, and, like the wolf, it is his nature to worry, scatter and kill the sheep. His food, or that on which the dog subsists, is not that which would feed the sheep and lambs, nor can the sheep and lambs subsist on what the dog can feed upon. The dog would starve in the richest pasture field, where the sheep would fatten, and the sheep starve if fed only on what dogs delight to feed upon. Dogs are dangerous animals, and we are admonished to beware of them. Some of them are said to be dumb dogs that cannot bark; sleepy dogs, lying down, loving slumber, and greedy dogs that can never have enough. In Revelation 22:15, they are classified with sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers, idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. The admonition of the Lord in our text then clearly means that his disciples shall not give, nor minister the gospel, or its provisions, its promises, its comforts, its ordinances, or any of its commands, to any who are thus designated dogs, or who are in nature, disposition, practice or appetite as unlike the regenerated and spiritual people of God as dogs are unlike and inimical to the sheep and lambs. The gospel is food to the saints, because it is Christ; the preaching of the gospel is preaching Christ, and it is food to the spiritual, and hence the ministers of the gospel are commissioned to feed the sheep and feed the lambs; to feed the flock of God which he hath purchased with his own blood, but charged to give not that which is holy (and the gospel and all its ordinances are holy) to dogs. Dogs have no use for holy things, they can do them no good, for they are not adapted to their nature or suited to their appetites; besides, it is a desecration of holy things to give them to dogs or to swine. It is true, that the Gospel is to be preached to every creature, to all nations, and in all the world, for a witness to all nations, but only those who have ears to hear can hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. The ministers of Christ have nothing but the Gospel to preach, and that they must preach wherever God is pleased to open a door for them to preach, and its effect will be to discriminate between the living and the dead. All who have been pricked in the heart by the life-giving power of the Spirit will gladly receive the Word, as did the quickened on the day of Pentecost, while all others will mock and reject the testimony. But what we understand as being intended by this admonition, is that we are forbidden to attempt to Christianize unregenerated men, by teaching them the letter of the Word, and applying to them the ordinances of the Gospel as a means of salvation, by Catechisms, Bible classes, Sunday Schools, etc...as though we could so improve their carnal minds as to make them acceptable to God, without being born of the Spirit.

According to our understanding of the subject, every effort to apply the things of the Spirit of God to unregenerated men, is to give that which is holy to dogs. Theological institutions for giving ministerial qualifications to graceless youths for preaching, and to unrenewed children and adults for church membership, and for evangelizing the world by humanly devised plans and schemes, is an attempt to give that which is holy to the dogs, and is clearly a transgression of the authority of our Lord, and an open violation of the words of our text: "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine." It is not in the nature of swine to appreciate the value or beauty of pearls any more than it is the nature of dogs to relish the rich pasture on which the sheep feed. The children of God are in possession of jewels of inestimable value, which none but the children of God can appreciate or enjoy. Their spiritual privileges, their Christian love and fellowship, their gifts and graces, their experimental joys and peculiar exercises, their knowledge of divine things, are all pearls of great value to them, but their excellency cannot be known or appreciated by those who know not God. There is a fitness and utility in exhibiting these pearls among those of like precious faith, but those who have never possessed them would rudely trample on them if cast before them, as swine would trample upon the most costly and precious jewels.

Christians are greatly edified and comforted by speaking often to each other of all the way in which the Lord has led them; they can talk freely one to another of their joys and sorrows their conflicts and victories, but should they make these things the theme of their conversation in the streets and market places, or in the synagogues of Satan, they would be treated roughly; infidels, Arminians, will-worshippers, like swine, would trample them under their feet, and turn and rend the child of grace. The psalmist said, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul." They who fear the Lord can understand the language, they know too well the value of such precious pearls to despise or trample on them. But those who have only religion of the world neither divide the hoof nor chew the cud and like swine, serve only their swinish appetites, their god is their belly and their glory is their shame. The swine seem to have but one desire, and that is the gratification of their ravenous appetite-, cast before them the most costly and splendid gems, or pearls, and as they cannot eat them, they have no other use for them, and they would as soon trample on them as on the most common earth, and they will turn again and rend you, determined to obtain something that they can eat; so when the Christian attempts to display the glorious things of the kingdom of Christ to unbelievers, they will sometimes be surprised to find that those with whom they labor cannot appreciate those experimental things of which they speak. Expostulate with them, and demonstrate what you say by the most clear and positive Scripture authority, and they will disregard your testimony and your Scripture, and trample both under their feet, and then assail you again with as much vigor and determined violence as though you had not exhibited to them your pearls.

Sheep, swine and dogs are not suitable companions for each other, they cannot live in good communion together, nor should unnatural amalgamation be attempted, but let the sheep be associated with sheep, and let them "beware of dogs," and avoid the society of swine, and they will be more pleasantly and comfortably situated. The great and good Shepherd has told his flock, Ye "are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." He has chosen them out of the world, and called them to be a separate people. Let us then heed the admonition of our Lord, and give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast our pearls before swine, lest they trample them under

their feet, and turn again and rend us.

Elder Gilbert Beebe Signs of the Times - November 1, 1886

S. Church History

Church History By Gilbert Beebe

We do not know of any reliable history of the Baptists from the apostles' days down to the present. Of all the books that 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, as all that we have read, after the Church a few centuries, and basing their account upon very doubtful data, become con-fused, 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 persecu-tion 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, an historical account of the anti-Christian beasts, which had assumed Her name. The most 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 historians of which we have any knowledge. When we consider, that during the Dark Ages of papal (Catholic) persecution all records and writings of non-conformists were seized, and with their authors committed to the flames, we shall not be surprised that no DIRECT AUTHENTIC HISTORY can be found.

Let us suppose at even the present time the world would write a history of the Baptist Church to transmit to the succeeding ages. Would they not all of them, like David Benedict and others, represent the popular Missionary Baptists as the true Church, and as a people, opposed to everything 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 comes not by observation; it cannot 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 are 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 are required 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 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 with the measurement of SCRIPTURAL 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, or Old School or Primitive Baptist in America, that we have any knowledge of, was constituted and organized in Wales, and embarked in a ship, the James and Mary in June 1701 and landed in Philadelphia in September the same year. A sailing vessel with pastor, deacons and members (16) all told, and were received by some Baptists who had preceded them in old Pennepek meeting house, builded in 1688.

Later in 1703 a colony settled at Welsh Tract, Newark, Delaware.

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 apostolic order, we know of no record extent that will give a more full account than that contained in New School Baptists from the old first book of Editorials, recently published by B.L. Beebe which contain the statements of 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 apostolic order of Baptists, nothing can be settled by the discussion of the time and manner of the division. The principle grounds of differences 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 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 New School Baptist are apostolic Baptists, and we old School Baptists 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 the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isaiah 8:20. By Gilbert Beebe, 1868

S. Drink No Longer Water, But Use A Little Wine...

Drink No Longer Water, But Use A Little Wine... By Gilbert Beebe

"DRINK no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake, and thine often infirmities." - Paul to Timothy

UNPOPULAR as this text may appear in this day of religious reform, in which the scriptures have fallen so far behind the spirit of the age, we have nothing of popularity at stake, may venture a few remarks upon it without the fear of losing the favor of the reformers of the day.

Paul, the writer of the text, was an inspired apostle, and wrote as he was directed by the Holy Ghost. Timothy was a minister of the gospel, and a bishop or elder of the church of Christ at Ephesus. It was therefore proper that Paul, as one of the twelve judges of the twelve spiritual tribes, should instruct Timothy how he ought to behave himself in the house of God. From the text we learn that Timothy was a man of frequent infirmity, and from the fact infer that although gospel ministers are required to be sound in the faith and practice of the gospel, they are men of bodily infirmity like all the rest of mankind.

Timothy could not be temperate in all things, unless he discontinued the use of water and used a little wine. We do not know that Paul required a tetotal abstinence from water; but he evidently believed that water was more injurious to the health of Timothy than wine would be; he therefore directed a discontinuance of the former and the use of a little of the latter.

Paul did not in this case, or in any other case, direct the use of much wine; but elsewhere forbids that the saints should be drunken with wine, wherein there is excess. From the above considerations we infer that there is a very wide difference between the views of Paul and those of the modern false apostles of our age, as the latter hold that the use of intoxicating drinks, to any extent, is a moral sin; that they are not to be used in any case, to any extent whatever, without involving guilt and sin on the part of the person or persons using it. Paul, however, held with his Lord, that the use, not abuse, of all things was lawful and expedient, and all things were to be received and used by the saints with thanksgiving. Had our Lord regarded the use of intoxicating liquors as a sin, is it consistent to believe that he would have given Israel wine as a blessing, or directed the children of Israel to buy wine and strong drink; or would our Savior have changed the pure element of water into such wicked stuff as wine, and then, after the people had already well drunk, caused the better wine to be served to the governor and the feast? Had our Lord approved of the doctrine of modern tetotal abstinence, would he have been called a wine-bibber or wine drinker ?

Again we infer, that the modern theory is not only without a divine warrant in the sacred pages, but is absolutely in opposition to the revealed laws of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. Any person, therefore, connected with the church of God, who shall violate the laws of Christ, by uniting in modern societies which are hostile to his laws, are guilty of disorder, and should be labored with as offenders; and if not reclaimed, excluded, as in all other cases of walking

disorderly. In rejecting the inventions of men on this subject, and adhering strictly to the bible, let no one suppose us to advocate an excessive, or even habitual use of wine, or other intoxicating drinks; such is not the fact, either in theory or in our practice. But we do believe, and maintain, that the bible is a full, perfect and infallible guide for the children of God. They were no countenance the excessive use of wine or strong drink, or of any thing else; but they direct that we should use all things bestowed upon us by a bountiful providence, as not abusing them. It is a reflection on the wisdom and goodness of God, for men to attempt an improvement of the divine rule. The church is required to withhold her fellowship from drunkards; and if any in our connection become intemperate in eating, or drinking, or otherwise, they are to be put away, if they cannot be reclaimed by gospel measures. it is disgraceful, and abominably wicked, for christians to indulge in an unbecoming use, or we would rather say, abuse, of what God has given us. Any person who cannot be reclaimed from intemperate habits, by gospel discipline, from a sense of their allegiance to their heavenly King, by the love of God dwelling in their hearts, by a sense of gospel order, by a desire to walk circumspectly, ought to be put away from the communion and fellowship of the church of Christ. To sustain them in the church by any other constraint than that found in the New Testament, is a perversion of the laws of Christ, and involves the sin of retaining in church connection, such as the laws of Zion have commanded us to put away. We care not for the slang of the enemy, in slanderously reporting us as wine-bibbers, gluttons, &c.; for so they accused our Lord; but when any of the household of faith give occasion to the enemy, to reproach them on this ground, it is trying indeed; therefore, suffer the word of exhortation.

Dear brethren, let us abstain from all appearance of evil; let us live soberly, righteously and godly in the present world. And although we are not at liberty to allow any man to judge us in meats, or in drinks, or in regard to a holy day, let us, as children of the light, as the followers of the Lamb, as the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, deny ourselves of all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and endeavor to show an ungodly generation that we, by the laws of Christ alone, are taught to walk worth of the high vocation wherewith we are called. If our infirmities (we don't mean depraved appetites) require strong drink, there is no more harm in using it moderately, than mil or bread; providing we use it lawfully; and it is as great a sin for us to refuse it when, like Timothy, our sickness, or natural infirmity requires it, as to refuse any other temporal blessing that God has given us. It is not in drinking a little wine that the evil lies; but in carnal indulgence, which inculcates an appetite for still greater indulgence, and so leads on to actual intemperance. In the use of wine and other strong drink, there is perhaps a much greater danger of cherishing an immoderate thirst, than in the use of many other things; we are therefore to be the more guarded - to use it with the greater caution; and if we cannot use it without exciting an inclination to use it excessively, it is our duty, as christians, to abandon the use of it altogether. By the same rule which required Timothy to discontinue the use of water, because it was detrimental to his health, we are required to abstain from wine and strong drink, when our infirmities require water instead of wine. By Elder Gilbert Beebe New Vernon, N. Y.,

June 1, 1840

S. Efficacious Power of the Blood of Christ

Efficacious Power of the Blood of Christ From Signs of the Times—June 1, 1869 by Gilbert Beebe

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 sprinkled 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, Hebrews 9:15). "And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin," (1 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," (1 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," &c. (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," &c. (1 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).

Dear dying Lamb, thy precious blood, Shall never lose its power, Till all the ransomed church of God, Be saved to sin no more."

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 anything 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,” &c. “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,” (1 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 unreprieveable 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," (1 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," (Revelation 12:11). 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, Zechariah 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 by.”

S. Elder Samuel Trott: Died at Age 83

Elder Samuel Trott: Died At Age 83 by Gilbert Beebe

Elder Samuel Trott has laid off his armor, received his passport, and gone, as we fully believe, to the bosom of his God and Savior. For several months his strength has been gradually declining; so much so as to prevent him from visiting the churches, as he has been confined to his house or immediate neighborhood ever since last May. At that time we met him at the Baltimore Association, where we heard him for the last time, preach a short but very impressive sermon from John 3:3, "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." His voice was feeble, and his physical power scarcely sufficient to support his debilitated frame. He remarked that that was in all probability the last time he should ever attempt to preach to us. But the ardor of his spirit arose to an irrepressible earnestness, in solemnly impressing upon the brethren the important doctrine of his text, that whatever amount of human wisdom, literary acquirements, or human talent a man may possess, or however sound in theory, none are competent to preach the gospel of Christ, who have not seen the kingdom; and none can possibly see that kingdom who are not born of the Spirit. His last solemn admonition to the saints on this important subject fell upon our ears, and sank deep in our hearts, as our dear aged father was summing up in a few words what had been the burden of his ministry for more than sixty years. His stand point, bordering on the verge of the eternal world, with the eye of faith uplifted to the glory of the upper skies, and wings expanded for his rapturous flight from earth, only waiting to pronounce the finishing sentences of the ministry which he had received of the Lord, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. If we mistake not that was the last time he in a formal manner attempted to preach. But as long as he continued in the flesh, he ceased not, as opportunity presented and his receding strength would allow, to speak of his Redeemer's kingdom, and to talk of his power.

We called on and spent a night with our dear brother in August last, in company of Elders Leachman and Durand, after the close of the Corresponding Meeting in Loudoun County, Va. In our last interview, as far as strength would permit, he reaffirmed the position he had so long held, and the testimony he had so long and faithfully born to the truth of prophecy, and of what he had understood to be its import. To us, his clear and lucid interpretation of those prophecies concerning the twelve hundred and sixty days of the papal beast, and the corresponding time of the two witnesses prophesying in sackcloth, was wonderful. And that he should have published his views nearly forty years ago, and that he lived to see that his views were correct, in the literal humiliation of the pope, and extinction of his temporal, or secular power, just twelve hundred and sixty years after the inauguration of that power in the year 606, is evidence that he was endowed with more light upon these subjects than had ordinarily been enjoyed by his contemporaries.

We have been personally acquainted with our dear departed brother about 45 years, and from our earliest acquaintance, have looked up to him as to a father, for counsel, and instruction, which he has been enabled to give. We have always found him ready to speak a seasonable word to us

when occasion has required. Like David and Jonathan, we have loved each other; facing the same foes, bearing the same testimony, engaged in the same conflicts and participating in the same victories, suffering the same reproaches, encountering the same persecutions for the truth's sake. Is it strange, now that he is taken from us, that we should exclaim, as did Elisha, when he saw Elijah taken up to heaven in the fiery chariot? "My father! My father! the chariot of Israel, and the horseman thereof."

More than an ordinary tribute to the memory of this dear servant of God is due from us, and a very large space in our columns should be devoted to a becoming notice of his departure. No other correspondent has contributed so liberally to our columns from the first number of our first volume, until prevented from writing, first by the late war, and since the war, for debility. Indeed it is doubtful if we could have succeeded in sustaining our publication had he withheld his support; and now that his pen shall no longer write for our edification, it is meet that we should record how greatly we have been aided by him, and how sadly the announcement of his departure has fallen on us.

Elder Daniel L. Harding, who was present with our dear brother R. C. Leachman at the funeral of brother Trott, has brought the sad tidings to us, that on Tuesday, October 30, 1866, brother Trott breathed his last, being about 83 years of age. An appropriate obituary will be prepared by brother Leachman, as we understand, which will be inserted when received.

Brother Trott leaves a widow and one daughter, and has one surviving son residing in Texas. His first wife and all his children, except the one son and one daughter, had been called away before him. With our dear bereaved sister Trott, and the surviving daughter, who were with him to the last, we most sincerely sympathize in this, their deep affliction, and may their sore bereavement be sanctified to their good, and may they, with the absent son, be divinely sustained by the strong arm of the Lord. To the churches of our order, especially those who have enjoyed the labors of the departed, we would speak words of consolation. It is the Lord, and he is able to comfort you, in this and in all your sorrows. Look up to him and pray him to send forth faithful laborers into his harvest. To the readers of the "Signs of the Times": we shall greatly miss that familiar signature and those deeply edifying epistles of love, which, for thirty-four years have afforded so much instruction and comfort. But our God hath raised up many other witnesses, and has assured us that he will not leave himself without witnesses. Long will you cherish the memory of our dear departed brother. To our brethren in the ministry: a valiant soldier has laid aside his armor; a veteran has received his passport to his mansion in the skies; our hearts are saddened, because the places that knew him once shall know him no more; but he is not dead, but sleepeth. His trials and conflicts are over, and all his tears are wiped forever away. A few more days of trial, temptation and conflict remains for us to fill up, and then, like him, shall we close our weary eyes on all the vanities of earth, and go to dwell forever with the Lord. The 1252 hymn, of our Baptist Hymn Book, seems to us so very appropriate, we are constrained to copy it, in the conclusion of this article. In hope of life eternal given, Behold, a pardon'd sinner dies; A chosen blood-bought heir of heaven, Called to his mansion in the skies.

He left the world, with all its toys, For better, brighter worlds on high: His faith embrac'd substantial joys, Soaring beyond the starry sky. From Pisgah's top, by faith, he saw The land where milk and honey flows; Nor can the power of hell below, Prevail to break his sweet repose.

He trod the shades of gloomy death, Could set his seal that God was true;

Finish'd his course, and kept the faith, And died with glory full in view.

Methinks I see him now at rest, In the bright mansion love ordain'd; His head reclined on Jesus' breast, No more by sin or sorrow pain'd.

Why should our eyes with sorrow flow, Our bosoms heave the painful sigh! When Jesus calls, the saint must go, 'Tis his eternal gain to die.

'Twas through the strength of Israel's King He proved a conqueror when he fell;

'Tis to the praise of grace we sing, Though of the dying saint we tell.

Fearless he enter'd death's cold flood, In peace of conscience clos'd his eyes; His only trust was Jesus' blood, In sure and certain hope to rise.

Since the foregoing was in type, we have received the following obituary, written by brother Leachman, in which he proposes for us to prepare a biography of our deceased brother. We are very certain that such an article as would do justice to the subject would be highly appreciated by all our readers, and if no one more competent shall perform the sad duty, we will, as soon as we can command the time to examine our files and other documents, do the best we can. By Elder Gilbert Beebe Middletown, N.Y.

November 15, 1866.

S. Entering Rest

Entering Rest From Signs of the Times—April 15, 1869.

Reply to Sister Walker, on Hebrews 4:1 and Hebrews 4:2.

“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.” Hebrews 4:1-2. by Gilbert Beebe 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, 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 were 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."

S. Eternal Generation

Eternal Generation The Signs of the Times—February 15, 1860. by Gilbert Beebe

Sir: —Will you do a reader of the Signs of the Times the favor to give your opinion of the doctrine of the eternal generation of the Son of God?

Reply. —The above note came to us by mail, precisely as we have copied it above, without place or date, but post-marked on the envelope by the stamp, Baltimore, Md., February 11, and directed to us at New Vernon, in this County; thence it was forwarded to us at this place. Who the querist is, and what is desired, and for what purpose, we do not fully comprehend, but as we desire always to oblige, as far as we have ability, the readers of the Signs, we will inform the inquirer frankly, that we do not know what the doctrine is, on which our opinion is requested. We have found no mention made, in our version of the Scriptures, of the eternal generation of the Son of God, in so many words, therefore we suppose the inquiry relates to some theory or doctrine so designated, as held and taught by men. As we do not know what the theory or doctrine is, we have no other opinion than this, that the Scriptures contain all that it is essential for the saints to understand in regard to the doctrine of God our Savior. That he is the Son of God, the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, and that he was the Son of God before he was sent into the world, and is the same yesterday, today and forever, and that he who is the Son of God, is also the eternal, underived, independent God, we also firmly believe. That in his Mediatorial union with his body, his church, he is the only begotten of the Father, while in his supreme Godhead, he is the fullness of the Godhead, underived and unbegotten. The New Testament begins with the words, "The book of the generations of Jesus Christ, the Son of David," (Matthew 1:1). Of his generation in this sense, we are told that he was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead, (Romans 1:3-4). Of his generation as the seed of David, we find no record of its being called eternal. The inspired psalmist, in prophesying of him, says: "The kingdom is the Lord's, and he is the governor among the nations," &c. "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation," (Psalms 22:28, Psalms 22:30). This prophetic declaration of the royal prophet, compared with 1 Peter 2:9: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people," &c., very clearly presents to us, the generation of Jesus Christ the Son of God. The life, that is, the eternal life or immortality of this generation, was with the Father, (1 John 1:2). "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," (1 John 5:11-12). This generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as we have proven by 1 Peter 2:9, is a chosen generation, and Paul testifies, (Ephesians 1:4) that they were "chosen in him," that is, in Jesus Christ the Son of God, "before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Thus far we have the testimony that the life which was given to the generation of Jesus Christ the Son of God, was eternal life, and that it was, and still is so in Jesus Christ the Son of God, that no man can have the one without having the other, and no one can be destitute of the one without being destitute of the other. Such, then, is the seminal union

and relationship of vitality, of immortality, that indissoluble unites the Head and Body of the church of God, that we are compelled to regard it as eternal. The book of the complete generations of the earthly Adam was given in the day that God created man, (Genesis 5:1) consequently before any of the children of Adam were born of the flesh. And as the earthly Adam is the figure of the heavenly Adam, (Romans 5:14; 1 Corinthians 15:47-48) we infer that the seed or generation of Jesus Christ the Son of God, is just as ancient as his Sonship. That is, we cannot from the Scriptures learn that our Lord Jesus Christ held the office, or occupied the position of Mediator, before the eternal life, which was with the Father, was given to us in him. That this is what constitutes the relationship between Christ, the seminal Head, and his seed, the Progenitor and the chosen generation.

We believe there are some who have held the idea that the flesh of our Redeemer, in which he was born of the Virgin, which suffered on the cross, was laid in the tomb, and which was raised from the dead, was begotten and brought forth by what they call an eternal generation, and so existed a human body and soul, from the ancients of eternity. If that theory be true, we have not so learned it, and must wait for clearer light on that subject. If what is called the humanity of Christ was also generated and did so exist before all time, then, instead of his assumption of our flesh, instead of his taking on him the seed of Abraham, or being made of a woman in his advent to this world, the whole race of mankind must have assumed his human nature when they were born of the flesh. And furthermore, we see no reason why it was expedient for him to be made of a woman, in order to be made under that law which the human family were under, as that law was binding on all human beings, until they are redeemed from its dominion by his one offering of himself without spot unto God. Until these difficulties which, to a very little mind like ours, are insuperable, are obviated, we are unable to endorse this speculation.

Another, to us, equally untenable theory, called eternal generation of the Son of God, sets forth, that his supreme Godhead is a derivative Godhead; that it is not original, self-existent, independent and eternal. This theory, as it appears to us, seems to deny all that is essential to his Godhead. How can we conceive of absolute Godhead that has descended by generation or otherwise from any producing source higher than himself. That Christ exists in a Sonship which is begotten of the Father, is clearly demonstrated in the Scriptures, and confirmed by his own declarations, but this we understand to be in relation to what he is as Head and life of his church. But that he also is the eternal, self-existent God, the Jehovah, is equally demonstrated in the Scriptures, and in the personal experience of every saint. For if he is not God in an absolute and unrestricted sense, he cannot be the Savior. He says, "I am God, and beside me there is no Savior." We must, therefore, be excused from endorsing a doctrine, however popular or plausible, that would rob us of a Savior, or present him in a character in which we are forbidden to worship him. This doctrine of a begotten Godhead is, to us, equivalent to a denial of his Godhead in all but a nominal sense. Nor does the fine-spun reasoning of his being eternally begotten, remove the difficulty. The effect would be the same, whether begotten in eternity or in time. A like it must and would imply a begetting or producing God, anterior to his development as God; while, to our view, the denial of his self-existence is a denial that he exists at all, as an absolute, eternal, independent and self-existent God. The argument, that the son is as old as his father, that a father cannot exist without a son, is quite too feeble to bring conviction to our mind. Stripped of all artificial verbiage, the naked question returns; Is Jesus Christ absolutely, eternally, independently, underivedly, the

very supreme and eternal God? To this question we emphatically answer, Yes! and as such we hope to worship and adore him when the earth and heavens shall be no more; and even now we have no sweeter song to sing than, “Jesus, my God, I know his name, His name is all my trust; Nor will he put my soul to shame, Nor let my hope be lost.”

S. Eternal Life

Eternal Life Sign of the Times - January 15, 1859.

“This is the true God, and eternal life.” 1 John 5:20 by Gilbert Beebe That this testimony is given by the inspired apostle concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, we presume but few if any will dispute, since there is no other character or being found in heaven or earth to whom we can apply these titles without involving the sin of blasphemy. The whole theme of John in this epistle, as well as in all his writings, was to bear record or testimony of him, and to show by the most indisputable testimony that he is as here declared, the true God, and eternal life. It is highly important that the children of God should be instructed in regard to his being, his attributes, his fullness, and of the relationship subsisting between him and them; and to meet this necessity the Holy Ghost inspired John to write unto the scattered family of God that they may have fellowship with each other, and that their joy may be full, (1 John 1:1-4). As the doctrine declared in our text involves the fellowship of the saints one with another, and their fellowship also with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, how very important it is that we in striving to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace, should search diligently these Scriptures which testify of him.

Two important points are established by the declarations of our text. First, that Jesus Christ is the true God, and secondly, that he is the eternal life. On these two points we will offer a few remarks for the prayerful consideration of our readers.

First. He is the true God. It is not said that he is a true God, as though there were a plurality of true gods: for the Scriptures proclaim but One living and true God, and he himself has said, “I am God, and beside me there is no other.” Hence the definite article is used to signify that Jesus Christ is the same God of whom Moses testified unto Israel saying, “The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath thee, are the everlasting arms,” (Deuteronomy 32:27). He is the same God who said by Isaiah, unto the seed of Israel, “Look unto me, and be ye saved all ye thee ends of the earth, for I am God and there is none else,” (Isaiah 45:22). Yea, he is that very God who has said he will have no other god before him. He is therefore called, the only wise God, our Savior. And in our text he is also distinguished from all false gods, or imaginary deities, the true God. This descriptive characteristic, implies that there are those that are called gods, and worshiped as such, that are not true. Jesus himself testified, all that ever came before him, were thieves and robbers: and he admonished his disciples that many false christs would come, and commanded them to beware of them.

He is the true God; all others who claim that honor, or who are revered as such, are false, delusive idols, whether they be of gold or silver, or any material substance, or existing only in the vain imagination of their worshipers. But when we claim that Jesus Christ is the only true and living God, we hold that all the fullness of the eternal Godhead dwells in him. The eternal Father is in him, and he is in the Father, and he and his Father are one. The Holy Spirit of the Lord God, in all his infinity is given to him without measure or limitation; it dwells in him, and is one with him. All that constitutes the Godhead, with all the attributes and perfections belong to him, and are

essential to his nature, so that in the absence of any of them, if it were possible that any of them could be absent from him, he would be disqualified to be a Savior, or to be worshiped. God has declared that he is God and beside him there is no Savior, and he has forbidden his creatures to worship any but himself, therefore in worshipping Christ, we worship none other than the true God. The Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, notwithstanding these personal distinctions by which they are severally set forth in the record of truth, are but the one only living and true God, for these three are one. In his eternal Godhead we hold therefore, in distinction from the views advanced by those who lately assailed our faith on this subject, that Christ, in his Godhead, is self-existent, independent and eternal. That his Godhead is unbegotten and underived, it is the Godhead of the Father, and of the Holy Ghost, and we would as soon think of applying derivation to the Father or Spirit as to that fullness of the Godhead which is embodied in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Although he is the true God, equally and identically with the Father and the Holy Ghost he also sustains and gloriously fills a mediatorial identity, in which he is as fully identified as one with the church as in his Godhead he is one with his Father. Hence our apostle not only declares him to be the true God, but also proclaims him as the eternal life. He himself declares, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." "I am the Resurrection and the life." The scriptural record of this Eternal Life, as given by the apostle John, and by all inspired writers finds its origin in the eternal Father; and hence its eternity, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For 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;) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.," (1 John 1:1-3). The manifestation of this eternal life which was with the Father, is represented as a begetting, a bringing forth, a setting up, and a Sonship, while its incarnation extended the manifestation to the saints on earth, so that they could see with their eyes, and handle the Word of life. Let us not forget that this Life is eternal, the manifestation is not the origination of it; for before it was manifested, it was with the Father. The begetting, or birth, is not the origination of that life which is made manifest by a birth. This eternal Life, is the Life which our Lord Jesus Christ is unto his body the church, which is the fullness of him that filleth all in all. "For me to live is Christ." "When he who is our life shall appear, we shall appear with him in glory." When this eternal life was manifested, of course it appeared, and in it all the saints were and are manifested in glory, even in that glory which the divine Mediator had with the Father before the world was. This is what we understand to be the eternal vitality, or immortality of the church of God. It was with the eternal Father, hid with Christ in God, and it was given unto the saints together with all that pertains to life and godliness, and the unspeakable gift of God's dear Son, whom God has given to be Head, Life and Immortality of the church, which is his body, all the members of which the omniscient eye of the Father did see, yet being imperfect, and in his book all its members were written which in continuance were fashioned when as yet there were none of them.

These views, if correct involve what is called the doctrine of Eternal Vital Union. That in the life of all the saints of God is one life, it is Christ, and Christ is eternal, as the Immortality of his body. The manifestation of this eternal life involves a spiritual generation, proceeding from God the Father, in manifestation of the eternal life which was with him, and all this eternal life with all spiritual

blessings, was given us in Christ Jesus, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. Hence, in the Sonship of Christ is found all our vital relationship to God. This is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and the life is in his Son, so completely identified with the Sonship of Christ that he that hath the Son of God hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life. For he only hath immortality dwelling in the light. The children of God having spiritual, eternal life given them in Christ before the world began, are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; they are a seed that shall serve him, and be counted to the Lord for a generation. This is the doctrine of the Bible on the subject of the true God, and Eternal Life, and a prominent and fundamental doctrine of the apostolic Baptists in all ages, and in all parts of the world. It sets forth Eternal, Unconditional Election, and life given to the chosen or elected people of God, before the world began. Yet there are those now, as probably there have been in past ages, who would confuse the minds of the saints, in order to rob them of the comfort which an understanding of this subject inspires. John says, These things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. Satan and his legions oppose the doctrine, traduce, misrepresent and persecute those who hold, and proclaim this doctrine. Not because Satan has any hope of being able with all his allies on earth, in or out of the Christian profession, to overturn or destroy it, but the joy of the saints cannot be full without the consolation of this doctrine, the object of the powers of darkness to prevent the fullness of joy which the subject inspires. May the Lord lead our minds by his Spirit into this and all truth, and deliver us from all error and delusions, for Jesus' sake, and then we can well afford to bear all the reproach which may be heaped on us for the truth's sake.

“Then let the loudest storm arise, Let tempests mingle earth and skies, No fatal shipwreck shall we fear, For Christ, our life, is always near.”

S. Eternal Unconditional Election

Eternal Unconditional Election by Gilbert Beebe NEW VERNON, N. Y., February 27, 1933. IN the third item of our prospectus, we are pledged to maintain inviolably the doctrine of eternal, unconditional election. Some of our opponents have been kind enough to interpret our prospectus in such a manner as to lay us under the necessity of giving our readers more fully to understand our views. The language in which this article is headed is neither vague nor ambiguous; nor does this subject require a volume to be written, in order to convince the wise what doctrinal ideas we wish to convey. Yet as we have only asserted the sentiment as a matter of faith from which we shall in no case depart, it remains for us to show that this doctrine is scriptural, and in proving it to be so we will give a sufficient reason why we cannot depart from it in conducting this paper. Having already given, in our former numbers, our views of the sovereignty, immutability, &c., of the great Jehovah, our present work will be to prove that he has absolutely, eternally and unconditionally chosen or elected a portion of mankind unto salvation, through Jesus Christ. With that class of our readers who take the bible as the man of their counsel and the standard of their faith, nothing more will be required of us. at this time, than a fair presentment of the word of God. Neither human language nor human wisdom can set forth the doctrine in a more clear or positive light than that which is left by the Holy Ghost, in the sacred pages of the Old and New Testaments.

Let it be understood that our work is only to state the doctrine, and to prove it to be in accordance with, and founded upon the word and testimony of the God of truth; we do not undertake to make the unregenerate understand or love it; for such a work we freely confess ourself inadequate; nor do we consider it any disparagement for us to own that God alone is able to bestow the knowledge and love of truth upon those who possess it not. We shall attempt to show that— First, God has chosen or elected a people unto eternal life; second, that this election took place in eternity, or before the foundation of the world; and third, that this doctrine is not founded on any conditions existing between the elector and the elected.

First, that God has an elect people, we call to witness the following portions of holy writ, viz:

“Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom he hath chosen.”—Psalms 33:12. “And he brought forth his people with joy, and his chosen with gladness.”—Psalms 105:5. “That I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the goodness of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance.”—Psalms 116:5. “The beasts of the field shall honor me, the dragons and the owls; because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen .”—Isaiah 43:20. “But for the elect’s sake whom he hath chosen,” &c.—Mark 13:20. “Go thy way, for he (Saul) is a chosen vessel unto me.”—Acts 9:15. “Salute Rufus, chosen in the &c.—Romans 16:13. “But ye are a chosen generation., a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”—1 Peter 2:9. “These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; for he is the Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.”—Revelation 17:14. “But for the elect’s sake those days shall be

shortened. For there shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch, that if it were possible they should deceive the very elect. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect, from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”—Matthew 24:22, Matthew 24:24, Matthew 24:31. “And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him.”—Luke 18:7. “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect?”—Romans 8:33. “Even so then, at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the election of grace. What then t Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it and the rest were blinded. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes; but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers’ sakes.”—Romans 11:5, Romans 11:7, Romans 11:28.

Second, the eternity of God’s election is set forth in the strongest terilis by the apostles, thus, “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ unto himself; according to the good pleasure of his will, wherein he hath made us, accepted in the beloved. In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”—Ephesians 1:4-6, Ephesians 1:11, also Ephesians 2:10. “Peter an apostle, &c~, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithyna, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father,” &c.—1 Peter 1:1-2. “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 lie called, them he also justified and whom he justified, them he also glorified.”—Romans 8:29-30. “But we are bound to give thanks always 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.”—2 Thessalonians 2:13. “And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, (the beast) whose names are not written in the book of life, of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”—Revelation 13:8. These with many like scriptures, plainly demonstrate the eternity of the election of the people of God unto salvation, through Jesus Christ their Lord. Arminians may well tremble to meet the array of scriptures here employed to refute their cavils against eternal election. But we must show that God’s election is unconditional, as far as it relates to those elected. The weight of this part of our argument may, for the present, rest upon the three following propositions, viz:

First, the fact that the election took place in eternity, precludes the possibility of its resting on conditions to be performed by the people elected. “For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good nor evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth,” &c.

Second, there is not the mention of a condition (as resting upon the elect) in the bible; and if this all important doctrine, which involves our eternal destiny in its weight had been suspended upon conditions to be performed by man, we may assuredly believe that God would have made known a fact of such awful moment, in his word.

Third, the scripture expressly forbids the idea of conditions, either in regard to election, or salvation in any form whatever. To establish this point we hear the inspired apostle say, "By grace are ye saved through faith, that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast."

Again, if there be conditions in the election of grace, resting on the creature to perform, we would for the moment inquire what are the conditions? Is it works? No, for if it be of works, it is no more grace, otherwise work is no more work." Does the doctrine then require that the sinner shall be willing on his part to be saved? No, it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. But did not the choice of God embrace the best kind of sinners, such as are not so vile, polluted and depraved as the rest of mankind? No, "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief." But did not God choose unto salvation such as would be born of pious parents—parents who would dedicate them by infant or adult sprinkling and train them up to religion? No, "Though Noah, Daniel and Job were in it, as I live saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter."

"Cursed is man that trusteth in man, or that maketh flesh his arm." But were they elected on condition that they should use what is in the present day denominated "The means of grace," viz:—to give their property to charitable societies, and so fill up the "Lord's treasury?" No, for "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth nothing." "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Now we inquire if election or salvation be conditional, on what condition does it rest? Let the Arminian answer if he can. But to the everlasting exclusion of all such heart-sickening, God dishonoring, soul-revolting, devil-pleasing delusion, Thus saith the Lord God, whose word endureth forever, "Behold o my people, I will open your graves, and cause, you to come up out of your graves," &c. Thus saith the Lord God, unto these bones, "Behold, I will cause breath to enter in you, and ye shall live. And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin and put breath in you and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. And I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea I will be their God, and they shall be my people."—Ezekiel 33:1-33, see also Hebrews 8:10-12. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me from the least to the greatest: for I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their iniquities will I remember no more." Here, from the uncorrupted fountain breaks forth a refulgent torrent of light and truth, sweeping away all refuges of lies, and reiterating Jehovah's declarations. "I will, and they shall," while each redeemed soul quickened and made alive by the Holy Ghost, and taught by the Father, joins in the heavenly melody to sing:

"Sons we are through God's election, Who in Jesus Christ believe; By eternal destination, Sovereign grace we here receive.

Lord, thy mercy Does both grace and glory give.

Pause, my soul! adore and wonder!

Ask, O why such love to me?

Grace has put me in the number, Of my Savior's family.

Hallelujah!

Thanks, eternal thank to thee.

Since that love had no beginning, And shall never, never cease;

Keep, O keep me, Lord, from sinning!

Guide me in the way of peace!

Make me walk in All the paths of holiness. When that blessed habitation, Which my God has foreordained; When in glory's full possession, I with saints and angels stand;

Free grace only Shall resound from God's right hand."

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S. Experimental Religion

Experimental Religion Signs of the Times - November 1, 1845 by Gilbert Beebe

There are many kinds of religion in the world. The apostle Paul speaks of having been brought up after the manner of the Jews' religion and, although it acknowledges a God, and the authenticity of the scriptures of the Old Testament, differed as widely from the Christian religion as enjoyed by the regenerated sons of God as spiritually worship differs from carnal ordinances. The religion of the Jews could never fit its possessors for the enjoyment of spiritual things here, nor for the songs of the redeemed in the ultimate state of their glory. The Pagans, also, were a religious people; extremely devotional and zealous, but knew not the author of their existence as God. They worshipped and still do worship a variety of gods. Mahometans [Moslems; Ed.] are religious, and their alcoran [Koran, Ed.] is by them regarded as an infallible and sacred oracle. Catholics and Protestants of numerous sects claim to be Christians, profess the Christian religion, and some of them are remarkably zealous in making converts to their religion; compassing sea and land, employing thousands of agents, and expending millions of money in spreading their religion; but all these are essentially different from the primitive disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ. And although the Catholics and the Protestants will not like to be classed with Jews, Pagans, and Mahometans, a careful investigation of their several claims will show them to be equally distant from the kingdom of Christ. The religion of the Jews was taught as a science; the religion of the Pagans was taught as a science; the religion of Mahomet was taught as a science; so is that of the Catholics and Protestants, as also the preparation of their priests and ministers, together with the religious instruction of their children. All are ready on every occasion when opportunity serves them to establish their religion by law, and to enforce it with the edge of the sword. The regenerating power of the Holy Ghost is by none of them considered an indispensable prerequisite to their religion. Jews, Pagans and Mahometans pretend to no such qualification; Catholics and Protestants profess to believe regeneration to be necessary, but hold it to be, a work which can be performed through the instrumentality of men and means. The Pope is considered competent to forgive sins and the Episcopalian priest or bishop to absolve and confirm sinners; Paedo-Baptists generally, as well as Campbellites, hold what they administer for baptism to be equivalent to regeneration or a rite by which unregenerated children are put into the covenant of grace; that all who are in the covenant are saved, and all out of it are lost. Arminian Baptists, or more properly, baptized Arminians, differ in no very essential points from their Protestant and Catholic brethren, except in name and spirit of competition. Like all other false religionists, they can teach their religion as a science, and make converts by the power of what they call moral suasion; the same kind of instruments used by the others in the propagation of their religion is also used by them. And all, Jew, Pagan, Mahometan, Catholic, Protestant, and Baptized Arminian, hate and despise, and dispute the doctrine of salvation by sovereign discriminating grace alone.

All false religion must agree in the particulars noticed above, for if regeneration were a prerequisite to knowledge of false religion, as it is to a knowledge of experimental religion, false religion could not be propagated, for the Holy Spirit will not qualify men for the reception or practice of false

religion. But experimental religion cannot be taught or learned as the sciences, or as every description of religion can. "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God," (John 3:3). "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," (1 Corinthians 2:14). The religion of Jesus is not a science; but purely a revelation. Flesh and blood did not reveal it to Peter. Paul knew nothing of it but by revelation. "When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood," (Galatians 1:15-16). God has hidden these things effectually from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes. It is indeed a distinguishing provision for the New Testament saints that they shall no more teach every man his neighbor and every man his brother to know the Lord. The knowledge of Lord is eternal life. "For this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent," (John 17:3). Men may with quite as much propriety undertake to give eternal life to dead sinners, as to give them a knowledge of the true God, and of Jesus Christ; for the one equivalent to the other. But experimental religion is not only radically dissimilar to all other kinds of religion, but there is also a wide difference between the practice dictated by pure religion, and the experience of that pure religion. Men may have the form of godliness while they know not the experience of its vital power in their hearts; but no man can possess the experience of godliness in his heart without its producing an effect upon his deportment. The difference between true and false religion is known by their respective fruits. Those who possess the experimental power of religion in their hearts, work from life already possessed, while all others work in anticipation of life expected. Such as are born of God desire and pray that they may be reconciled to God; all others desire and pray that God may be reconciled to them. God's people are exercised by faith; all others profess to exercise faith. Experimental Christians love God, love his truth, love his service, and desire with their whole hearts to live in obedience to all the precepts of their spiritual King; but others sometimes have been heard to say, if they believed that their eternal destiny was unalterably settled in the purpose and decree of God, they would take a fill of sin. On the whole, a religious education, a constrained, or even voluntary form of godliness may exist where there is no vital relationship to God; where the power and experience of the religion of God is unknown; and what an awful state must that be, where the form of godliness is possessed and the power thereof is denied.

Before we close these remarks, we will observe for the encouragement of some of the trembling lambs of the Redeemer's flock, that the experience of vital religion in the heart is not always attended with an unfaltering and clear evidence of such is the case. We have thought there are no people on earth so exceedingly jealous of the evidences, of their own personal interest in the religion of Jesus, as the children of God are. The reason is obvious; they both see and feel the corruptions of their own natures. Grace has made them sensitive and that which would occasion no pain to a hypocrite, is felt and mourned by an heir of heaven. None can know the experience of vital religion, who do not feel the opposing corruptions of their fleshly nature. This number of the Signs[of the Times; Ed.] may reach the eye of some one of those tried, afflicted, tempted, doubting, and tempest-tossed children of God, who feels almost ready to conclude all former exercises are but delusion. Such a tried, sighing soul may reason thus: If a child of God, why so dull, so stupid so barren and unfruitful? Why so tempted, perplexed, and doubtful? Or why so little of the spirit of grace and of supplication? Why hungering and thirsting for righteousness, never

able to see myself as I would wish to be? Poor soul all this is Christian experience. No Christian escapes these trials of their faith. No graceless hypocrite ever experienced these trials. Therefore, "Count it not strange, as though some strange thing had happened unto you." The trial of your faith is more precious than the trial of gold which perisheth. Therefore count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations for:

"Your God shall make the tempter flee, For as thy days thy strength shall be."

S. Heirship and Eternal, Vital Union

Heirship and Eternal, Vital Union From Signs of the Times -November 1, 1879 Vol 48. by Gilbert Beebe In reading an article in the Gospel Messenger for October, 1879, written by our esteemed brother, Elder T.J. Bazemore, one of the editors and publishers of that periodical, we are led to believe that he has misapprehended the views which are entertained by us, and by those generally who hold the doctrine of the eternal, vital union of Christ and the church, and also of the true basis of the heirship of the sons of God. We do not design to inaugurate a controversy or unpleasant discussion; for widely as we may seem to disagree in our understanding of these subjects, we feel confident that a calm, dispassionate investigation will obviate our seeming discrepancy of views.

If we had not on former occasions fully expressed our convictions on these two cardinal points of the doctrine of Christ, we would feel more hesitancy in entering upon a discussion of the subjects involved; but having frequently presented our views, which we presume brother Bazemore is aware of, we feel called upon to either retract or establish what we have stated, or at least to labor for a more full and clear understanding of each other. Let nothing however that we may write be construed so as to indicate any unfriendly feeling towards the publishers of the Messenger, both of whom we highly esteem and respect.

First. The heirship of the sons of God we have held to be exclusively founded upon their sonship in Christ Jesus, as made known to them by their spiritual birth, in which they receive, not the adoption, but the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry Abba, Father, (Romans 8:15); for in Romans 8:23 of the same chapter we are told that "we who have received the first fruits of the Spirit groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." And in Ephesians 1:13 and Ephesians 1:14, "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, after that ye believed, [or were born again,] ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." In this first chapter to the Ephesians the apostle speaks of our being predestinated to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself; and in the tenth verse he says, "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are in earth, even in him; in 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; that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted &c." The reception of this spirit, by the new birth, is the earnest or certain assurance that the purchased possession [the people redeemed from the family of mankind, which is all the purchased possession of Christ that we have any knowledge of] shall be ultimately disrobed of mortality, and clothed with immortality, after they shall have been changed and fashioned like the glorious body of their risen and glorified Lord. For this adoption we are now waiting and groaning, but for it we are now sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.

If then we have rightly understood the Scriptures on the relationship of sons, that sonship develops a vital relationship to a parent in whom our spiritual vitality existed before it was made manifest by a birth. A birth is not the origin of life, either spiritual or natural; it is the bringing forth a life which existed in the parent before the birth. If life did not exist antecedently to the birth, it never could exist subsequently to the birth. The apostle says, "For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God." And, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." The heirship is thus made to depend on the vital relationship of children; and as the heirship is a joint heirship with Christ, so also must the relationship on which the heirship is predicated be a joint relationship with Christ, for he himself is the life of all who are joint heirs with him. For the life of all the saints is hid with Christ in God. "When Christ who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory," (Colossians 1:3-4). If then our spiritual life, sonship, and joint heirship is so identified with Christ, as the only begotten of the Father, that our life is hid with Christ in God, it is based on what we call Eternal, vital union, and not on the birth either of our flesh or spirit, which develops, but does not originate, the relationship and consequent joint heirship. But brother Bazemore says, "There is a doctrine called eternal, vital union, which is in our view a strange and unscriptural doctrine;" and asks, "How can there be a vital union between the living and the dead? How can there be a vital union between that which is, and that which is not? In a state of nature the sinner is dead in sin, without eternal life, without spiritual vitality or motion; and how, then, can there be any actual, vital union between him and Christ while he is in that state of death and sin? Christ is life, a quickening Spirit; and how can there be any vital union between him and the sinner, while the sinner is dead in sin?"

We have never understood our brethren who hold and contend for the scriptural doctrine of eternal, vital union, to hold that this sacred union of life was given to the children of God in the earthly Adam, nor that it eternally united the two natures of which the children of God are partakers while in the flesh, for neither before, nor after the new birth do we find any union, harmony or agreement between the flesh and the spirit, of which two natures they are partakers; for these are contrary the one to the other, causing a continual warfare in them until their final change shall come, or until death shall be swallowed up of life—until God shall change our vile body, and fashion it like the glorious body of our risen Lord.

We shall not be likely to differ on the simple signification of the words—eternal, vital union. That which had its origin in God the Father, and was given to the body and members of Christ before the world began, must be eternal; and that which the inspired Word of God calls eternal life, must be vital; and that which joins in indissoluble relationship the Head and body of the church of God, we call union. Can this be what our esteemed brother calls philosophy and vain deceit, and of which he warns the saints to beware? Is this doctrine taught in the Bible, and by the Spirit of divine inspiration, or is it only after the traditions of men, and after the rudiments of the world? Let us see. The apostle Paul says, "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life," [Not through the earthly Adam, but] "through Jesus Christ our Lord." When did God give us this eternal life? (Romans 6:23). If eternal life is a spiritual blessing, it was given us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, [not in Adam,] according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, (Ephesians 1:3-4). The most solemnly attested record which the Bible contains, which is borne in heaven by the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, and witnessed in

earth by the Spirit, the water and the blood, which all agree in one, is summed up by the inspired apostle John in these emphatic words, "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." And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life," (1 John 5:7-8, 1 John 5:11-12, 1 John 5:20).

We learn then that the life which was given to the saints as members of the body of Christ, was with and proceeded from God the Father, and was given to them in Christ by the Father, and is, in the unrestricted meaning of the word, absolutely eternal life; not only everlasting, but eternal, without beginning or ending, not created, but begotten of God the Father, and given to all the sons of God in Christ before the foundation of the world, and they all, in their spiritual relation to God in Christ, were sanctified or set apart by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus, and ultimately called by 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," (2 Timothy 1:9).

Some of our brethren have admitted that all this was true in purpose, but was not actually done in eternity, before the world began; but when God has said that all the spiritual blessings in heavenly places were given us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, it seems to us presumptuous to deny that this unspeakable gift involved an act or action of God. We hold that the gift was actually given us in Christ, and safely secured to us in him, just exactly as God has stated it in the words of inspired truth. Christ himself is the life—the eternal life of all his members, and God did actually love them with an everlasting love, and therefore with loving-kindness does he draw them; and no man can come unto Christ except the Father which sent him draw them.

Now let us inquire whether this eternal life or vitality which God has given us in Christ Jesus actually unites Christ, the Head, and his church, the body of Christ; and whether it is an eternal, or only a time union. We do not ask whether this vital union was manifested and experienced by any of us here in the flesh before the world began, for that is not claimed by any. Our life which was given us in the earthly Adam is not that life which is begotten of God, and given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; for if it was, then all mankind would be the children and heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. But all the children of God are children and heirs of God by virtue of being begotten of the eternal Father, and recipients of eternal life in Christ Jesus from everlasting. And of them, as the children of God in Christ, it is said, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he [Christ] also himself likewise took part of the same," (Hebrews 2:14). It was not their partaking of flesh and blood that constituted them children of God, any more than it was Christ's "also likewise [or in like manner] partaking of the same" that constituted him the Son of God. He was as perfectly the Son of God before he partook of flesh and blood, as he was after his assumption of flesh and blood; but his being made flesh, made of a woman, and made under the law, made him manifest as the Son of man, of the seed of David, after the flesh. As his Sonship of the Father was in no sense changed by his partaking of flesh and blood, so neither was the spiritual relationship of his members changed by their partaking of flesh and blood. But his coming in the flesh of which his children are partakers, brought him under the law which they in their earthly nature had transgressed. And thus we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, taking on him, not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham;

not to make him the Son of God, for that he had always been; but as his children in their earthly nature had sinned in the flesh, he took their nature on him, that he might suffer in the flesh, and under the law which they had transgressed, and redeem them unto God by the sacrifice of himself, and rise again from the dead for their justification.

Now, we ask brother Bazemore, if the law of God could have recognized in the blessed Jesus the right to redeem them from its stern, but just demands, if they were not his property before they sinned and fell in the earthly Adam? Our Lord Jesus Christ, as the Son of God and life of his body, the church, is called the “only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth ... and of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace,” (John 1:14, John 1:16). In this chapter John testifies concerning him; “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.” And the same inspired apostle, as we have already shown, in his first epistle, first and fifth chapters, declares that this life which was and is in him, was with the Father, and was manifested, and that God hath given us [his children] eternal life, and this life which God hath given us is in his Son. Let this testimony be admitted, and we think no God-fearing man will deny that this eternal life is eternal vitality, or that this life is a unit. It is one undivided and indivisible life in its nature, because it is hid with Christ in God; and although it extends from the Head of the church to all the members, permeating the entire mystical body of Christ, it cannot be separated from him. For he that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life; consequently it is the unity of Christ the Head with the church as his body, and the fulness of him that filleth all in all. This union of life in Christ Jesus is what we understand our brethren to mean by the words—eternal, vital union; and if it is not so taught in the Scriptures, and in the experience of the saints, we confess that we have read our Bible for almost four score years to but little, if any profit. If it be only philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, then we have long rested upon a fallacious hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.

We are not contending for an eternal, or even a time union, between the flesh and spirit of the children of God and heirs of glory, for such a union has not yet taken place in us. We find no harmony between our flesh and that spirit which we hope and trust we received when we were born of the Spirit; but from that hour when Christ, who is our life, was revealed in us, we have felt most painfully and continuously the warring of our flesh against the spirit, and 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 members. But can this doctrine of vital union of the Head and body of the church, which we have so sweetly enjoyed so many years, now that we are about to lay off our mortal tabernacle, be but a delusive phantom? Have we in melody of heart, in joyful and melting strains, joined with the poet in the delightful theme of his songs;

“Twixt Jesus and the chosen race, Subsists a bond of sovereign grace, That hell, with its infernal train, Can ne'er dissolve or rend in twain.”

Or, “In union with the Lamb; From condemnation free, The saints from everlasting were, And shall forever be. In cov'nant from of old, The sons of God they were; The feeblest lamb in Jesus' fold, Was bless'd in Jesus there. Its bonds shall never break, Tho' earth's old columns bow; The strong,

the tempted, and the weak, Are one in Jesus now.” And this oneness of vital relationship is in Jesus, not in the earthly nature, which has yet to be changed, and fashioned like Christ’s glorious body. Adam, we are told, (Romans 5:14), is the figure of him that was to come. And if there had not been a union of natural life extending to his posterity, his transgression could not have involved them in the condemnation and death that by his offense passed upon all of his undeveloped race. “Therefore, as by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of One, the free gift came upon all men to justification of life. For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous.” As in Adam, who is the figure of Christ, God made of one blood [or life] all the nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation, &c., (Acts 22:26), so that eternal life which is begotten and born of God, which was given to the heirs of God in Christ their Head, is one life—a unit, and not a plurality of lives. It was given to them in the Son of God, as the same eternal life which was with the Father, and is the same in all the members of the body of Christ. It is in Christ, and it is Christ. He says, “I am the resurrection and the life,” (John 11:25). “I am the way, the truth, and the life,” (John 14:6). “I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me,” (Galatians 2:20). “For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain,” (Php 1:21). “Set your affections 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 3:2-4).

These scriptures, if we rightly understand them, prove two important propositions; first, that our life which is in Christ Jesus is eternal life, or vitality; and secondly, that this eternal life, being in Christ as the Son of God, and with him hid in God from everlasting, is a unit of life; and Christ, who is our life, although living in all his members, is not divided. As there is but one Head of the church, so there is but one body belonging to that one Head. “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, and one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all,” (Ephesians 4:4-6). The apostle speaks of those who would beguile the saints, by “not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands, having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God,” (Colossians 2:19). Our natural life, on which death has passed by reason of sin, was given us in that Adam which is of the earth, earthy; but our spiritual—eternal life was given to us and securely preserved for us in that Adam which is the Lord from heaven. Our natural or earthly life began when man became a living soul; but our life which is in Christ Jesus is as ancient as eternity, for it is eternal life, and has its origin in God. Therefore that life which is born of the flesh is born of corruptible seed, and is mortal. But they who are the subjects of regeneration and the new birth, are born of God, of an incorruptible seed, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever; and they are a “chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people.” And, “Now are they the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what they shall be; but we know that when he [Christ] shall appear they shall be like him;” for God has predestinated those whom he did foreknow to be conformed to the image of his dear Son, that he may be the first-born among many brethren, (1 John 3:2; Romans 8:29). In the vital unity of this eternal life, between the Head and body of the church, Christ is not ashamed to call his members brethren; for in his Mediatorial relation to them he claims them as his body, his flesh, and his bones.

“Hail, sacred union, firm and strong, How great the grace! How sweet the song! That worms of earth should ever be, One with incarnate Deity.”

Again we will assure brother Bazemore, that notwithstanding the seeming difference in our views on the doctrine of the eternal, vital union of Christ and his body, the church, and the basis of the heirship of the saints, we esteem him as a beloved brother in Christ; and we have read many of his articles in the Gospel Messenger for the year past with pleasure, and this is the first we have noticed from his able pen from which we seriously dissent. And we hope and believe that on more mature consideration of the subject, he will greatly modify the doom to which he has [we think unintentionally] consigned us, together with a very large majority of the Old School or Primitive Baptists of our acquaintance, who hold the doctrine of eternal, vital union as the very foundation of our hope of that inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and which cannot fade away.

S. Incarnation of the Children of God

Incarnation of the Children of God From Signs of the Times—September 15, 1856 Vol.24. by Gilbert Beebe With a consciousness of the magnitude of the subject involved, and of our incompetency to elucidate the subject so as to remove all darkness or doubt from the contemplation of it, we propose to submit such views as we have, to the consideration of all who feel an interest in the investigation of a subject which is so profound as to excite the admiration of angels, and so boundless as to mock every human essay to comprehend its limit. The incarnation of our blessed Redeemer is, without controversy, a great mystery. “God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory, (1 Timothy 3:16); and yet the participation of the children of God of flesh and blood, and the incarnation of the Son of God, are placed on the same ground, and based upon the same principle, by the inspired apostle in his epistle to the Hebrews: “Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same,” (Hebrews 2:14). To our mind, this text is a key to the subject, so far as we may be favored with the Spirit’s teaching to enlighten us on the subject. So far, therefore, as we can comprehend the mystery of godliness in the one case, we have an illustration of it in reference to the other. When we read that Christ is come in the flesh, that the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and that he also likewise took part of the same flesh and blood of which his children are partakers, we very naturally and unavoidably infer that he had an identity and did exist as the Son of God, as the Head, Life and Immortality of his body, the church, before he partook of flesh and blood; and that his participation of the same was not to make him the Son of God, nor to make him the life and immortality of his church [for he was their Head and Life before]; but he took part of the same for the purpose which is distinctly stated in the text, namely, 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. That Christ did so exist before his advent, is so fully established by Scripture testimony, that but few have the audacity to deny it. But whether denied or admitted by men, the matter is settled in the divine testimony, “But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son,” (Galatians 4:4). He had a Son to send, and he was a Son before he was sent, when he was sent, and shall continue to be the Son of God after he shall have delivered up the kingdom unto the Father, and the Son, as such, shall be subject to him that hath put all things under him, that God may be all in all, (1 Corinthians 15:28). “Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things,” (Ephesians 4:9-10).

It being established that Christ did exist, not only as God, but also as the Son of God, the only begotten of the Father, and as the first-born, and before all things, and at the appointed time, when the fulness of that time had come, he was sent forth, and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us; so the doctrine of the incarnation of his children, together with that of their previous existence in him, is exemplified. They were created in him, chosen in him, preserved in him, saved and called, according to the purpose and grace which was given them in him before the world

began. And all spiritual blessings [past, present, or to come, that the saints ever have, or ever will or can enjoy] were given them according as God hath chosen them in him before the foundation of the world, (Ephesians 1:3-4). Their spiritual, eternal life was given them in Christ before the world began, as their earthly, fleshly life was given them in the earthly Adam, in time. 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," (1 John 5:11-12).

We now pass to consider the development of these relations. These children in Christ were, in the matchless wisdom of God, destined to partake of the life of the natural Adam. This participation, however, had nothing to do in making them the children of God, any more than the incarnation of Christ had in constituting him the Son of God; for the relationship of sons or children was, as we have proved, as perfect before, as subsequently to that participation. The two headships were, according to the counsel of God, to be developed. The first, in the order of time, was that Adam which is of the earth; the second, is that Adam, or seminal head, which is the Lord from heaven. The one is natural, the other is spiritual. In the creation of the earthly Adam we have the creation of all that constitutes the outward man, or earthly bodies of the children of God; and the reception by them of this earthly nature is that wherein they are made partakers of flesh and blood. This, of which they were to partake in Adam, was provided for them in his creation, marked and identified in the foreknowledge, predestination and election by which they were chosen and ordained to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the great pleasure of his will.

Viewed now in either headship, they were the chosen and peculiar people of God. And as there was a fixed period when the Son of God should take upon him the seed of Abraham, or in other words, when also himself should likewise partake of flesh and blood, so there was and is an appointed time when the spiritual, eternal life which was given to the saints shall be made manifest in them personally and individually, and when they shall be born of the Spirit, of an incorruptible seed, by the word of the Lord, which is immortal. In the exemplification of this by the incarnation of Christ, we have to consult the inspired record. The explanation of the angel Gabriel, who was sent from God to a city of Galilee, unto the virgin Mary, is clearly in point. The inquiry of the virgin Mary embraced the mystery: How can that spiritual, eternal life which God gave his people before the world was, become identified with that natural, earthly life which he gave them in the earthly Adam? To which Gabriel replies, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God," (Luke 1:35).

So, after this example, that life by which God's people were identified in Christ before all time, is implanted in those persons, by which God's chosen people were identified in the earthly Adam. The Holy Ghost comes upon them, and the power of the Highest overshadows them. The incorruptible seed, not by the agency of man, but by the word of the Lord, which liveth and abideth forever, implants in them that spiritual, eternal life which was and is hid with Christ in God, by which is given to them "power to become [manifestly] the sons of God;" and they are "born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," (John 1:13). That body which Christ assumed when he was made of a woman, was a body prepared for him, and he adopted it, or in other words, took it on him, and thus became a partaker of the same flesh and blood that his children are partakers of; in that adopted or assumed body he suffered death; that body was laid in the grave, [but saw no corruption] was raised up from the dead, and finally ascended up into

heaven, a spiritual, immortal body. And so these earthly bodies of his saints are predestinated to the adoption of children, and have received the spirit of adoption, or implantation of the Spirit, and are sealed unto the day of redemption. Yet, even we who have received the first-fruits of the Spirit [in receiving the spirit of adoption] even we ourselves do groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. "But if the Spirit 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, Romans 8:33; Eph. 6:30). "Now this I say unto you, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption," (1 Corinthians 15:50). But though there is no flesh and blood heirship securing to us an incorruptible inheritance of glory, these adopted bodies from the Adamic stock shall be changed by the Spirit of him that raised up Christ from the dead; and this spirit of adoption shall quicken the mortal bodies in the resurrection of them from the dead, and they shall put on incorruption and immortality, and mortality shall be swallowed up of life. That life which is born of God requires no adoption, for it was never out of the family; it was always identified with Christ, who is our life; but that which is to be raised up from the dead, being alienated, must be made nigh, and brought by adoption into the family of God. "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me," (Galatians 2:20). As Adam is our natural life, and in him, and in all that is Adam [which includes all that is born of the flesh,] we all die, so Christ is our life, our immortality, and in him we live. "I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness," (Psalms 17:15). "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though, after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me," (Job 19:25-27). "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; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure," (1 John 3:2-3). The subject contemplated in the foregoing remarks is by no means exhausted; it is rich, boundless and glorious; it involves the ground of our hope for heaven and an incomputable inheritance. If what we have suggested shall be blessed to the edification and comfort of any of the lambs of our Redeemer's fold, we shall not have labored in vain. Let the readers compare what is written, with the divine standard. What is not sustained by the Scriptures reject; but see that ye reject not what the testimony of God sustains. And may the Lord give you understanding in all things, for the Redeemer's sake; so prays one who claims to be the chief of sinners, and less than the least of all saints.

S. Intercession

Intercession Sign of the Times - January 15, 1859. From Signs of the Times—January 15, 1869. by Gilbert Beebe 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 anything 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 mine; and I am glorified in them," (John 17:4-10). 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, indicted 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 him.” 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.

S. Invitation of the Gospel?

Invitation of the Gospel? by Gilbert Beebe New Vernon, N. Y., July 15, 1846

MUCH is said about them, and spirited controversy is often raised in deciding whether they are made to the world indiscriminately or only to the children of God. Few have paused to inquire at the sacred oracle, whether there be invitations of any kind in the gospel or not. If there are invitations in the gospel, where are they? What are they? And unto whom are they addressed? These are questions which naturally enough arise, and which the reader may feel but little doubt that he is able to answer satisfactorily; but before he attempts the task let him duly consider what it is that constitutes an invitation. Take for example any message that God has ever communicated to man, whether in the law or in the gospel, and to make of it an invitation, the compliance with the message must rest entirely on the volition of the person or persons addressed. Nothing beyond the simple issuing of the invitation can depend on the will of him from whom it proceeds. Is this the case in regard to any thing which God has spoken in the gospel? Or has God in any case in the law or in the gospel sent a message concerning the result of which his will has nothing to do? Impossible; for he "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," and it is God that worketh in his children, both to will and to do according to his good pleasure. The difference between a call or command, and an invitation, may be illustrated thus: A man may say to his neighbor, "Will you oblige me with your company," &c. Here it is plain to see that the will of the individual alone is to determine whether the other party shall be gratified. But if a magistrate issues his warrant or summons, and in the name of the people of the state or nation commands the immediate attendance or personal appearance of a person, the will of the summoned person is not consulted, and therefore the message is not an invitation, but a summons with authority. Even the character of a message expressed in the same words takes the form of an invitation or a command, according to the will that governs it. A man may say, Come unto me, all ye that thirst, and I will give you drink. This would be an invitation, because the man supposed to give the invitation has no power to compel a compliance; all the power to determine is with the person addressed. But when God speaks the word, it stands fast; when he commands, it is done. His words are clothed with omnipotent power, as when he commanded, saying, "Let there be light." He did not invite light, for no will but his own was consulted, and he said, Let it be, and it was. Jesus our Lord did not invite Lazarus to come forth from his grave, although the same words, if spoken to a living person and left optional with such person, whether to comply or not, would have been but an invitation; but, spoken as they were by Christ, and addressed to one who had neither power to will nor to do, could imply nothing like invitation. When Jesus stood and cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink," he no more invited the thirsty, than he invited the light when he said, Let there be light. In the first place there is not a soul on the earth that does or can thirst for the living waters which flow from him, until he quickens it, and makes it thirst, and when made to feel its thirst, and even when the tongue faileth for thirst, it can no more approach the living fountain than it can make a world, until Jesus applies, not the invitation, but the word, "Come unto me." His words are spirit and they are life; and his sheep hear them, and they know his voice, and they

follow him; because they have no power or even disposition to resist their Shepherd's voice. The calling of the saints is no where in the scriptures denominated an invitation. he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. If he only invited them they would have to get out themselves, or stay behind. But when he calls, the dead hear his voice (not his invitation,) and they that hear shall live. How would it suit the condition of a poor, lost, helpless soul, one that feels his poverty, inability and impotence, to read the word thus: The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall be invited to live, and they who accept the invitation shall live. And when he inviteth forth his own sheep he goeth before them, provided they accept the invitation. It is perfectly in keeping with every feature of arminianism for workmongers to talk of invitations of the gospel, because the very term implies the willing and the doing power to be in the creature. But it is neither in harmony with the doctrine or experience of the saints of God to so speak of his communications to them as to imply that he has yielded up the government to them; that he has hinged the effect and result of his communications on their will instead of his own will. It is derogatory to his character, it reflects on his wisdom, power, and grace, and the term should be expunged from the vocabulary of Bible Baptists.

S. Invitations of the Gospel

INVITATIONS OF THE GOSPEL The Preceding writings are from the March 1, 1863 edition of the publication "Signs of the Times" founded and published for over 45 years by Elder Gilbert Beebe. by Gilbert Beebe

We have received a communication from the north, over the signature, "A Friend of Truth," desiring our views in regard to what are called the invitations of the gospel; whether they are addressed indiscriminately to sinners or exclusively to the quickened children of God. We learn from the letter that some of our esteemed brethren are differing seriously on the subject. Such passages as Matthew 11:28-30: "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," etc. "Many are called, but few are chosen." The marriage of the king's son: "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Also the first and eighth of Proverbs. Some brethren take the position that these are invitations to sinners indiscriminately, and others contend that these are invitations addressed only to the children of God. In giving our views we beg leave to differ, very respectfully, however, from both parties. We deny that there are any invitations, either in the law or gospel, to saints or sinners. We think that a little reflection on the subject will satisfy all honest inquirers after truth that it would be altogether incompatible with the eternal perfections of Jehovah to issue invitations to any of His creatures.

First: We will remark that none of the communications from God to men are anywhere in the Bible called invitations, and it is therefore speculative and idle to argue theologically a position or question which has no scriptural foundation, and therefore, like the endless genealogies and questions about the law, which the apostle warns us against, is only calculated to gender strife, but cannot edify or comfort the family of God.

Second: An invitation is a complimentary request or message from a party having, and claiming to have, no authority to enforce the request, or message, which concedes to the party invited the undisputed right to respectfully decline the invitation, leaving it entirely optional with the party invited to accept or decline without transcending his right.

Third: All those who have been brought to a saving knowledge of God will admit that He speaks the word, and it stands fast; He commands and it is done. "Where the word of a king is, there is power," and God is the King eternal, and the word that proceeds from Him shall not return unto Him void of the work whereunto He hath sent it. Even the carnal Jews perceived that our Redeemer spake as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Should the writer of these remarks receive a card of invitation from the President of these States, or from the Governor of New York, the fact of its being an invitation guarantees the right to accept or decline without involving a wrong or a crime in doing either. But should either the President or Governor, as chief magistrate of the nation or the State, send an authoritative message to any citizen, summoning him to be or appear at any place, that message would be clothed with all the authority and power of the magistrate from whom it issues; but it could not be regarded as an invitation, because it does not concede to the party to whom it is addressed any right to decline or disobey its authority.

Will any of our brethren contend that when the God of heaven peremptorily says to the seed of Israel, "seek ye my face," that they have a right to disobey or regard it only as a mere invitation? If He says to them, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else," does this imply that the people thus addressed have the same right to decline it as an invitation to obey it as a sovereign mandate from the throne of God? Since God has commanded men to look to him for salvation, have they a right to look anywhere else for that salvation? If there be any authority implied in the address it destroys the nature of the invitation. Indeed, we cannot, without detracting from a proper sense of the eternal power and majesty of Jehovah, entertain the preposterous idea that He deals in invitations to any of His creatures in heaven, earth or hell. All His words are big with power and high in authority; He worketh all things after the counsel of His own will, and submits nothing to the volition of any of His creature's wills. But in regards to the passages referred to, they bear the impress of His divine authority; they can none of them be disregarded or disobeyed. The passage referred to, Isaiah 45:22 is a sovereign command to the seed of Jacob scattered to the ends of the earth, to look to Him for salvation, because He is God, and beside Him there is no Savior. All who looked anywhere else, or to any other being, or to themselves, for salvation, were not only guilty of disobedience, but also of idolatry. The passage, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden," etc. is sufficiently clear and explicit. It is addressed to all who labor and are heavy laden, and to no others; and whenever and wherever these words are applied by the Holy Spirit to any poor, laboring, heavy laden sinner, that sinner will as surely come to Jesus as it is sure that the dead will rise when the voice of God calls them forth. The dead neither labor nor are they heavy laden, they slumber unconsciously in their graves; and all men are dead in sin, and as destitute of spiritual vitality until they are quickened by the Spirit, as the body of Lazarus was of natural life before Jesus raised him from the grave. But as soon as a sinner is quickened by the Holy Ghost he becomes a laborer, and is burdened with a heavy weight of guilt, and such are called to Jesus and find rest to their souls in bearing His yoke, which is easy, and His burden, which is light. To take the yoke of Jesus is to come under His law, to be baptized in His name and be yoked together in communion and fellowship with His disciples in all the privileges of the church of God. But are the unregenerated called to be baptized and identify themselves with the church of God? Philip did not so understand it when he said to the Eunuch, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest," (Acts 8:37). None but believers are called or commanded to be baptized and come under the yoke of Jesus, for they must first be delivered from the yoke of Moses, the yoke of bondage. In Matthew 20:16, in the conclusion of the parable of the householder and his hired laborers for his vineyard, Jesus used these words, "so the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen." There was murmuring among some of the disciples; the sons of Zebedee desired distinguished places in the kingdom and some said, "We have forsaken all," etc. "What shall we receive?" The parable was to rebuke this selfish principle, and to show not only the right of our Lord to choose from the whole company of His called children whom He pleased, to labor in His vineyard, but also to reward them equally. Those who had labored the most or the longest were amply rewarded, but Jesus chose to make those who had labored least, equal with those who had borne the heat and toil of the day.

Again in Matthew 22:14, the same words are used at the end of the parable of the marriage of the king's son. The application was made to the Jewish nation, which had been called as the carnal or fleshly descendants of Abraham, and under the covenant of works. God, by the prophets, had

informed them of the approaching marriage. In the type they were bidden to the marriage, but in the election of grace they were not the chosen people of God. As the apostle Paul explains, "For they are not all Israel. which are of Israel: neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, the children of the promise are counted for the seed." (Romans 9:6-8) Although the whole nation of Israel was called in the type, or shadow of good things which were to come, how very few of them were found to be included in the covenant of grace. Esias, also cried concerning Israel, "Though the number of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved," (Romans 9:27). "What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election [or the few chosen] hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded," (Romans 11:7).

We have not time nor space to enlarge on these parables, but it is sufficient for us to demonstrate that there are none called by grace but the chosen people of God, whose salvation is fully secured in our Lord Jesus Christ. "For whom He [God] did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn 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). In this calling none but the predestinated are called, and all who are called are justified and ultimately glorified. They are saved and called with a holy calling, not according to their works, but according to His own [God's own] purpose and grace which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began, (2 Timothy 1:9). To prove, therefore, that they are the called according to God's purpose, is to prove that they love God; that all things work together for their own good; that they are predestinated to bear the image of the Son of God; that they are justified and glorified in Christ. The passages, therefore, which speak of many being called, do not, nay, they cannot possibly relate to this holy calling in which Christ, the good shepherd, calls His own sheep by name and leads them out. For in this calling, the dead shall hear His voice, and they that hear shall live. (John 5:25) The promise of God is unto "all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call," (Acts 2:39). The declaration of Christ to the self-righteous Jews that He had not come to call or save righteous people, but to call sinners to repentance, does not admit of the construction that He had come to call all the sinners of Adam's race to repentance, for millions of them had already left these mortal shores. The Pharisees upbraided him for associating with publicans and sinners, and He told them that this was His business in the world, to save sinners. The whole did not need a physician, nor did the righteous need one to save and purge them from sin.

Proverbs 1:1-33 is also referred to as favoring the doctrine of invitations, etc. But an examination of the Proverbs of Solomon will show that Solomon personifies Wisdom; and Wisdom, we are told, is justified of her children. In a spiritual sense, Christ is the Wisdom of God to His children. He is of God made unto them wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption. But wisdom, abstractly considered, is the opposite of folly and madness. As rational beings, we disobey the maxims or proverbs of wisdom when we transgress her dictates; and wisdom will laugh at us in our calamities, into which we foolishly plunge ourselves, and mock us when our fear cometh. The voice of wisdom is loud in her reproofs when we rush heedlessly into trouble. But the wisdom of God is only known to those who are made wise unto salvation, through faith, which is in Christ Jesus.

Brethren should be careful to avoid any interpretation of the Scriptures which will clash with other plain declarations of the inspired word. We may fail to comprehend or understand some portions of

the divine testimony, but our ignorance will not justify us in forcing interpretations which must necessarily conflict with the teachings of the word and the Spirit of the Lord. If our views are right, both the word and the Spirit will harmonize with our views, but if we entertain opinions or views which the Scriptures do not so justify, they must be discarded as wrong and pernicious. Now, in conclusion, we will reiterate to our legally inclined brethren of the north the appeal which the great apostle to the Gentiles made to the bewitched Galatians: "This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" (Galatians 3:2-3). Review your own experiences, see if in your own salvation you only accepted an invitation and availed yourself of it to secure your acceptance with God, or were you awakened to a sensibility of your guilt, lost and helpless condition by the irresistible and almighty power of God? Was it left optional with you to decide whether you would live or die, when the arrows of the Almighty you were arrested and arraigned before the bar of eternal justice? Why did you there cry, "Lord, save, I perish?" Why did you not say, "Lord, I will accept thy invitation."

S. It Is Finished!

It is Finished! by Gilbert Beebe WHEN the beloved Son of God hung on the accursed tree,— when his soul was poured out unto death, when frightened rocks were burst asunder, the heavens in sackcloth were veiled, when the rugged bars of death were loosed, and tombs of marble resigned their sleeping tenants, when by the rending of the veil of the temple the ark, and cherubims, and mercy seat were all disclosed, while, nerved with malice, Jews and Bomans mocked, while racking pains and most tormenting smarts were inflicted on that blessed Lamb who bore our sins, when justice drew its flaming sword, and vengeance struck the dreadful blow, when hell exulting in her hour of darkness, amidst the awihi grandeur of that dreadful scene, the voice of triumph, from the expiring Saviors lips shook the creation to its very centre; stern death, in dreadful terror clad, affrighted, paused and felt the thunder of that voice which in all the power and majesty of the eternal God-head shouted, “It is finished.” With due humility and that reverence which becomes the ransomed of the Lord, let us inquire what was finished. From the sacred record of eternal truth we learn that all was finished that the glorious Mediator had began; love was not finished, for the love of God had no beginning. Election and predestination, with all the perfection’s of Jehovah which shine forth in the economy of salvation were not finished, for these were without beginning, and can never, never end. But something was certainly finished by the Savior when he in triumph gave the victorious shout; nor has our Lord left this important subject in the clark. “He who runs may read.” “He finished transgression, made an end of sin,” &c. He himself has declared that ho has finished the work that his Father gave him to do. We eagerly inquire, what then was the work that his Father gave him to do? The Son of God responds, I come to do thy will, O God. I am come to do the will of my Father who sent me, and to finish the work. And this is the will of him that sent me, that of all that he has given me I should lose nothing; but should raise them up at the last day. And the Father has given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him. A shining messenger from the world of glory came down from heaven to earth, to announce the work that Jesus was to perform, viz: “His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.” He finished the redemption of his people agreeably to the prediction of the Psalmist: “The redemption of the soul is precious, and it ceaseth forever.”

First. He has finished the redemption of his people, and it ceaseth forever.

Second. He has finished, or made an end of sin, as far as it relates to those he represented.

Third. He finished the law as far as relates to its demands in reference to the election of grace, and the fulfillment of its divine requisitions. “Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfill. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but one jot or tittle of the law shall not pass until all is fulfilled. He is the end of the law for righteousness unto every one that believes.

Fourth. He has finished transgressions; for his blood cleanseth from all sin. He has given himself for his church, that he might redeem it from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.

Fifth. He has finished the curse, having borne our sins in his own body on the tree; and being made a curse for us, as it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.

Sixth. He has finished the covenant of works, having blotted out the handwriting of ordinances which were against us, nailing them to the cross.

Seventh. He has finished the work of making sacrifices for Sin. "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sin."

Eighth. He has given a finishing stroke to the perfection of his people, for by one offering he has perfected forever them that are sanctified.

Ninth. He has finished death, having destroyed death and him that had the power of death, which is the devil.

Tenth. He finished the work of his sufferings, being now baptized with that baptism for which he was straitened until it was accomplished. When deep called unto deep, and the billows of divine wrath went over him; deep waters came into his soul.

Eleventh. He finished the complete pattern which he set for his children to walk in. Let no presumptuous wretch dare attempt to change the pattern of the things in heaven.

Finally, he has completely finished all that was written of him in the law, in the prophets, and in the psalms; and all that was necessary to secure the eternal salvation and justification of his people, and left them to challenge wicked men and devils, to declare, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; It is Christ that died. He was wounded for their transgression; he was bruised for their iniquities, and the chastisement of their peace was upon him; then with his stripes they are healed. He sees of the travail of his soul, and is satisfied.

Reflection. Is it finished? Or, is something remaining to be done by the redeemed, in order to secure the blessed objects of the death of Christ? If something remains to be done, whether it be using means, or giving our hearts to God, or our money to modern institutions, or sitting on anxious benches, or anything else, much or little, then is the work not finished, and the words of the expiring Lamb of God are contradicted. But be assured, dying reader, whatever relative duties are enjoined on the disciples of Christ, there is among them nothing to be added to the finished work of the Redeemer—nothing to render his redemption efficient, or effectual, or to extend its benefits to any for whom God did not eternally intend it; so far indeed from it, all the good works of the people of God are the immediate result of the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing can be added to or taken from the work which Christ finished when he yielded up the ghost and bowed his head unto death. "It ceaseth forever."

Here then the Old School Baptists find a sure foundation to build upon, and hence we preach Christ crucified, and proclaim a finished salvation in his worthy name—a salvation completely suited to the case of the poor, the needy, the halt, the lame and the blind; a salvation suited to the condition of every hungry, starving soul, who by grace is made to feel his wretchedness, and mourn his sins; but by no means suited to the ease of the whole, who need no physician. The pharisees of eighteen hundred years ago, rejected this finished work, and from that day to the present it stands rejected, despised, opposed and slandered by all the work-mongers who have flourished in our sinful world. But tell us, reader, how do you view the perfect work and finished

salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ, for be assured if you despise this doctrine you are yet in your sins; but if you love the doctrine and can feed on it, you are not far from the kingdom.

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S. Joshua the High Priest

Joshua the High Priest From Signs of the Times—June 15, 1867.

“Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel.” Zechariah 3:3 by Gilbert Beebe

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 rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of the peace shall be between them both,” (Joshua 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 arch angel, when contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses... said, The Lord rebuke thee." 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."

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.

S. Keeping the Heart

Keeping the Heart From Signs of the Times—March 15, 1869. by Gilbert Beebe

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, yours, 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; so the heart is used figuratively to illustrate the seat and center of human affections, thoughts, passions, desires, hopes, resolutions, &c., as all flowing 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 reasoning 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," &c., 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, (1 Corinthians 2:1-16). 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, &c., 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, &c. 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 outflowings 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.

S. Loosed from the Law Rom_7:2

Loosed from the Law Romans 7:2 Signs of the Times—October 15, 1869. by Gilbert Beebe

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 know 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," (Romans 7:6). "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," (Romans 7:4). 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," (Romans 7:3). 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.

S. Ministerial Education

Ministerial Education “When Greek meets Greek, then comes the tug of war.” From Signs of the Times—February 1, 1844 by Gilbert Beebe The writer of a circular upon the subject of Ministerial Education, published in the Michigan Christian Herald, by the committee of the State Convention, makes use of the above quotation, in showing up what he conceives to be the necessity of making the Baptist ministry familiar with the Greek language, in order that they may compete successfully with their learned opponents of other denominations. How various and discordant are the reasons assigned by the advocates of a man-made ministry, for their preference of human above divine qualifications for the ministry. At one time we are told that our version of the scriptures is so imperfect, that a thorough knowledge of the original text is indispensably necessary in order to produce unanimity of sentiment; and to know the original text we must of course understand the languages in which they were at first written, to wit: the Hebrew and the Greek: and not infrequently in the same treatise we are told that they have to contend with learned critics, and therefore we must meet them Greek to Greek, and Hebrew to Hebrew, or we cannot do them battle. Now both of these arguments cannot be good for the purposes intended, even if either or both of them could be established in point of truth: but we propose to show that neither of these positions are tenable. A collegiate or classical education never has led to unanimity of sentiment, or we should not find, as now we do, giants of literature distributed among almost every religious sect in existence. So far to the reverse of this, there are very few religious sects, heresies, or speculations, which may not be traced back to some profoundly learned man. We might here name a catalogue of them, such as Luther, Calvin, Cromwell, Wesley, Priestly, Gill, Fuller, &c. Why so much discord among these worldly wise men if much learning tends to unanimity? If a thorough knowledge of the original language in which the scriptures were written, will enable men more readily to understand these scriptures, why were not the Jews, who understood their own language, the first to understand what the prophets had written? And why was the gospel, as preached by Paul and his brethren in the primitive church, foolishness to the Greeks? The truth is, the gospel of Jesus Christ is, at this day, as great a stumbling block, and as great foolishness to our Hebrew and Greek scholars, generally speaking, as it was in the apostolic day to the Jews and Greeks; because it has seemed good, in the sight of God, to hide these things from the wise and prudent, and to reveal them unto babes. No man can therefore admit that the scriptures are truth, without denying that human wisdom or education can assist its possessors to understand, from the scriptures, the things of the Spirit; things which can be known only as they are spiritually understood, by a spiritual people, or a people born of the Spirit of God.

Neither is human erudition the armor in which the battles of the Lord are to be fought; for then would God have chosen the mighty, the learned, the wise, the noble, and the great; but this the apostle expressly declares was not the case. Paul was himself a learned man, but his learning did not make him acquainted with the spirituality of the scriptures, for he was not taught it but by revelation. When it pleased God, who separated him from his mother’s womb, to reveal his Son in him, straightway he conferred not with flesh and blood; and his speech and his preaching was not

in the language which man's wisdom teacheth; that the faith of his brethren should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

Examine the history of the church of God in all ages of the world, and tell us, if it be true, that the cause of truth has been defended by the learned and wise of this world. In what college did Moses, and Aaron, and Joshua, and Sampson, and Gideon, and Daniel graduate? What were the classics of David and of all the prophets of our God? In what seminary did John the Baptist study Latin and Greek; and what human training caused him to leap at the salutation of the Virgin Mary? What was the education of the apostles of the Lamb of God? In what chapter of holy writ are we informed, that, when the foes of Zion perceived that the apostles were learned men, they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus? So far as divine revelation extends, the testimony of Paul is sustained, that God has chosen the foolish and weak things of this world, to confound the wise. This was not from necessity, but choice: for God was as able, if it had been his pleasure, to call learned men as fools to the work; but that would not show that the excellency of the cause was of God. A bad cause may often be made to appear very plausible when defended by the eloquence and the talent of the learned and the mighty; but when the learned and the mighty are driven from the field by the unlearned, the artless and the simple, the excellency of the cause is made more prominently to appear.

Now let us review the retrospect we have taken of the history of the children of God, and inquire who have uniformly been the enemies of the truth of God? On this branch of sacred history, let the modern disciples of Gamaliel feast their vanity. All the magicians who opposed the word of the Lord by Moses were learned men! All the astrologers: and soothsayers of Babylon were men of education! All the prophets who were fed at Jezebel's table were learned at the expense of the crown. The scribes, the Pharisees, and Sadducees, who constantly opposed and persecuted the Son of God, were all learned men. Pilate, who condemned to be cruelly scourged, insulted, and crucified, one in whom he could find no guile, was able to write a superscription to, place above the head of Zion's King, in Hebrew, Latin and in Greek, where human literature, when religiously employed is generally placed. An orator of distinguished talent was, hired to impeach an apostle of the Lord Jesus, before Felix, the Roman governor, and learned men have flourished among the principal pagan, papal, and Protestant persecutors of the people of God, from that time to the present. In what part of divine revelation is the church of God taught to trust the defense of the cause to the learning and the talent of men? Is it where God has said, "Cursed is man that trusteth in man, or maketh flesh his arm?" The people of God shall dwell as towns without walls; for God himself shall be a wall of fire round about them, and they shall glory in their midst. And is not our God a sufficient refuge for his people? He is our shield, our defense, our strong tower, and our avenger. Are we not safe without the armor of Saul? "Walk about Zion, tell her towers, consider her palaces, and mark well her bulwarks, that ye may tell it to the generations to come." He is indeed our hiding place, our covert from the storm, and he is unto us as rivers of water in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. The place of Zion's defense is the invincible munitions of rocks; the eternal God is her refuge, and underneath are, the everlasting arms. He rideth upon the heavens in her help, and in his excellency on the sky. Who is like unto thee, O Israel, a people saved by the Lord? But it is said, "When Greek meets Greek, then comes the tug of war." The perversion of this motto, from its original application to Grecian chivalry, to make it apply to the lily-fingered and effeminate production of modern academies and colleges is no greater than the

perversions which such writers usually make of the scriptures when they take occasion to refer to them. It would be curious enough to witness the tug of war when the aristocracy of religious learning compare their notes. How often they have been called into the field like horses trained for the turf, or like game cocks, to contend for some premium offered for a tract. There have we seen Greek to Greek, and there the tug of war. Greek has met Greek at the Congress Hall, at the commencement of almost every session to contend for the chaplaincy, and there have we witnessed the tug of war. Where rich congregations, splendid meeting houses, and heavy salaries have been in the market, there has been a tug of war; there Greek and Greek have dressed themselves (not in thunder, but) in smoke, and fought with zeal worthy of a nobler cause. High offices of honor, trust, and emolument, in voluntary religious associations, fat missionary fields, and lucrative agencies have often brought Greek to Greek and there has been the tug of war. But when have men, distinguished for their literary attainments, been assembled for the defense of the doctrine of divine sovereignty, against the attacks of Arminian work-mongers? When and where have they ever been known to advocate unpopular truth against popular error? Reader, have you ever seen the powers of darkness rally against the little flock of Jesus? Have you seen them in deadly strife? Then have you marked on the part of Apollyon a collection of wealth, talent and learning; and on the part of Zion, the poor, the obscure, the unlearned, and the unpopular. On the one side you have seen the Davids, and the Goliaths on the other. Those on the one side boasting in human power, and ability, and learning, and those of the other, discarding all confidence in the flesh, and in the name of their God, setting up their banner. The help which the church of God derives from State Conventions, Education Societies, and other humanly devised worldly religious institutions, is very similar to the aid which the cause of truth has been favored with by popish inquisitions, racks, tortures, gibbets, flames and fagots, for the extermination of heretics and heresy. From all such helps every devoted soul shall pray, "Lord, deliver us." In reference to the pretended object of the Michigan Baptist State Convention, in calling for money to make Greeks of those agonizing young men whom, they say, are panting to do good, and whose souls burn within them to preach the gospel, and who are so inflammable and likely to be burnt up, as to extort from the convention the pathetic cry, "Brethren shall we let the internal fires consume them?" In reference, we say, to the object of the convention it is the most flimsy and hypocritical that we have ever heard of, viz.: to defend the Baptist denomination from the learned trickery of the Pedo Baptists, and thus to keep up our denominational distinction, &c. Is there a rational being in our country who does not know that the greatest pretenders to learning among the Baptists, are invariably among the very first to join affinity with the leading spirits of antagonistical denominations? Are not the leading actors in all the worldly institutions of our times, such as National Bible, Missionary, Tract, Sabbath School, Abolition and total Abstinence Societies, in which the various ring-streaked and speckled professed denominations are united with the world, educated men? Do not those Baptist preachers who have learned the science at college, interchange with preachers of the Methodists, Presbyterians, and other opposite denominations, following around, and hailing them as brethren, and paying more respect to one of them than to a dozen of the poor brethren of the Baptist order? It cannot be denied; and yet they have the affrontery to ask us to educate their beneficiaries, in order to defend the distinguishing points on which we differ from our neighbors. Who by learning the Latin or Greek language can better understand that Christ's kingdom is not of this world, and that the subjects of his government are required to become a separate and distinct people? Who that has been taught of God, and can

read the English version of the New Testament, needs a Greek Lexicon to define the language that enjoins on all who love our Lord, to follow him in baptism? Our version of the scriptures has been scrutinized by the best linguists of all the conflicting denominations, and the result of all their criticisms is before us, in plain English. Where then is the necessity of spending our time and the people's money, to acquire a knowledge of the dead languages? If these sprigs of scholastic divinity, who study the science of sermonizing at colleges and theological schools, were qualified to do all their preaching in the Greek language, their hearers generally would not be profited by it. It is all a mistake to suppose that the defense of gospel truth, gospel rites or ordinances, requires any other ability than that which God giveth. We have men enough among us who have never seen the interior of a college, who, with the scriptures in their hand, and the grace of God in their hearts, could set the world on fire, while one of our college-bred dandies would be lighting his match. It is a gross impeachment of the wisdom of God, to say that those whom he has called, to the work, need to be trained by the wisdom of men, for the work whereunto he has called them. It is his exclusive province to call and to qualify whom he pleases and as he pleases; and all whom he has thus designated are required to preach as with the ability he giveth. How presumptuous, heaven daring, and insulting to the divine majesty for man, in the pride of his vain heart, to attempt to improve what God has done. May not the works of God, in creation and providence, be as easily improved as his works of grace? Why not, then, try the powers of human sufficiency upon the natural heavens, polish the sun, hang out a greater number of stars, forbid the waning of the moon, and increase her lustre until her radiance shall surpass the brightness of the sun, as far as it is supposed the wisdom of men excels the wisdom of our God? Why not improve the fixed laws of nature, annihilate the covenant which God has made with day and night, "Make frightened rivers change their course, And backward hasten to their source?"

Alas for the vanity of the human heart, thus to contend with God! If human wisdom and power can neither improve nor change the principles of nature, why should it be thought that the spiritual things of God are more susceptible of human improvements? High as the heavens transcend the earth on which we tread, do all the thoughts and ways of God transcend the vain, illusive and arrogant thoughts and pretensions of the human heart.

S. More on Intercession

More on Intercession From Signs of the Times—January 15, 1869. by Gilbert Beebe 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 unprovable 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 him." 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.

S. My Kingdom Is Not of This World

My Kingdom is not of this World From Signs of the Times—November 1, 1845. by Gilbert Beebe

Thus spake the Son of God when mantled in the flesh. He stood arraigned at the bar of Pilate; and when, if there had been anything in the elements of this world which could contribute to the defense or benefit of His kingdom, they must have been called into action. All the interests of the kingdom which He claimed as His own, centered in Him, and the destiny of the kingdom, for weal or woe, was at that important moment hinged upon the result of what was at that time progressing.

None of the princes of this world knew Him; He had not made a revelation of what He was, even to those who sat empowered to deliver Him to death. He had not labored in His ministry to make Himself familiar to the crowned heads of the nations of the earth. He had proposed no treaties or terms of alliance with them; not had He called on them, or any of them, to propose terms for His acceptance; for the nature of His kingdom was so radically different from every kingdom under heaven, that it was not possible that an alliance could be entered into that could subserve the true interests of either party. His kingdom truly was destined to encounter the violence, enmity, wrath, strife, and persecution of kingdoms of men, both in her King and in the subjects of her government. The powers which should oppose Him in person and in His people were not such as He was compelled to succumb to for what of power to resist, for He reminded Pilate that he would not have had any power, if it had not been given him; and on another occasion He declared that He was able to call on His Father, who would instantly honor His requisition for more than twelve legions of angels—a force sufficient to overwhelm all earthly powers engaged against Him; but how, in that case, could the Scriptures be fulfilled? Not an intimation was made of raising up an earthly force to resist the assaults of the enemies of His kingdom, even if a force had been requisite, He would have called from the heavenly world.

We may well conclude, that if in that most trying hour, when His holy soul was pressed within Him, He had nothing to ask of the rulers of this world, there never could a period arrive when the powers of earthly princes should be required to defend Him or His cause. To those who tempted Him with their questions concerning tribute money, He said, “Render unto Caesar the things which belong to Caesar, and unto God the things which belong to God,” (Mark 12:17); thus clearly intimating that the governments were not only distinct from each other, but that the distinction should be perpetual; and that the requisitions of Caesar, or of the governments of the nations, had to do with men as citizens of the world, and that their obligation to earthly magistrates and rulers was not relaxed nor abolished by the administration of His laws. And again, that the things of God were not to be rendered to Caesar, but unto God.

Things of a civil nature, relating to the natural rights of men, were to be settled by God’s own providential appointment, by human legislation; but the things aside from a respect for and obedience to earthly potentates, in natural matters, belonging to God, such as matters of faith, of conscience, of religion, were not things over which the kings of the earth had any supervision or power, and things in which His subjects were not at liberty under any circumstances, to submit to

the dictation or legislation of any other than God Himself. The kingdom of Jesus is not of this world. In its origin, elements, provisions, policy, protection, government, or destiny. Its origin is heaven—it is a heavenly kingdom. The King is the Lord from heaven; He said, “I proceeded forth and came out from the Father;” and again, “What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before,” etc. The subjects of his kingdom are of the same origin, for “Both he sanctifies, and they that are sanctified, are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren” and he said, “Thine they were and thou gavest them me.” “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world,” etc. The laws for the regulation of this heavenly kingdom are not of earthly enactment. Christ the anointed of the Father, is the sole Legislator, and he, by His Spirit, writes his law upon, and sets it up in the hearts of his children. The elements, or component parts, viewed separately or collectively, are all of God, and every plant that the heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up. The provision on which this kingdom is sustained, were given us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and being prior to, could not be of the world. Grace, mercy, peace, righteousness, and truth, with all things else necessary for the commandment of the everlasting and unchanging decree of God, were treasured up in the Head of the church before the world began; and all the provisions of His spiritual house on which His poor are fed, were brought down from the abounding and overflowing fountain from which every good and perfect gift comes. And He will abundantly bless her provisions and fill her with bread. The policy of this kingdom is from above. “For our conversation is in heaven,” and it is therefore as becomes the children of God. All earthly religions have to depend on human policy, human wisdom, and humanly devised means; but not so with the kingdom which no man can see except he be born again. The protection of that kingdom is of him who is a wall of fire round about it, and the glory in its midst. All anti-christian religious establishments desire the arm of human government—regal power, and human means for their protection; but not so with the kingdom of Jesus Christ; the eternal God is the refuge of His people, and underneath them are the everlasting arms.

All provisions on which the subjects of the kingdom of our Lord are fed, comforted, instructed, and secured, are spiritual, and therefore cannot emanate from any but a spiritual fountain. Although the world, the flesh and Satan have volunteered like the aliens about Jerusalem in the days of Nehemiah, to furnish God’s people with food, the order of the government forbids the traffic with them; and it is impossible that the children of the kingdom should be fed with any other food than that which God has graciously provided, and abundantly blessed. Should the government of the kingdom of our Redeemer be to any extent divided with angels or men, whatever part or portion these should administer, must necessarily detract so much from the power and glory of Christ. “The government shall be upon his shoulder; and of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, (Luke 1:33)” So stands the record of the Holy One. The subjects of His government are forbidden to call any man, master, or father, as their Master and spiritual Progenitor is in heaven, and nothing can be born of the flesh but flesh; so that without being born again, no man can see the kingdom of God. A legislature of unregenerate men who cannot see the kingdom, would be very poorly qualified to legislate for a kingdom which is to them absolutely invisible; and if there were none but regenerate men seated in legislation, they being by the new birth qualified to see the kingdom of God, would to a man, know by the same illuminating work of the Spirit, that they could do nothing to aid in the legislative or executive departments of the Messiah’s kingdom. The destiny of the kingdom of which we write, differs essentially from that of

all other kingdoms. The best systems of human government are destined to crumble to the ground. In the providence of God, empires are founded, kingdoms and republics are raised up, they reach their climax, and then decline, and finally cease to be reckoned among the things that be; but the kingdom of Jesus is an everlasting kingdom, and a dominion that shall never end. It shall never be changed, superseded, or transferred to other hands. The mountains shall depart, the hills shall be moved, the earth and the sea shall pass away, and all the elements of this world shall be dissolved, but the kingdom of our God shall survive them all, and flourish in eternal bloom. How presumptuous then, for monarchs of the earth, whose transient glory is as a withering flower, or human legislatures which God shall obliterate, to prepare the way of the rising empire of His to reach forth the guilt-polluted fingers of their power, to point out the course in which God requires His children to move.

Seeing, then, that we look for such things—seeing that we have received a kingdom which is not of this world, 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.

S. Neither Cast Your Pearls Before the Swine

NEITHER CAST YOUR PEARLS BEFORE THE SWINE by Gilbert Beebe The Preceding Classic is from the November 1, 1862 edition of the publication "Signs of the Times" founded and published for over 45 years by Elder Gilbert Beebe.

"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." Matthew 7:6 This text is found in the closing part of what is familiarly termed, "Christ's Sermon on the Mount," in which he taught them privately, and gave them lessons of instruction, which are the greatest importance to the saints in all subsequent ages. These instructions should often be examined and re-examined by the children of God, as they are given for their special benefit, and contain admonitions and precepts of the most vital importance. From the rich cluster of golden maxims and rules laid down for the observance of the disciples of the Redeemer in this sermon, we are requested to give our views on the text written at the head of this article, to which we will call the especial attention of the readers.

"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs." The things which were holy under the ceremonial law were the things which were especially consecrated, or sanctified (set apart) for holy purposes, as were the tabernacle, the ark, the altar and the consecrated things of the inner temple of the Lord in Jerusalem, The tribes themselves, being solemnly set apart from all the families of mankind, were ceremonially holy, and forbidden to intermingle with the other nations of the earth, and as a consecrated and holy people they were to live on consecrated and holy food; they were forbidden to eat that which was common or unclean. Of all the beasts of the field, none but those which divided the hoof and chewed the cud were set apart by the special enactment of the Lord as the consecrated or holy sustenance of the consecrated tribes of the Lord, and these consecrated things must not be polluted by contact with other things which were not set apart; no mixture with anything else was allowed. All this was undoubtedly to signify to us that God's chosen and redeemed people, who are born of God, receive from him spiritual and immortal life, which must be fed and sustained on spiritual and immortal food. This lesson is taught us in all the types and shadows going before. For instance, when God had created man out of the dust of the ground, He provided that the food necessary for man's subsistence should grow out of the same dust of the ground. His nature and composition being of the earth, earthy, his subsistence must, to be adapted to the support of his earthly nature, be also earthy; and when man had transgressed the law of God and fallen under the curse, the earth out of which he was to subsist was also cursed for his sake, that it might be still adapted to his nature as a fallen, sinful earthy man. So in the figure, we are taught that in the spiritual creation in Christ Jesus, they who are born of the Spirit of God must be sustained on spiritual things-, as their spiritual life is in God, so is all their spiritual food and sustenance. The productions of the earth cannot feed and sustain the inward man, nor can all the joys of the Spirit, which do feed and sustain the new man, prevent the old man, the earthy nature, from requiring its earthly nourishment. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that flesh is of the earth, earthy, and cannot be sustained without that food which is produced from the

earth, and he that is born of God, although he might possess all the produce of the earth, would starve if he were not fed on that bread which cometh down from heaven. Except we eat the flesh and drink the blood of Jesus, we have no spiritual life in us, for spiritual life can live on nothing else. Those who are thus born of God are a “chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people,” etc., chosen, consecrated and set apart, “sanctified by God the Father,” “elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit,” etc., cleansed and washed, purged and justified, they shall be called the holy people, and as a holy, consecrated people, they are made partakers of the divine nature, and qualified to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man, who is the true bread which came down from heaven.

Then the things which are holy are appropriated exclusively to a holy people, a people whom God has cleansed, and which, we are forbidden, to call common. This sanctified people are called sheep, lambs and doves, and by many other figurative names, but they are never called dogs or swine. A dog is a very different kind of animal from a sheep or lamb; he neither divides the hoof, nor does he chew the cud, he is therefore unclean. His disposition is also very unlike that of the sheep or lamb; he is ferocious, quarrelsome, vicious, and, like the wolf, it is his nature to worry, scatter and kill the sheep. His food, or that on which the dog subsists, is not that which would feed the sheep and lambs, nor can the sheep and lambs subsist on what the dog can feed upon. The dog would starve in the richest pasture field, where the sheep would fatten, and the sheep starve if fed only on what dogs delight to feed upon. Dogs are dangerous animals, and we are admonished to beware of them. Some of them are said to be dumb dogs that cannot bark; sleepy dogs, lying down, loving slumber, and greedy dogs that can never have enough. In Revelation 22:15, they are classified with sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers, idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. The admonition of the Lord in our text then clearly means that his disciples shall not give, nor minister the gospel, or its provisions, its promises, its comforts, its ordinances, or any of its commands, to any who are thus designated dogs, or who are in nature, disposition, practice or appetite as unlike the regenerated and spiritual people of God as dogs are unlike and inimical to the sheep and lambs. The gospel is food to the saints, because it is Christ; the preaching of the gospel is preaching Christ, and it is food to the spiritual, and hence the ministers of the gospel are commissioned to feed the sheep and feed the lambs; to feed the flock of God which he hath purchased with his own blood, but charged to give not that which is holy (and the gospel and all its ordinances are holy) to dogs. Dogs have no use for holy things, they can do them no good, for they are not adapted to their nature or suited to their appetites; besides, it is a desecration of holy things to give them to dogs or to swine. It is true, that the Gospel is to be preached to every creature, to all nations, and in all the world, for a witness to all nations, but only those who have ears to hear can hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. The ministers of Christ have nothing but the Gospel to preach, and that they must preach wherever God is pleased to open a door for them to preach, and its effect will be to discriminate between the living and the dead. All who have been pricked in the heart by the life-giving power of the Spirit will gladly receive the Word, as did the quickened on the day of Pentecost, while all others will mock and reject the testimony. But what we understand as being intended by this admonition, is that we are forbidden to attempt to Christianize unregenerated men, by teaching them the letter of the Word, and applying to them the ordinances of the Gospel as a means of salvation, by Catechisms, Bible classes, Sunday Schools, etc...as though we could so improve their carnal minds as to make them acceptable to God, without being born of the Spirit.

According to our understanding of the subject, every effort to apply the things of the Spirit of God to unregenerated men, is to give that which is holy to dogs. Theological institutions for giving ministerial qualifications to graceless youths for preaching, and to unrenewed children and adults for church membership, and for evangelizing the world by humanly devised plans and schemes, is an attempt to give that which is holy to the dogs, and is clearly a transgression of the authority of our Lord, and an open violation of the words of our text: "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine." It is not in the nature of swine to appreciate the value or beauty of pearls any more than it is the nature of dogs to relish the rich pasture on which the sheep feed. The children of God are in possession of jewels of inestimable value, which none but the children of God can appreciate or enjoy. Their spiritual privileges, their Christian love and fellowship, their gifts and graces, their experimental joys and peculiar exercises, their knowledge of divine things, are all pearls of great value to them, but their excellency cannot be known or appreciated by those who know not God. There is a fitness and utility in exhibiting these pearls among those of like precious faith, but those who have never possessed them would rudely trample on them if cast before them, as swine would trample upon the most costly and precious jewels.

Christians are greatly edified and comforted by speaking often to each other of all the way in which the Lord has led them; they can talk freely one to another of their joys and sorrows their conflicts and victories, but should they make these things the theme of their conversation in the streets and market places, or in the synagogues of Satan, they would be treated roughly; infidels, Arminians, will-worshippers, like swine, would trample them under their feet, and turn and rend the child of grace. The psalmist said, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul." They who fear the Lord can understand the language, they know too well the value of such precious pearls to despise or trample on them. But those who have only religion of the world neither divide the hoof nor chew the cud and like swine, serve only their swinish appetites, their god is their belly and their glory is their shame. The swine seem to have but one desire, and that is the gratification of their ravenous appetite-, cast before them the most costly and splendid gems, or pearls, and as they cannot eat them, they have no other use for them, and they would as soon trample on them as on the most common earth, and they will turn again and rend you, determined to obtain something that they can eat; so when the Christian attempts to display the glorious things of the kingdom of Christ to unbelievers, they will sometimes be surprised to find that those with whom they labor cannot appreciate those experimental things of which they speak. Expostulate with them, and demonstrate what you say by the most clear and positive Scripture authority, and they will disregard your testimony and your Scripture, and trample both under their feet, and then assail you again with as much vigor and determined violence as though you had not exhibited to them your pearls.

Sheep, swine and dogs are not suitable companions for each other, they cannot live in good communion together, nor should unnatural amalgamation be attempted, but let the sheep be associated with sheep, and let them "beware of dogs," and avoid the society of swine, and they will be more pleasantly and comfortably situated. The great and good Shepherd has told his flock, Ye "are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." He has chosen them out of the world, and called them to be a separate people. Let us then heed the admonition of our Lord, and give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast our pearls before swine, lest they trample them under

their feet, and turn again and rend us.

S. Not by Succession but by Who are Called

Not by Succession but by Who are Called by Gilbert Beebe

Since the apostles of the Lamb have finished their course with us in the flesh, no history of the church of God should be allowed to lure us from the doctrine which they taught, the judgments they recorded, the ordinances they have enjoined; nothing is to be added nor aught diminished from the perfect standard of faith and order they established, which is confirmed by all the valid authority of earth and heaven. What they have bound on earth is bound in heaven, and what they have loosed on earth is loosed in heaven. The question with us now is not or should not be: What was believed or practiced in the church one hundred or a thousand years ago, but rather, what was the faith which was once delivered to the saints? We are not now to ask: Are our ministers by succession of ordination, through the dark ages of papal abominations – traceable to the apostles? But rather let it be asked: Are they such men as the Holy Ghost commanded the church to separate to the work whereunto He had called them?

- Gilbert Beebe, 1800-1881

S. On Marriage

On Marriage by Gilbert Beebe We are requested by a correspondent to give our views on Romans 7:2-3.

“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. 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 that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.” From this apostolic exposition of the law of God upon the subject of matrimony, we are fully sustained in asserting that nothing short of the death of the husband can so exonerate the wife from her marriage obligations as to leave her at liberty to marry another man. That cases may and do sometimes occur in which a wife may lawfully separate from her husband, or a husband may put away his wife, we believe the Scriptures are sufficiently clear and to the point, (See Matthew 5:32; also Matthew 19:9;) but in no case do we find authority for such persons to marry again.

Cases may occur in which a separation may take place against the will of one of the parties, and not for the cause mentioned, Matthew 19:9; but in such cases the parties are forbidden to marry again.

“But unto the married I COMMAND, yet not I, BUT THE LORD, let not the wife depart from her husband; but and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband.”

(1 Corinthians 7:10-11) “The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband Liveth.”

(1 Corinthians 7:39) From the plain testimony of the Scriptures as referred to above, we give it as our decided conviction that no married wife can, under any circumstances whatever, marry another man while her husband is living, without involving herself in the crime of adultery. Nor can a man marry again while his wife lives, without involving the same sin. We do not say, first husband and first wife, for a second marriage does not constitute the parties husband and wife, where this legal impediment exists. A bill of divorcement, legally obtained, may in the eye of our civil code disannul a former marriage contract, so that, as far as the civil law is concerned, the parties may contract to live in adultery with impunity, and their issue be legally their heirs; but the Bible gives them no such liberty. Nor has the God of heaven given any authority to any earthly legislature to divide asunder what God has joined together.

We could as soon extend our fellowship and approbation to the direct crime of adultery, where no separation has taken place between the husband and wife, as where such separation has taken place, a divorce obtained and the new connection legalized by the marriage of parties where one or both have a living wife or husband.

We know there is a difference of opinion among professors of religion on this subject;but we have ever refused to perform the marriage service, in any such case, as we should as soon connive

directly at or countenance the sin of adultery.

We hope never to hear of an instance among old school baptists; nor can we hold any as Old School Baptists who would thus live in adultery. The very use the apostles makes of this law, in the text at the head of this article, shows that the church of Christ could not be lawfully wedded to Him, in her visible Gospel order, until she became dead unto the law. Her being put away and cursed by her former husband, (the law) did not release her — she must die, and she did die to the law; Christ became the end of the law, for righteousness to every one that believes. We might extend this article; but we hope enough is said to satisfy the mind of our inquiring correspondent.

(By Gilbert Beebe, September 15, 1840)

S. Our Great High Priest Consecrated for Evermore

Our Great High Priest Consecrated For Evermore From Signs of the Times—April 1, 1857

“For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.” Hebrews 7:28 by Gilbert Beebe

This whole epistle appears to be devoted to an exhibition of the mediatorial relations which our Redeemer bears to his Father and his church, prominent among which his priesthood is the peculiar theme of the inspired writer. The epistle begins with the testimony of his sonship, and as the medium of divine revelation to the saints on earth, God who spake to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, and by whom also he made the worlds. 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, &c. The Son of God thus identified, is next presented in the perfect work of purging our sins, and then sitting down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. In purging our sins, his priestly office is involved, and a comparison of him with angels and with the priests of the Levitical order, by way of contrast, is instituted; wherein his unexampled pedigree, the higher order of his priesthood, and the superiority of the testament of which he is the surety, are brought to view. The disparity between the order of Aaron’s priesthood, and that of Melchisedec, is very clearly and strikingly demonstrated by several qualifications, which Christ possessed over those possessed by Aaron and his, among which is that found in our text, namely, the oath, by which the perpetuity and immutability of his priesthood are established. The law maketh men high priests which have infirmity. That is, the law to which the Levitical priesthood belonged, for Aaron and his sons had infirmities, were liable to diseases, like other men, and could not long fill the office by reason of death, yet the law expressly made these men high priests, and allowed no other men to hold the office. Hence we are told that there being a change of the priesthood, there must of necessity be also a change of the law. The law could not recognize any but Levites, and it is evident that our Lord sprung out of Judea, of which tribe Moses (or the law), spake nothing concerning the priesthood. The law under which Aaron was made a priest is called the law of a carnal commandment; that is, it had reference to the fleshy persons, descent, physical and mental properties of those who were to hold the office. If a son of Aaron was blemished in his person, or unsound physically, he was disqualified, because the Levitical law and priesthood regarded the commonwealth of Israel as the fleshy descendants of Abraham. But Christ is not made a priest after the law, but by the power of an endless life. And there was verily a disannulling of the law going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof, for the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope, by the which we draw nigh unto God. The inspired writer having thus explained the distinction between the covenants, or testaments, or laws, goes on to speak of the oath which was required in the priestly office of Christ, as another essential difference between the two priesthoods and laws, and in doing so, makes use of the words of our text, before summing up the arguments. In the foregoing references to the testimony, we see that the men which were made high priests by the law, all had infirmities, and had first to offer sacrifices for their own sins, and then for the people’s; and such

was their infirmity they could not continue in the office by reason of death. But the word of the oath which was since the law, maketh the Son who is consecrated for evermore. The word of the oath is quoted in the twenty-first verse of this chapter, from Psalms 110:4, "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent. Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." The word of this oath was since the law. Not that the word was not spoken, or the oath taken until after the legal dispensation expired, for the law and the prophets were until John, but the inspired psalmist declares that it was in the past tense in his days, more than fifteen hundred years before the days of John the Baptist. And we understand that Christ, as signified by the peculiar order of his priesthood, was a Priest, without predecessor or successor, without descent, without father or mother, in the priesthood, and without beginning of days or end of life. Thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec, was the word of the oath, and that order is expressly defined as signifying that his priesthood was without beginning or end, and after the power of immortality. So long then as Jesus has embodied in himself the immortality of his body and members, as their mediatorial Head and Life, the words of the oath by which he is made priest have been in force. But his appearance now in the end of the world to officiate in the priestly office, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, was in the order of time, subsequently to the priesthood of Aaron. In the same sense in which he is called the second Adam. Not that Adam existed before him in reality, for before the dust of the world, out of which Adam was formed, was made, Christ existed in his mediatorial relation to his body and members, as one brought up with the Father. In manifestation to us, Christ was the second Adam, while as the Lord from heaven, his goings forth were of old, from everlasting—so in the order of divine revelation, the types preceded their antitypes, the shadows, their substance. The word of the oath, "Thou art a Priest," not thou shalt be a Priest, the word of the oath is in the perfect tense, but this word of the oath by which he is made a Priest, involved the necessity of his advent to the world, and of his being made under the law to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. Moreover, the word of the oath consecrated him as the High Priest for evermore, and thus secures the perpetuity of his priesthood. He is not to be removed by infirmity, by death, or anything else. He is not to be superseded by any other priests or priesthoods, sacrifices or sufferings, but to represent his people as their only dependence—for acceptance before God for evermore. In the summing up of what had been said, the amount of testimony is thus given: "We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched and not man" who has by so much obtained a more excellent ministry, than that under the Old Covenant or Testament; by how much also he is the Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises. The superior excellency of the new covenant over the old is to be estimated by the superiority of the priesthood of Christ over that of Aaron. The better promises are those which God, that cannot lie, made before the world began, and which is confirmed by oath. An oath for confirmation with men is an end of all strife, wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, by which it is impossible that God should lie, we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us, which hope we have, as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus made an High Priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec.

Well might the inspired penman assure us that “Such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens,” And also that he is able to save unto the uttermost all who come unto God by him, seeing that he ever liveth to make intercession for them. One who is easily touched with the feelings of our infirmities, having been tempted in all points as we are, and yet without sin. Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.

S. Remarks on Religious Revivals

REMARKS ON RELIGIOUS REVIVALS From Signs of the Times-June 1, 1862 by Gilbert Beebe

It is always cheering to the saints of God to witness the outpouring of the Spirit in quickening and bringing into his gospel fold the subjects of his saving grace, and the more clearly we can trace the work of God in revivals of religion, the more abundantly we rejoice. But wherever we detect the fingerprints of man in their production, our joy is dampened, and our confidence in them shaken. We have been a member in the Baptist church more than fifty years, and in that time have witnessed many revivals. Some that have afforded us inexpressible joy and gratitude to God, and others which have filled us with the most fearful apprehensions. That men, by their activity and zeal can get up revivals of religion or religious revivals, by stirring appeals to the passions and to the natural judgment of unregenerated sinners, which will attract and gather them in excited crowds, and produce intense excitement, and ultimately draw large numbers into the church, we cannot doubt, and for the time the cause may seem to flourish, but when the net has been drawn to the shore, a large portion of the fish found to be of no value to the church of God. Every plant, says the divine Master, which my Father has not planted, shall be rooted up. From this declaration we infer that every one that comes into the church without his saving grace shall be expelled without his favor.

Well do we remember the old fashioned revivals, in which God's holy arm was made bare for the salvation of sinners, when such things as protracted meetings, anxious benches, coming forward publicly for prayers, and the like, had not been introduced in the Baptist churches. Then the Baptists were one people and one communion the world over. When we heard of a revival among the Baptists we knew what the term signified; and those gathered into the churches were not offended at the doctrine of God's sovereignty in the election, predestination, irresistible calling, and complete salvation of his children; nor with the faithful exposure of all manner of heresy, will-worship, delusion and idolatry abounding in the world. Then the Baptists, as a distinct people, were not reckoned with the popular denominations of the earth. Then they desired no revival that was or could be gotten up; they delighted only in those revivals which come down from above, in which they had the evidence that they were seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. But after the importation from England of a theory which was labeled "Fuller's Gospel", very soon the poison of Fuller's heresy began to spread, and many Baptist churches, which about that time began to enjoy some respite from the oppression of the New England Puritans, began to show symptoms of infection. The truth is, the Baptists never could endure prosperity to any great extent, without, like Israel of old, running into idolatry.

Following an under current of Fullerism, which had promised to raise the Baptists from the degradation of a dunghill (to use Fuller's classic language) to a respectable position among the popular religious denominations, came in stealthily at first, but more openly afterwards, a lusting after the leeks and onions, and especially the fleshpots of Egypt, This manna from above, on which the saints have so long and so miraculously fed, began to be regarded as light food. The

Anakims, their neighbors, who lived on the productions of the earth, grew to be giants, and looked down with contempt upon the poor, little dwarfish Baptists; and under these circumstances many of the Baptists betrayed a desire to become like the nations round about them. Thus hardening their hearts, as in the day of provocation, became vain in their imaginations. This spirit of discontent and rebellion soon produced wide-spread murmuring among them; that the place where they dwelt was too strait, and some were heard to say, "Go to, let us make brick, and we will build a tower," etc. The more enterprising and zealous complained that their brethren were too inert, inactive, and withal, too tight-laced, folding their hands and waiting for God to build up his cause. But their active and sprightly companions sprang forward to steady the ark of God, which seemed to them to jostle on the new cart. A new era had begun, the law of Christ, as the only standard for faith and order in the house of God, was ignored by the enterprising, for they said, "If we wait for God to do the work, it will never be done. The day of miracles is past, and we must 'Up and make us gods to go before us.'" The ministry which God had hitherto given and sustained among the Baptists, came to be regarded as inefficient, they were too illiterate, too slow, too tight-laced; or, in other words, too confident that what God had begun he would himself perform until the day of Jesus Christ, and so inert had they become that they declared that even if the olive should not blossom, and there should be no herd in the stall, they would still trust in the Lord and even though he should slay them, they still would trust in him. The wise and prudent ones, therefore, determined to get these sleepy drones out of the way, and soon Baptist colleges began to arise, Theological Schools were instituted, Baptist State Educational Societies were chartered by the Legislature, Sabbath Schools and Bible Classes, for teaching "Every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord," were multiplied. Missionary Societies were organized, and plans matured for collecting missionary funds. High sounding titles of a flattering kind were given to men. Presidents, directors, life membership, etc., became merchantable commodities, and were bought and sold in the market. The antiquated notion that it required grace to save sinners, where money was plenty, and that "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God" was thought to belong to a former age, was not adapted this day of improvements. Baptist meeting houses now began to wear steeples and towers, or domes of imposing dimensions; bells were found necessary to drive the bad spirits away and call the multitudes together; a learned but graceless ministry filled the pulpits, and the Baptists began to look respectable in the adulterous eyes of the world. Now to fill up these costly and splendid edifices with paying converts something more attractive to the world than the preaching of Christ and him crucified was deemed necessary. Protracted meetings, anxious benches, exciting appeals to the carnal passions of men, women and children were regarded as the most effective agencies, and hence they were brought into requisition. Much experimenting was required to demonstrate the comparative efficiency of the new inventions. Union prayer meetings, monthly concerts of prayer, with numerous other contrivances of men, were tried, with a view to either scare people into religion, or to scare religion into the people. At the time of the introduction of these new things among professed Baptists, the party in favor of them was in the minority, but with all this machinery under their control they were soon multiplied into an overwhelming majority, and as there was no legitimate affinity between the old primitive order and these machine-made Baptists, a formal separation became inevitable, and ultimately took place. In the division the old order was called by a number of names, among which were, Old School or Primitive Baptists; the new order are known as New School or Missionary Baptists. These two kinds of Baptists have

become so distinct that neither claim any relationship to the other. Indeed, the Primitive Baptists have no greater opposers or more bitter enemies to contend with on earth than are found in the ranks of the New School.

Perhaps brother Strickland and others are ready to ask us, What has this recital of past history to do with the revivals of which that brother writes? We reply, Simply this, to hold up the history of the past as a beacon upon the walls, that our dear brethren in the ecstasy of their feelings caused by revival, may remember the rocks on which the Baptists of former times have been wrecked, divided and split. By no means would we utter a word to dampen the spirits of precious brethren who are enjoying the gracious smiles of their covenant God. We have greatly mistaken the characters of brethren Strickland and Hume, if they would designedly depart from the ancient landmarks of Zion, or forsake the footsteps of the flock of our Redeemer. But, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall," is an apostolic admonition. May we all heed it. There are a few expressions in brother Strickland's account of the revival that we feel constrained to notice, not in a fault-finding spirit, but in all love and tenderness. At our time of life, being now more than three score years of age, and about half that time have conducted the publication of this paper, we are aware that the time of our departure is not very far distant. We feel desirous, before the grave shall close over our mortal body, to faithfully, but affectionately, warn all our dear brethren in Christ to shun the appearance of evil in all things. Adhere strictly to the precepts and examples of our Lord and Master in all your religious deportment, and we trust that neither of our ministering brethren, nor any of the precious converts of their late revivals, will be hurt with us, or mistake our design in reviewing the expressions to which we have alluded.

First. Brethren, your meetings have been protracted. Now, where the Spirit of the Lord is manifested, drawing the hearts of the saints together, and in the display of his quickening power and grace, in causing the dead to hear the voice of the Son of God, and they feel disposed to protract such meetings for the worship of God and the edification of the saints, as did the apostles in the early days of Christianity, we have not the slightest objection to offer. At such seasons we have sometimes felt to say, "My willing soul would stay In such a frame as this; Would sit and sing herself away To everlasting bliss." But to appoint protracted meetings as a means of grace, or for the purpose of getting up revival, or producing an excitement, is, in our view, by attempting to do by our enchantments that which we know can only be done by the mighty power of God himself. A meeting was once protracted at Jerusalem, after the ascension of our Redeemer, because Jesus had commanded the apostles to tarry at Jerusalem for a specific reason. And they with other disciples, were in one place, and of one accord, until the day of Pentecost was fully come. A glorious revival took place while they were together, not as a result of their being together, but as the result of the Mediatorial triumph of the Son of God. They did not claim that they had gotten up this revival but they assure us that it did not come up, but it came down. While they, in obedience to Jesus, were all of one accord and in one place, "Suddenly there came a sound from heaven; as a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting," (Acts 2:2). Thus we have the testimony that this reviving sound came from above, and God poured out on them of his Spirit. So all spiritual blessings are given the saints in Christ, according as he hath chosen them in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, (Ephesians 1:3-4). And every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning. On this occasion a vast multitude were quickened, and made to gladly receive the word-, and they

were baptized, and added to the church. The apostles did not claim this as resulting from anything they had done to produce it, but told us frankly that this was something God had long had in store; it was that which had been spoken of by Joel more than seven hundred years before, and some seven hundred years before any of them were born. The protraction of the meeting in Indiana, we should judge, was like that at Jerusalem, were it not for a remark of brother Strickland in another part of the letter, which seems to reflect severely on ministers who have not enjoyed similar revivals, as dull, cold and inefficient, under whose labors no church can prosper. Now we must in all candor, and in kindness, contend that revivals that are at all profitable to the church of God, are not the result of the vivacity, warmth or efficiency of the minister. All the ministers of Christ are in themselves dull, cold and inefficient, until animated with a live coal from off the altar of the Lord. Paul, with all inspiration, disclaimed all efficiency in himself, and exclaimed, "And who is sufficient for these things?" Or what is efficient? Jesus has said to his disciples "Without me ye can do nothing." Where then is the efficiency for these things?

Again, brother Strickland remarks, "Neither can any minister of Christ be profitable and fully efficient as a minister of the cross of Christ unless the church does her duty." Does our dear brother mean that the will or works of men or angels can give efficiency to the preached gospel? That the success of the gospel really rests upon duties faithfully performed by the church? How then did Paul affirm that the excellency of the gospel is not of us, but of God? Why are we told that Paul may plant, Apollos may water, but God alone can give the increase? We have no reason to doubt that the church, and all the saints, ministers included, are, sometimes, if not at all times, remiss in the discharge of their duties, but we would greatly prefer to hear our brother say, When God pours out his Spirit upon the thirsty hill of Zion, the plants of his right hand planting will be revived, the church will awake to a sense of neglected duties, the dull ministers will lift up the voice with renewed energy, sinners will be pricked in the heart, and the redeemed of the Lord will be gathered into the fold, and all will be the result of those seasons of refreshing which come from the presence of the Lord.

We also believe that God has intimately connected the prosperity of his church and kingdom with the faithfulness of her members and her gifts, but we do not believe that connection is such as to make the prosperity of the kingdom to depend on the faithfulness of either the members or the gifts. For, "Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." But when God's set time to favor Zion comes, God sends her prosperity, and in a way that she shall see, and feel, and confess, that it is "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord," And when God gives prosperity to his church, then, and only then, her vine will flourish, and her pomegranates will give a goodly smell. When he commands the north winds to blow, and the south winds to come, then the spices will flow out. This will enliven the dull minister if he be a servant of God, and this will wake up the sleepy spouse of the Redeemer and thus the connection of faithfulness in the church, and her prosperity is effected, so that the praise is not of men, but of God. That there are ministers and members of churches who are worldly, and allow much of the precious time allotted for social religious intercourse to be spent in worldly conversation, talking of politics, or of the war, is very probable; but it is an exciting time, and we are yet in the flesh, compassed with infirmities, so that it is hardly to be expected that we can divest ourselves from all anxiety on the subject. But it is to be hoped that the saints will, as far as possible, divest themselves from all anxiety on the subject. But it is to be hoped that the saints will, as far as possible divest themselves from these cares when we

meet to worship God, and with the poet say, "Far from my thoughts, vain world, be gone, Let my religious hours alone-, Fain would my faith my Savior see, But wait a visit, Lord, from thee" When Paul says we are laborers together with God, we are not to understand that we are fellow-laborers with God, or co-laborers, for we, that is, Paul and Apollos, were laborers together. They were not laboring to help God build the church, for his church is not made with hands, it is God's building, an house, which stands eternal in the heavens. We are God's husbandry, or plantation, or garden, where he implants the seeds of grace, which spring up and bring forth fruit to God. Paul and Apollos were laboring together in planting or preaching the word: "So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase."

One, remark further of brother Strickland we must notice, wherein he speaks of a class of preachers who have too much to say against error, especially the abominable, God-dishonoring and heaven-daring doctrines of Arminians, who give their (the Arminians) errors more attention than they give to the errors of their own brethren. (Brother Strickland will not probably classify us with that sort, as we sometimes pay some attention, as he will perceive, to the errors of our brethren.) These, he complains, "Dwell long and loud on the doctrine of predestination and election to the exclusion of practical and experimental religion."

Now we are somewhat puzzled to know how to understand this complaint. What more exalted theme has ever moved the tongues or thrilled the hearts of men or angels, than that of the doctrine of predestination and election, we cannot conceive. Is not the predestinating government of God worthy of our loudest, longest notes? Why should they not dwell long and loud upon the doctrine affirmed by the Holy Ghost, proclaimed by God himself, reiterated by patriarchs and prophets, heralded by inspired apostles, and lying as the basis of all our hopes for heaven and immortality? How the preaching of this doctrine can exclude practical or experimental religion, we cannot understand, since no practice or experience can be worth having in its absence. If God has not chosen us in Christ, and predestinated us to the adoption of children, and if God hath not before ordained us to walk in good works, all our practice and all our experience will leave us far short of heaven and eternal happiness. "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." If there be no election and predestination, then there can be no inheritance of glory for us or for anybody else. Then let the brethren shun not to proclaim election and predestination, and expose the abomination of Antichrist, and exhort the saints to stand fast in the doctrine of God our Savior, and to walk in all his ordinances, and see that in the excitement of revivals none be admitted to fellowship who do not love the doctrine of salvation by grace alone.

We trust that our brother will not be offended with us for the candor with which we have remarked on his letter, but carefully examine the points to which we have called his attention, and may the Lord give us all the light and wisdom we need, and crown us in his kingdom, Amen.

S. Repentance

REPENTANCE Signs of the Times -December 15, 1865 by Gilbert Beebe In replying to the inquiries of brother Samuel Rixey, of Culpepper C.H., Va., we will in the onset observe that although we are not very familiar with all the theories of theologians on the subject of repentance, and therefore but poorly qualified to follow them in all their applications, explanations, divisions, and nice distinctions as to the meaning of the word, when applied literally, we nevertheless feel willing to give to our brother, and to our readers generally, such views as we can gather from a close attentive reading of the scriptures. That the word is used in our version of the Bible with a variety of application is certain, from the fact that it is not only applied to good men, and bad men, but also to God himself. And that it does not apply to God in the same sense that it does to man is clear from the declaration that God is not a man that he should repent. That is, God does not repent, yet in the same chapter, (1 Samuel 15:29, 1 Samuel 15:35) we are told "the Lord repented that he made Saul king over Israel." And this he did, simply by deposing him from the throne, and supplying the throne with a better man. Repentance when applied to God does not intend a sorrow for what he had done, a conviction of having done wrong, or even a change in his mind or purpose; but, as we understand, it signifies a change of his outward administration in his dispensations, and all in perfect harmony with his eternal and immutable purpose. Nor does the term when applied to men always mean sorrow, or regret, for what we sometimes denominate evangelic or gospel repentance, which is unto life, is not, but results from a godly sorrow for sins. In the text referred to by brother Rixey (Mark 1:15), the word is used in the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom by Christ himself, and not in the ministration of the law by Moses; it was not therefore legal repentance, but a repentance preparatory to a cordial reception of the gospel of the kingdom which Christ was preaching. If the term legal be used as an adjective, to signify a repentance demanded or required by the law, we should first inquire whether the law ever did, or could, demand or accept of any kind of repentance. It is not in the nature of any absolute law to require repentance. The law of God does not require that we shall be sorry for having sinned, but it forbids that we should sin. It requires perfect and perpetual obedience, and condemns to death for the first transgression.

"And could our tears forever flow, And could our grief no respite know,"

It would avail us nothing by way of explanation. "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy." No repentance or mercy can flow to transgressors, from the law. From the confused theory of Arminians of a legal repentance grows also the doctrine of obligatory repentance. That repentance which is unto life and is connected with godly sorrow is the gift of God; it proceeds from a godly principle implanted in the heart, and which cannot possibly flow from an ungodly source. Any sorrow or repentance that could come from an ungodly sinner's heart, or from any sinner's heart before a godly principle is therein implanted, would be like the fountain from whence it emanates - ungodly. We search the law and gospel both in vain to find this obligatory repentance which is in so great demand among all the legal work-mongrel tribes of the Arminians. We do not wonder that our dear brother's mind has been puzzled and perplexed to bring the obligation of repentance

upon unregenerate sinners. We might as well speak of their obligation to remit their own sins as to procure their own repentance, seeing Christ alone is exalted to be a Prince and Savior, for to give, both the one and the other unto Israel. It would be equally as proper and scriptural to speak of their obligation to be saved, to go to heaven, and to make themselves sons and heirs of God. But, does man's inability to repent, or to believe, or even to keep from sinning, relieve him from his obligation to do so? Certainly not, if it can be found that such obligations are upon him. Now the sinner is one that has sinned. Sin is the transgression of the law; but where has the law under which the unregenerate sinner is held, either required him to repent or believe the gospel? The law truly forbids him to transgress, and holds him answerable for every transgression. Sin, not a want of repentance or faith, is what the sinner is condemned for. Without the faith of the Son of God, no sinner ever did or could believe the gospel; for believing the gospel is the assurance of faith, and that is the gift of God. Is there any obligation devolving on a graceless sinner making it his duty that God shall give him either faith or repentance? How absurd! But suppose the sinner could control the convictions of his own carnal mind so far as to make himself believe that he is a Christian, that he was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that Christ died for him, that he is freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, would that carnal assurance make it so? Would he not believe an untruth, even if he believed literally just what the Christian believes? Because that which is true in the case of one that is born of the Spirit is not true of him who only possesses a carnal assurance. The heaven-born child believes that God is his Father, and has the witness in himself. The Spirit bearing witness with his spirit that he is born of God. But if the unregenerate sinner without that witness believes himself to be an heir of immortality, he is deceived, and believes a lie. But to believe the gospel is to believe all this. It is precisely so with all that passes for true gospel repentance, if it be not the work of God, and the gift of God, it is all delusive and vain.

But, we shall be asked, did not John the Baptist and our Lord preach to the people saying, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand?" All this is admitted. But if we carefully observe when, to whom, and by whom this repentance was preached, it will enable us the more clearly to understand what manner of repentance was called for.

"The law and the prophets were until John." Since that time, and until these words were spoken by our Lord (see Luke 16:16), the kingdom of God is preached and every man presseth into it. At this particular time John was sent from God to prepare the way of the Lord; to preach that the kingdom of heaven, so long predicted, was at hand; that the Messiah had come; that Jewish rites and ceremonies were now about to be abolished; that their fleshly descent from Abraham was no longer to avail them; for God was able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham. John's mission was only to the Jews, to preach repentance to them, and to baptize them with the baptism of repentance. This repentance and baptism both signified a turning away from the works, rites, ceremonies and ordinances of the law, as a ground of acceptance with God; and a coming out from Jerusalem, and a reception of Christ as that Messiah which was to come, and which they professed to be looking for. Their repentance did not signify that they were at that time born of the Spirit, or that they had not been subjects of that spiritual birth for many years. But it did signify that they came out from Judaism, sensible that the works of the law could not purge their consciences from dead works, to serve the living God; and hence they came to John's baptism of repentance, confessing their sins, and professing their faith in and reliance upon that Christ whom John pointed

out to them as the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world. Remember John was sent to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. His work was stated by the angel of the Lord in Luke 1:13-17. It is also recorded in prophetic declarations of Zacharias in Luke 1:68-79. "And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord, to prepare his ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God: whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

Now observe, John's commission was to go before the face of the Lord, to announce his coming, and to "give knowledge of salvation" to God's people, by remission of their (God's people's) sins, and to make ready a people, already prepared by grace, for the Lord, by calling them out from the house of bondage, and by baptizing them with the baptism of repentance, or reformation, saying unto them that they should believe on him that was to come, that is on Christ; and that they should receive him as the true Messiah, and look to him alone for salvation. The repentance which John preached, and to which he baptized the people prepared for the Lord, is further defined in its peculiar nature and effects by the rejection of the Pharisees from John's baptism of repentance. "O, generation of vipers! Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come. Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance, and think not to say unto yourselves, We have Abraham to our father, for I say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham," (Matthew 3:7-9). Had these Pharisees and Sadducees possessed the repentance which John preached, they would have signified it by a turning away from their cherished traditional hopes of being saved by their fleshly relation to Abraham, and by a reliance alone on him whose kingdom was about to be organized. The repentance preached was an abandonment of all confidence in the flesh, and a ready and hearty acknowledgment of Christ. "And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees." They were about to be cut off from Abraham as their root, and scattered among the Gentiles. The wrath to come, of which John spake was that wrath which had long been accumulating and now hung impending over Jerusalem and the Jews as a nation. Every tree in this wilderness of Judea, which God had not by his grace made good and fruitful, was to be cut down. Their confidence in Abraham as their root, and the covenant of circumcision was now to fail them, and only such Jews as God had prepared, and John was commissioned to make ready, should be admitted into the kingdom which was at hand. The preaching of Christ referred to by brother Rixey was addressed to the same people, and was a continuance of the preaching of John. "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe the gospel," (Mark 1:14-15). This time appointed was Daniel's weeks, or the "fullness of time," when God was to send forth his Son; the time allotted to the legal dispensation, the time for the worldly sanctuary and carnal ordinances was fulfilled. The good news, tidings of great joy to those who could show fruits meet for repentance; the gospel of the kingdom, which the God of heaven was to set up, was now preached, and those who had oil in their vessels were to go into the marriage, and the door was to be shut. This proclamation was made that all such as were prepared for the announcement should abandon their former position under the works and ritual of the law of a carnal commandment, and adhere to the gospel. This proclamation was not a proposition that if they would repent and believe the gospel they should be saved for doing so, for that would suppose that a bad tree could bring forth good fruit, without first being made good,

which Christ says is impossible, (see Matthew 7:18). We are told that when Jesus thus came to his own (his own people, the Jews) his own received him not. "But unto as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," (John 1:11-13). The twelve disciples also which were sent out were in their commission forbidden to go with this message to the Gentiles, for God had not yet granted repentance to the Gentiles, (See Acts 11:18). Nor were they allowed to bear these gospel tidings to the Samaritans, "But, go ye rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, (Matthew 10:5-6). The time had not yet come for the gathering in of the other sheep which were afar off among the Gentiles. For this preaching of repentance and remission of sins in Christ's name must begin at Jerusalem, (Luke 24:47). At the preaching of John, of Christ, of the twelve, and of the seventy, as many as were ordained unto eternal life believed, and came forward, confessing their sins, and professing faith in Christ, renouncing their former hopes of salvation by the deeds of the law, or works of the flesh; and signified the same by being baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and not unto Moses. We have perhaps said enough to signify our views as to the nature of the repentance preached to the lost sheep of the house of Israel by John, by Christ, and by the disciples, before the crucifixion and resurrection of the Son of God, to satisfy brother Rixey that we do not understand the repentance preached by Christ in our text to be either that, strictly speaking, which results from fear of wrath, nor that which proceeds from godly sorrow for sins, but rather a turning away from their former legal works and adherence to abrogated rites and ceremonies, to receive that promised Messiah, of whom Moses and the prophets had written, and whom they were expecting should come. And although the words were addressed to the Jews generally, they were only applied to a people prepared for the Lord. All such on hearing the proclamation came from Judea, Jerusalem, and from regions about Jordan, to Jordan, and were baptized of John in the river Jordan, confessing their sins, thus fleeing from the wrath which was then about to come upon Jerusalem, and other cities of Judea, and thus by baptism signifying their death to Moses, and resurrection with Christ to newness of life.

S. Risen With Christ

Risen With Christ From Signs of the Times—1868

“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 by Gilbert Beebe

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,” (Galatians 3:29). “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,” (Galatians 4:5). 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,” (Isaiah 53:6). And for this great and gracious end, “It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief,” (Isaiah 53:10) 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 t herein? 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 [with] 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 now 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," (Psalms 42:7). Also in the sign of the prophet, "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," (Jonah 2:3). 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 Zebedee, "Ye shall drink of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with," (Matthew 20:22; Mark 10:38; Luke 12:5). Paul says, "For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God," (Galatians 2:19). 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," (Galatians 2:20). 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," (Romans 7:4) 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," (2 Corinthians 5:14). 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 1 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," (Ephesians 2:4-6).

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," (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.

RISEN WITH CHRIST: THE HIGH VOCATION

"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 show 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 Godhead, 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; 1 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," (Hebrews 1:8). 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, (Psalms 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 everything 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," (1 Corinthians 2:9, 1 Corinthians 2:14)." 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," (John 14:15). 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, Proverbs 7:27). 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," (Revelation 22:14). The things which are above, and which all who are risen with Christ should seek to 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," (James 1:17). 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; Matthew 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," (Colossians 3:3). 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, Colossians 2:20, Colossians 2:22). 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," (1 Corinthians 15:50). "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 work-mongrel 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 allurements, 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.

S. Sanctification

Sanctification by Gilbert Beebe

Dear Brother Beebe:—Will you be so kind as to give your views through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on 1 Thessalonians 5:23? The doctrine of Sanctification, or holiness, is being a subject of much discussion here, and often by opponents I am thrown into perplexity for want of a more full understanding of the subject, and I ask for your aid. Likewise, please tell me what is to be understood by the veil which the keepers of the walls took from the spouse? (Song of Solomon 5:7) In christian love, HUESTIS Catskill, N.Y., Jan. 19, 1859.

REPLY — It would afford us much pleasure, were we competent to relieve the minds of all the dear children of God from their perplexities in regard to the doctrine of God our Savior, and to expound all mysteries, so far as the clear understanding of the truth as it is in Jesus would promote their happiness, and reflect honor and glory on the name of the Lord. The Scriptures of divine truth, however, can only be correctly opened and explained to the edification of the saints by that Holy Spirit by which the prophets and apostles were inspired to write them. And God has wisely ordered it so, to teach our dependence on him for a knowledge of divine things, that no flesh should glory in his presence. If the religion of Jesus Christ were a science, to be taught and learned by men, as the arts and sciences of this world are, then might the wise men glory in their wisdom, &c. But, Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? It is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. The first text proposed for consideration, by sister Huestis, reads: “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”—1 Thessalonians 5:23. The New School Baptists, of Catskill and elsewhere, with nearly all the other religious organizations of the present age, have incorporated the idea of progression in their creed. They all point at the old-fashioned order of Baptists as being many centuries behind the age, and tauntingly tell us that our doctrine and order would do for the intelligence of the people of a thousand years ago; but now they have brought the light of science to shine on the sacred pages, and by the aid of Bible Classes, Sabbath and Theological schools, &c., they have taken the sacred Book, and opened the seals thereof, and as their progression has outstripped the sacred volume, they are now invoking “the talent of the nineteenth century” to revise the Scriptures, and bring them up to a level with their inventions. In their blind zeal for progression, the poor, deluded dupes of priestcraft are now claiming in many instances what was once only pretended by the more fanatical portion of the Wesleyan Methodists, the attainment of perfect holiness in soul, body and spirit, which they call sanctification. None but the most deluded fanatics, or the most consummate hypocrites ever have, or ever will make such pretensions; for the inspired apostle of the Lord has positively declared, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”—1 John 1:8. Yet these enthusiasts say they have no sin, and the apostle says they have not the truth in them; that they are deceived. The text on which our views are requested, is often brought forward as evidence that such a state of immaculate purity is attainable by the efforts of men, but to an

enlightened, heaven-taught child of grace, this text conveys no such doctrine. It is the prayer of the apostle in behalf of the saints that God would sanctify them wholly, that is, as we understand the language, that God would wholly consecrate and set them apart for his glory. To sanctify, in a scriptural sense, is to set apart for a holy purpose or work, to consecrate, dedicate or devote. Under the law, the priests, the altar, the victims offered, &c., were sanctified or set apart for the purpose to which they were devoted. The whole family of Israel was sanctified in being set apart from the rest of mankind, as the people of God, in a legal or ceremonial sense. And they were commanded to sanctify the Lord God by reverencing him as their only God, in distinction from all other gods. The temples in Jerusalem were sanctified, or set apart to a religious purpose, so wives and husbands are set apart by the ordinance of marriage, else were their children unclean, or illegitimate, but by the legal sanctification, or setting apart in marriage, their offsprings are holy or lawful children. In a gospel sense sanctification is used to signify, **FIRSTLY**. The grace of God in the predestination and election of his people, separating them from all others of his creatures in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, in this sense it is used Jude 1:1 : “Sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Christ Jesus, and called.” This people, saith the Lord, have I formed for myself, they shall show forth my praise. This separation being in Christ, it is said of him, “Who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.” In him they are set apart 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.

SECONDLY. It is used in reference to the mediatorial work of Christ. “For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren; saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.”—Hebrews 2:11-12. The mediatorial sanctification, embracing their being redeemed unto God out of every kindred, tongue and people, under heaven, and set apart by the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, presents them perfect and complete in him, before the throne in glory, and set apart as the bride, the Lamb’s wife in marriage nuptials, and one with Christ, as Christ is one with the Father.

THIRDLY. Sanctification, as the work of the Spirit, is also taught in the gospel as an important and indispensable work, in bringing the chosen people of God experimentally from the power of darkness into the light and liberty of the sons of God, separating them from the world, and setting them apart as a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people. “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ,” &c.—1 Peter 1:2. Indeed all the work of the Spirit has the effect to sanctify, or set apart, as a consecrated people, devoted to God. All the instructions given, all the exercises and emotions produced in the people of God by the Holy Spirit, distinguishes them from the children of this world, and makes them manifest as members of a spiritual family.

Thus we see the children of God are sanctified by God the Father, by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Holy Spirit, but we have no account of their being sanctified by themselves. But if we mistake not there is another family, or fraternity described in the word as being their own sanctifiers, and the epistle of Jude is devoted principally to a description of them. He says they have crept into the church unawares, who were of old ordained to this condemnation; ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. “These,” says Jude, “be they **WHO SEPARATE THEMSELVES**, sensual, having not

the Spirit.” These speak evil of those things which they know not; but what they know naturally as brute beasts, having no experimental knowledge of divine things by revelation of the Spirit; for they have not the Spirit, and all they know, or can ever learn naturally by searching, studying, or by any operation short of divine revelation, they only know as natural brute beasts. “Ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.” “Woe unto them, for they have gone in the way of Cain;” in setting up a system of religion unauthorized by the Lord, and like Cain, they are at war with the religion which God has revealed. “And ran greedily after the error of Balaam,” in his missionary zeal to curse Israel for a pecuniary reward, and in teaching Balak to cast stumbling-blocks to cause the children of Israel to commit wickedness, and who have perished in the gainsayings of Core, who with his troop, in usurping the priesthood unbidden of the Lord, was swallowed up of the earth.

“These are they.” Can we doubt it? Do they not make themselves all that they profess to be? Do they not, like Cain, produce their offerings from the earth by their own industry? And like him would they not stain their guilty hands in the blood of God’s children, who oppose their abomination? Are they not walking after their own lusts? Do not their mouths speak great swelling words of vanity, having men’s persons in admiration because of advantage? “These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with the children of God, feeding themselves without fear.” But by whom are these spots, these raging waves of the sea, these wandering stars, these wells without water, these clouds without rain, by whom are they set apart? Not by the Spirit, for Jude says, “These have not the Spirit;” but they separate, or dedicate, or consecrate themselves. The church of God is faithfully warned in the word to beware of these filthy dreamers, to give place to them by subjection not for an hour. Protesting, in the name of the Lord, against this whole system of self-sanctification, self-righteousness, and all humanly invented appendages to the gospel of God our Savior, the apostle prays the very God of peace, not the imaginary god of will-worshipers, who is at the best but a god of war and confusion, while the christian’s God is the God of peace, of order, of salvation; and to him Paul’s ardent prayer in the Spirit ascended, that he would wholly consecrate or sanctify the saints; for he alone can do it effectually, wholly and perfectly. The language of the apostle’s prayer implies his conviction that they were already set apart by the foreknowledge and predestination of God the Father, by their redemption in our Lord Jesus Christ, by their calling and regeneration by the Holy Ghost, but in regard to their body, spirit and soul, there was a lack of devotedness to his cause, and a lack which none but God can supply, and he prayed in faith, too, believing that God was not only able, but willing and determined to accomplish it, for he adds, “Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it” Do what? Sanctify the saints wholly, in body, spirit and soul. Not only by separating them from these filthy dreamers, cleansing them from all the filthiness of the flesh and spirit, purifying their souls in believing the truth, giving them grace sufficient for their day, to keep their body under, and enabling them to present their bodies and spirits a living sacrifice, which is their reasonable service, but eventually he will change their vile body, and fashion it like the glorified body of their glorious Redeemer; for he has predestinated them to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he may be the first-born among many brethren. The work of sanctification in all its vital bearings, is of the Lord; he has written his law in the hearts of his children, and he has commanded them to come out and be separate from anti-Christ; and I will receive you, saith the Lord, and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters saith the Lord Almighty. The text from the Song of Solomon 5:8, presents a beautiful figurative illustration of the deliverance of the church from the veil of Moses, which Paul

says remains to this day untaken away from the hearts of them that read Moses, when redeemed and delivered from the law dispensation and brought into the light of the gospel, where she with open face, beholding as in a glass, or mirror, the glory of the Lord is changed to the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. The watchmen or ministers of the law, smote the spouse with a heavy hand, when requiring everything at her hand, and furnishing her with nothing wherewith to meet its stern demands. The eye of Moses was not dim, as a watchman over those who read him; he detected their short comings, nor was his natural force abated to the day of his death, to smite with killing effect. But Paul says, when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. Thus under the new covenant dispensation, the apostles whom Christ stationed to keep the walls, all see eye to eye, and their charge is to take away her veil from her. Their principal work was to show the law by Christ fulfilled, and the veil of the Old Testament temple rent in twain, from the top to the bottom, exposing the glories of the gospel kingdom, as typified by the inner court, or the most holy place, the ark, the mercy-seat, the cherubim of glory, and showing the way opened into the immediate presence of God, by a consecrated way, through the veil, that is his flesh. As when Jesus called Lazarus from the tomb, he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot, and a napkin was about his face. Jesus said, Loose him and let him go. Thus having redeemed his people from the curse and dominion of the law, he has commissioned the keepers of the walls to loose them, and to "make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery," &c. The individual experience of every child of God is in perfect harmony with this figure; they cease not to be smitten by the demands of the law, from the time they are quickened until the unveiled glory of the Lord in its transforming power is revealed to them in the face of Jesus Christ. And Christians, when aroused from a sleeping state, often go forth to seek their Lord by night, and fare roughly from the hands of the watchman. For example, how long did our highly esteemed sister Huestis sleep at Catskill, with the New School, having made every preparation for a refreshing slumber, and when the voice of her beloved Redeemer knocked, and she recognized his voice, saying unto her, Rise up, my love, my dove, my fair one, and come away! Was there not a murmuring, I have arranged matters to rest here, to enjoy pleasant dreams, I have put off my coat, ceased to be as tight-laced as I once was, how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them? Was there not a lingering delay between sleep and awake? But at length when constrained to rise up, and being fully awake, did you not go forth in search of the Beloved asking for the old paths, and while thus inquiring of those who were regarded as watchmen, did they not smite you sorely, until the veil was completely removed, and then after having at length passed the watchmen, you found him whom your soul loveth?

We have mistaken your case, dear sister in Christ, if there is not a striking analogy in this beautiful figure, and the reality of your own case.

Middletown, N.Y., February 1, 1859.

Editorials of Gilbert Beebe Volume 4 pgs 190-197

S. Seek and Ye Shall Find

Seek and Ye Shall Find by Gilbert Beebe

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." (Matthew 7:7-8)

These words are plain and emphatic, and sufficiently simple to be comprehended by the merest infants among the children of God, whose minds are unbiased by false teaching. But such has been the indefatigable zeal of the enemies of the Lord, to pervert the Scriptures of truth, that even these words of our divine Master, have been strangely misconstrued, and it is to be feared that some of God's dear children have been imposed upon by the enemy, in regard to their real meaning. To understand properly any Scripture, especially the text under consideration, it is indispensably necessary that we should observe who is the speaker, and who are the subjects of address, as well as the true meaning of what is spoken. The Scriptures generally are a communication from God himself. Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and God spake to the fathers, the ancient patriarchs, by the prophets, so that their inspired communications to Israel were no less the words of God than that which he has in these last times spoken to us by his Son. The words of our text were spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and therefore must be regarded as clothed with all the power and infallibility of the supreme and eternal Godhead. They are entitled to the sacred reverence which we have for him from whose lips they were spoken. No one, we conclude, who fears the Lord and trembles at the majesty of his words, would designedly pervert their meaning, or countenance their perversion by others. But so it is, as we shall presently show, this with the general tenor of the Scriptures is most awfully misrepresented, distorted, misinterpreted and misapplied, by very many who claim to be the children of God, and ministers of the gospel. By them it is generally, and perhaps we may say universally, applied to mankind in general, and to the unconverted or unregenerated, in particular. Those who contend for what they call "Free agency," offered salvation on conditions to be performed by men, human ability to repent and believe the gospel, to exercise faith in Christ, to love God, and to secure their own eternal salvation by their own wills and works, frequently repeat the words of our text, and other passages in the same connection, with an air of assumed triumph, as though they either believed themselves, or intended to make others believe, that these words were addressed by our Lord to the human family at large, and to the most ungodly in a special manner. They even go farther, and represent that the God of glory was in the act of expostulating with unrenewed sinners, and laboring to induce them to apply to him for salvation. As though the subject on which our Lord was speaking, was to show how possible it was, and how very cheaply every sinner might save himself. That if the sinner can be prevailed on to seek for religion, he shall find it; if they will seek for Christ, they shall find him; and if they will seek for justification before God, and eternal life and happiness, they shall find it. That if they will knock at heaven's gate, the portals of immortal glory shall on that condition be thrown open to them. A careful examination of the Scriptures however, will show to those unto whom it is given to know the things of the kingdom

of Christ, that such a gross perversion of the text is a most presumptuous and blasphemous contradiction, both of the letter and spirit of what our Savior said, and also of the uniform testimony of all the record of the holy Scriptures on the subject.

Instead of addressing the words and assurances of the text to the world of mankind indiscriminately, or to ungodly sinners in particular, they were spoken exclusively to his disciples, and we have his own authority for saying that they apply to no other characters. At the commencement of the fifth chapter, we are informed of the peculiar circumstances of the occasion, when Christ delivered this discourse, or "sermon on the mount," as it is called, which is given in the fifth, sixth and seventh chapters, and of which our text is an important part. It reads thus, "And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying..." Now if he had intended this discourse to apply to sinners indiscriminately, why did he retire from the multitudes and address it exclusively to his disciples? Why, if it concerned the multitudes, did he not address it to them? Can any mortal tell? Again, if he were only speaking to his disciples of things which were applicable to the multitudes of the unconverted, why did he address his words to them, in the second person, ye and you, instead of they or them? Will any one dare to charge that he did know the proper use of words, or that he would say one thing and mean another, and that, too, essentially different from what he said? If in our text he had been speaking of asking for, and receiving regeneration; seeking for and finding pardon; knocking, and thereupon having the doors of mercy, or salvation, or of eternal life, opened to them, then they unto whom the words were addressed, were those of all men, unto whom they had the least application, for as his disciples they were regenerated already, and he said they followed him in the regeneration, they had already received the forgiveness of their sins, and could, and did experimentally know, and unequivocally testified that, "The Son of man had power on earth to forgive sins." And in so testifying, Jesus said to the rulers of the Jews, "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen..." They had already been admitted into the kingdom of the Messiah; had already entered into life, and already stood freely justified in the Savior's righteousness, before the throne of God. Why then, we repeat the question, did he retire from the multitudes, and speak these words only to his disciples? If he had designed these words to express a conditional offer of salvation to unconverted sinners, is it not rational to believe that he would have availed himself of so favorable an opportunity as he had before he departed from the multitudes? How irrational then to suppose that with these words on his lips for the multitudes, that he who is too wise to err, should have deliberately left those to whom he designed his words to apply, and who, more than all the others, were the most vitally interested in them, and without uttering one word of the kind to the indiscriminate multitudes, ascend a mountain, and when his disciples came to him, open his mouth, and deliver to them the message which he had intended for the very multitudes which he on that occasion purposely avoided.

Another equally conclusive and irresistible testimony in the Scriptures, against the heresy of the Arminian notion, that God has offered salvation to all who will seek for it, is found in the words of our Lord in reply to his disciples, when they had asked him if there were many that would be saved, In this case observe the subjects of salvation, and concerning the extent of salvation Jesus said in reply not to the world, but to his disciples "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many shall seek and shall not be able." Who can believe it possible that our Lord should at one time say that all sinners who seek for salvation shall be saved, and at another time declare positively that many

should seek, and should not be able to enter in at the strait gate, which leadeth into life? To say nothing of the absurdity of the notion of blind men's seeking, and dead men's knocking, it is enough for us to know that Christ is sought of them that asked not for him, and that he is found of them that sought him not. That Israel (that is carnal Israel) hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. (Romans 11:7). "But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone: as it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offense: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed."-Romans 9:31-33. God has bidden his Israel to seek, (not to procure their salvation by deeds of the law, or works of righteousness which their own hands have done, or can do,) but he has commanded them to seek his face. He said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye my face, in vain. It was not in vain that he has said unto his spiritual Israel, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else." It is because none but God can save a sinner, that God commands his Israel to look to him for salvation, and to him alone-, for in the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory. Not in themselves, nor in their resolvings, nor in their seekings or doings, for the Lord has made bare his holy arm, and the ends of the earth shall see his salvation. He shall say to the north, Give up- and to the south, Keep not back. He will gather them from the east and from the west, and shall also say, Bring my sons from afar, 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. When he who is the good Shepherd putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them and calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. When dead in sins, they are made to hear the voice of the Son of God and they that hear shall live. Who are the dead that shall hear, and that shall live? Christ has himself settled this question, "My sheep hear my voice;" because he has put them forth, gone before them, and called them by name. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give to them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand."

We have shown, by such testimony as men will not disregard with impunity that the words of our text were spoken by Christ, and addressed to his disciples exclusively; that it is audacious presumption in those who labor to pervert his words, and to turn the truth of God into a lie. It remains now for us to show who are the disciples, and in what sense these words were applied to them, and the eternal consolation which they afford to such as are his disciples indeed.

They only are recognized in the New Testament as his disciples, who deny themselves, take up their cross and follow him. To be born again, born of the Spirit, and born into the light and love of the Redeemer, affords evidence that we are the children, and heirs of immortality; but some of God's children walk in disobedience, at least for a season; but in their disobedience to him as their Prince and Savior, their Leader and King, they are not scripturally speaking, his disciples, though they be his children. The disciples who went to him in the mount, and who listened to his discourse, were those who had not only passed from death unto life, but they had forsaken all, and followed him-, to them therefore his promises in his discourse were, and to such now, are applicable. "Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." He had told them in a former part of his sermon, or discourse, of the special providential care which their heavenly Father had over them, that he feeds the ravens, and protects the

sparrows, clothes the grass, and beautifies the frail lilies of the field, and that he would also provide all things needful for them. Although exposed to the rage of their enemies, disfranchised as citizens, cast out of the synagogues, and even driven from their houses and homes, they need not distrust the goodness and constant providence of their God, or say, What shalt I eat, or what shall I drink, or wherewithal shall I be clothed? for their heavenly Father knoweth that they have need of these things. They were directed to seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto them. The kingdom of God, and his righteousness, then, was that they were to seek, and our text assures us that they would not seek in vain, for they shall find. None but those who are born again, can seek that kingdom successfully, for except a man be born again, he cannot see it; and we cannot be qualified to seek for things which we cannot see. But Christ had said to his disciples, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear." To them it was given to know the things of the kingdom; but to them that are without, it was not given. Therefore he said to his disciples, apart from the multitudes, Seek, and ye shall find, as they were directed to ask, and it should be given to them. He had taught them to pray, and to ask God to give them their daily bread, deliver them from evil, protect them from temptation, and forgive their trespasses..etc, and in our text he assures them that they shall not ask in vain, for these things shall be given to them. If earthly parents knew how to give good gifts to their children, how much more should your heavenly Father? for he told some who claimed to be children of God, that if God were their Father, they would believe on him; but he said they were of their father the devil. To the children of God belongs the privilege to ask, with the assurance that they shall find the kingdom of God, and his, God's, righteousness; and to knock, and the doors of deliverance from all their fear shall be opened unto them. Of them, as the disciples of the Redeemer" it may truly be said, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high places." What encouragement is here for the tried disciples of the Lord Jesus, while well they know that all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution, yet amidst all their conflicts, their God is within hearing. He rideth upon heavens in their help, and in his excellence, on the sky. May the kind assurances with which the new covenant abounds to abounds to them, be set home with power and grace to the heart of all who love the Lord, and may we be encouraged to trust in, and rely upon him, constantly, firmly and forever.

Signs of the Times - July 15, 1855

S. So Walk Ye in Him

So Walk Ye in Him From Signs of the Times - March 15, 1857.

“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him!” Colossians 2:6 by Gilbert Beebe This important admonition is not restricted to the saints and faithful brethren at Colosse, unto whom it was addressed, but it is equally applicable to the saints in all places and throughout all time. And as it relates to the walk of the children of God, and their reception of Christ Jesus the Lord, it is full of interest and instruction as well as admonition. Three leading propositions are suggested for our special and prayerful consideration, from the reading of our text, viz:

1. The person and perfections of Christ Jesus the Lord.

2. Our reception of him: When and how?

3. The admonition to so walk in him. On our first proposition the inspired apostle has given some plain and positive declarations in the preceding connection. In the thirteenth verse of chapter one, he sets him forth as the Son of God, in the fourteenth as possessing in himself the redemption of his church; in the fifteenth as the image of the invisible God, and as such, the firstborn of every creature. In the sixteenth he is declared to be the Creator of all things, visible and invisible, thrones, dominions, principalities and powers, all were created by him and for him; in the seventeenth verse his priority and sustaining power is declared. “And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.” The eighteenth verse asserts that he is the head of the body, the church, and that he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, and that in all things he has the preeminence. And it then follows, “For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell.” His complete success in the work of redemption, making peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven, and the saints to whom our text is addressed, are an exemplification of his glorious triumph. “And you who 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 unproveable in his sight.” In this second chapter the apostle expresses his anxious solicitude for the saints, that their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto the riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. These all being hid in God, and in the Father, and in Christ, and Christ the only image of the invisible God, inasmuch as he is the brightness of the Father’s glory and the express image of his person, (Hebrews 1:3). By the term image, we understand is signified that there is no revelation made to men of the eternal Godhead, only in and through our Lord Jesus Christ. But in this divine mystery of God, and the Father and of Christ, God is manifest in the flesh. They that have seen the Son have seen the Father also, for the Father is in him, and he is in the Father, and in Jesus Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and the saints are complete in him, which is the Head of all principality and power.

Second. Our reception of him. The Scriptures, to our mind at least, most clearly teach that Christ was given to be the Head over all things to his church, as anciently as were his people given to him as his body, and the fullness of that body. Christ acknowledges the receipt of his people as a gift from his Father, in these words, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me," (John 17:6). "My Father which gave them me, is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand," (John 10:29). And that Christ had this gift in possession before the world began is abundantly proved by Ephesians 1:4, and 2 Timothy 1:9. But in the sense of the text under consideration, the time of our receiving him, was when he was manifestly presented to us as our Savior, in delivering us from bondage, guilt and condemnation, when by faith we were enabled to lay hold on him, as our full and complete Savior. Then, and not until then, did we receive him in an experimental sense of the word. Till then we were living without hope and without God in the world. Although in the depravity of our nature we were enemies to him by wicked works, and under the delusion that we had power to secure his favor by our own works whenever it should please us to do so, we were brought by his quickening power to see and feel and confess that we were poor, lost, guilty and helpless sinners against a good, just and holy God, and that we justly deserved to bear the awful penalties of his holy law. How were we then suffered to exert all our fancied powers, to try all our imaginary plans, schemes, instrumentalities and means, and to find them all delusive and vain. Yielding ourselves to hopeless despair, our prayers unheard and unanswered, our cries for mercy shut out, our best performances to which we had attached so much virtue in commending us to God, we now in astonishment discovered were only the polluted streams from a corrupt and filthy fountain. Relinquishing the very last glimmering hope that God could save us without doing violence to his eternal perfections, all, all was gone, and we were sinking down to meet our dreadful fate, when Christ Jesus the Lord was presented to us in all the irresistible charms of his eternal excellency, as the One altogether lovely, and the chiefest among ten thousand. A full and all-sufficient Savior in every respect suited to our hopeless case. With what rapture, joy and gratitude, we then received him. His blood was applied for the cleansing of us from all iniquity, and his righteousness for our full, free and everlasting justification before God. All our capacious souls could wish, in him did richly meet, and unworthy as we felt ourselves to be of him we were constrained to receive him.

How did we receive him? Was it as a conditional Savior, or one who would meet us on some conditional ground? Alas! we had never performed a meritorious act in all our life. We received him in his full character, as a whole and all-sufficient Savior, on whom we could safely rely as our Prophet, Priest and King, our Shepherd, and the Bishop of our souls, our Leader and Commander, the Captain of our salvation. We received him in all the attributes and perfections set forth in the connection of our text, as our strength, being by him strengthened with all might according to his glorious power, giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in glory; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son, in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins. We received him as the image of the invisible God, the firstborn, of every creature. We received him as the Creator and upholder of all things. We received him as the Head of the body, the church, as the beginning, the first-born from the dead, and as in all things having the preeminence. We received him as possessing all fullness; as having made peace by the blood of his cross, and able to reconcile such enemies as we were, to himself, and to shed his love abroad in us that we should love him supremely, love his people, his cause, his doctrine, and

all his laws, and ordinances, and institutions. We received him as the embodiment of all the fullness of the Godhead, and therefore all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in him. We received him as the Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God and everlasting Father; as the first and the last, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the Almighty. We receive him as our Life, our Resurrection, our Advocate with the Father, and our only and blessed Potentate. This being the way the saints have received Christ Jesus the Lord, let us attend to the apostle's injunction.

Third. So walk ye in him. In all our walk and deportment we are admonished to walk in him as we have received him. As the names and titles which he bears, Christ Jesus, signify the anointed Savior, in all our walk and conversation we should so regard him, and as the Lord, we are to revere, honor, praise and obey him. As the Lord our God, we should worship him, and trust in him. As we have redemption in him, we should look for redemption and justifying righteousness nowhere else, for so we received him. As we received him as possessing all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, so in our constant walk should we look to him for all the wisdom and knowledge that we need. "And this," says Paul, "I say lest any man should beguile you with enticing words," (Colossians 2:4). Well the apostle knew that great reception would be used by the enemies, to entice the saints to seek for wisdom and knowledge in relation to spiritual things, in the schools of men. But to guard them from imposition, he tells them that all wisdom and knowledge is hid in God, and the Father and Christ. And he has hidden it from the wise and prudent of this world, and revealed it unto the babes. He has made foolish the wisdom of the world, and determined that no man by searching shall find him out, to the end that no man shall be allowed to glory in the flesh. He that glories, let him glory in the Lord. None of the children of God have ever received a particle of the treasure of wisdom and knowledge of divine and spiritual things only as they have been taught of God, and every one that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh to Christ. Not only is all wisdom and knowledge hid in him, as we received him, but in him all fullness dwells; he is full of grace and truth, and of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. As we received him as our life, it is in him as our life we are to walk. We are dead to the flesh, dead to the law, and dead to sin, and the life we now live in the flesh, we live not by the life of the flesh, but by the faith of the Son of God. We are baptized into Jesus Christ, and have put on Christ, therefore our life is hid with Christ in God. For us to live is Christ. "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. 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. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead, because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness," (Romans 8:5-10). Thus circumcised, and the flesh cut off, slain and crucified, we live unto God, in the spirit, and all our walk, spiritually speaking, is in the Spirit, and therefore in Christ we received Christ Jesus the Lord as our Light. All other lights were extinguished, and to him we are consequently to look for instruction, wisdom and deliverance from all our clouds of darkness. To so walk in him is to live by faith upon him, discarding all the boasted light of human wisdom and science, knowing that in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. We received him, when we were perfectly helpless, as our strength, so are we to walk in him, having no confidence in the flesh. We received him as the consummate fullness of all we desired, and so

let us walk, having Christ all things are ours. We received him as our Leader and example; then let us deny ourselves of all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and take up our cross and follow the Lamb wherever he leads the way, through evil as well as through good report. We received him as our Lord and Master, our King and Commander, and so it becomes us as his saints, to walk in him in cheerful and willing obedience to all his commands and ordinances, In our reception of Christ Jesus our Lord, we were willing to forsake all things else, turn our back upon the world with all its vanities, and find our home, our joy, our treasure and all our desires in him—even so let us walk in him. When we received Christ Jesus our Lord, we received his mystical body, the church; that love of God which was then shed abroad in us centered in him, and embraced all his members. We saw his image enstamped on them and loved that image whenever we saw it. So then ought we to walk in him in love, in fellowship with him and in fellowship and union one with another. When we received Christ Jesus the Lord we loved the assemblies of the saints, and were glad when they said unto us, “Come, let us go into the house of the Lord, our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem,” (Psalms 122:1-2). Should we not so walk in him now, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together?

S. Spiritual Depression and Assurance

Spiritual Depression and Assurance From Signs of the Times—September 15, 1867. by Gilbert Beebe 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 anyone on the subject of religion, then I feel how very ungrateful it is in me to repay 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 conclude you know not what the feeling of gratitude is? I often think, dear Elder Beebe, that I have deceived you, though I do not think it has been my intention to do so. I think the animal feelings can become excited when there is really no change 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 everything 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 anyone 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 county, 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 anymore. 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 anything about my feelings, then I think I would not deceive anyone, 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 have never had a full and complete Savior presented to their view? Is it possible for anyone 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 anyone, 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 to listen with any degree of patience to an Arminian sermon. I felt in my heart that 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 17th 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 3:1-19, 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, and the spirit against the flesh. But remember, they cannot possibly both be found in anyone 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 anyone 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; until faith revives and looks within the veil; 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 anyone 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.

S. Suitable Words

Suitable Words by Gilbert Beebe

Dear Brother Beebe:—I heard an Old School Baptist preach some time since, and he remarked that if sinners were lost, it was their own fault. I should like to have your views upon the subject. To me it had an awful, squinting towards Arminianism. I hope you will go fully into the subject as it is one that seems to puzzle the minds of a good many of the Baptists, even in this part of the world, though I am not of that number.

JOHN R. MARTIN Franklin County, Va., Feb. 3, 1859.

Reply - Old School Baptist preachers should be exceedingly careful how they express themselves in setting forth their views, as a very considerable of the apparent difficulty which too often agitates the Zion of our God arises from a failure to understand the real meaning of each other. A loose, careless way of dashing out off-handed expressions can hardly fail to produce or promote such agitation, which, when produced, is often very hard to allay. The wise man, we are told, sought out suitable or appropriate words; and words fitly spoken are like apples of gold in pictures of silver. If we would preach, or talk, or write so as to edify the saints, and promote union, harmony and christian fellowship, we should avoid as far as possible all ambiguous expressions. We remember a short time ago a brother in the south said that he did not believe in revealed religion, and the expression startled many of his and our brethren, whereas the brother had no idea of denying what we generally mean when we use those words, but probably designed only to show that in his view the word "religion," as used in the Scriptures, has reference to the conduct and works of men, rather than to what is revealed to them. So also some expressions made by us, and others, have been so construed as to charge us with holding sentiments for which we have not the least fellowship, and although we have from time to time disclaimed the imputation, the charges are in some quarters reiterated with as much zeal as though we had never disclaimed them. In regard to the remark which brother Martin heard an Old School Baptist make, we should be at loss to know the meaning of the brother, unless he should explain. In some respects, with brother Martin, we think the remark has a "squinting to Arminianism."

First. Because it is a favorite expression of all Arminians, and is used by them to signify that in their opinion every guilty sinner has salvation offered to him on certain conditions they are able to perform, and that it is therefore optional with them to be saved or damned.

Second. Should we hear an Old School Baptist make the remark, we would very naturally understand him to signify that he was not in perfect unison in his views with his brethren, or that he designed to convey the idea that his brethren exonerated that class of sinners that are finally and forever lost, from blame, and thus implying a charge of unrighteousness and injustice on God. In either or any case, we think such expressions thrown out are calculated to produce jargon and discord among those who, of all men, should strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Third. The IF in the remark seems to imply a doubt whether sinners will be, and a disbelief in the scriptural doctrine that sinners are already, lost; and this we think implies an Arminian idea. The blessed Savior has informed us that he that believeth not, is condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on him. From the condemnation and wrath of almighty God nothing short of the blood of Jesus Christ can possibly save any of them, and the application of that blood is by no means within the reach or power of any sinner; if it be applied at all, it must be by the sovereign grace of God. That men are in fault for being sinners, and that they are justly and righteously condemned as guilty sinners, is taught both by the word and Spirit, by the word as recorded in the Scriptures, and by the Spirit in his work on the heart, and in the experience of all who are born of God.

We have not room to pursue the subject farther at this time, but we hope our brethren will be more careful in the selection of words, knowing that we are surrounded by enemies who watch for our halting, and who rejoice when they can, either by fair means or foul, succeed in stirring up strife and discord among us.

Middletown, N.Y., March 15, 1859.

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S. Temptations

Temptations From Signs of the Times—August 1, 1868. by Gilbert Beebe

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 irreconcilable, 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 1:2-4. "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 1 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.

S. Temptations of Christ

TEMPTATIONS OF CHRIST From Signs of the Times—August 15, 1868.

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

“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 anytime 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 anytime 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 (2 Peter 2:1-22).

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 (Jude 1:11). 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.

S. That I May Know Him

That I May Know Him From Signs of the Times—August 1, 1867.

“That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection.” Php 3:10 by Gilbert Beebe

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 an 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. And 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," (Php 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," (Ephesians 1:17-18). 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 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, 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 everyone 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 Ephesians 1:1-23 and Ephesians 2:1-22 shows 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 is raised from the dead, that ye should bring forth fruit unto God. Romans 7:4 and Ephesians 2:1, omitting the supplied words, should read in connection with the last preceding verses. "And hath put all under his feet, and gave him the head over all to the church, which is his body, the fullness 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 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 bodies, 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 handwriting 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 show 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 from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you, (Romans 8:11). The same resurrection power that brought up from under the death and 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.

S. The Absolute Predestination of All Things

THE ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS by Gilbert Beebe

[Note: The following is a combination of four separate articles by Gilbert Beebe, editor of the SIGNS Of The Times paper from 1832-1880. The publisher has edited these in the following manner: They are joined together because they do not replicate thoughts contained in each separately, and by omitting the salutation or query at the beginning. He has separated the articles by placing the publication date at the end of each. It is appropriate to note two things about Elder Beebe: He expressly and repeatedly denied that his views “made God the author of sin,” which a fair reading by an enlightened mind can easily ascertain, and he did not use the word “permissive” relative to God’s will. —Publisher] On this important part of the doctrine of Christ, we wish to be well understood, as we consider it a fundamental part of the faith of the Gospel. In the absence of this doctrine we can have no confidence in the predictions of the Word of God. If the prophets spake and wrote of undetermined events, events concerning which the Holy One Himself had not made up His mind, they must have spoken and written with the utmost uncertainty. If it were possible to banish the doctrine of Predestination from the Holy Scriptures, we should not only lose thereby our interest in the ancient predictions of the Old Testament, but we should find it impossible to believe the testimony of the New. What consolation would the exceedingly great and precious promises of the Gospel afford us, if we had reason to believe that God had not yet determined whether they should ever be verified? Again, what confidence could we have in the veracity of God if it were certain that His promises were made without any determination on His part to perform them? Indeed there could be no certainty of a future state without the predestination of such a state. No heaven, no hell, no resurrection of the body, or final judgment. Thus we see to what an awful dilemma we should be driven without this doctrine.

Predestination is the pre-determination of all events that can possibly come to pass. It involves the doctrine of Divine Sovereignty, and exhibits the wisdom and the power of God; the one presents the purpose, the other carries into execution the thing decreed.

Predestination is the result of the counsel of God’s own will, originating with Himself alone. “With whom took He counsel, and who instructed Him..,” (Isaiah 40:14). In the doctrine of Predestination all the Attributes of God shine forth, with dreadful majesty. The entire history of mankind is by Predestination established in the view of God, and the final destiny of all things are held in His Almighty hand.

“There’s not a sparrow nor a worm, But’s found in His decree;

He sits on no precarious throne, Nor borrows leave to be.”

We may consider this doctrine first in the economy of salvation, and then in its more general bearings. First, God has chosen, or predestined, His people unto salvation, “through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth,” (2 Thessalonians 2:13). Agreeable to His own sovereign pleasure as expressed in the above text, He has predestinated them “to the adoption of children

by Jesus Christ unto Himself according to the good pleasure of His will,," (Ephesians 1:5). He has predestinated them unto eternal life. "As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him,," (John 17:2). "And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed," (Acts 13:48). He has predestined their calling, conformity to the image of Jesus Christ, their justification and glorification. "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," (Romans 8:29-30). In short, every thing in relation to His people here and hereafter is so firmly established in the decree of God that no power can prevail against them. "He rideth upon the heavens in their help and in His excellency on the sky. The eternal God is their refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms," (Deuteronomy 33:26-27). "Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel; according to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought?," (Numbers 23:23) "Even the very hairs of your head are all numbered," (Matthew 10:30; Luke 12:7).

Second, Predestination is not confined to the adorable purpose of Salvation by Grace; but it has a direct bearing on all things. Not a sparrow can be brought to the ground, nor can the troubled ocean dash her foaming waves one inch beyond the limits of God's decrees. "And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed," (Job 38:11).

If any thing was left upon uncertainties, every thing must have been equally uncertain. If the smallest atom in creation were suffered to fly at random in the full sense of the word, God Himself not knowing where, or when it would alight, it would prove what cannot be proved, viz: that God is deficient in knowledge. The omniscience, and the predestination of God, must stand or fall together; they cannot be separated. We are confident that both exist in glorious harmony in the mind of Him who has "declared the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all My pleasure," (Isaiah 46:10). The doctrine of Absolute Predestination, when rightly understood, does not involve the idea of man's acting involuntarily in sin; nor does it exonerate him from accountability; this may be discovered by noticing the following examples: The crucifixion of Christ, the abduction of Joseph, together with many other circumstances recorded in Holy Writ. "For of a truth against Thy holy child Jesus, whom Thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were gathered together, for to do whatsoever Thy hand and Thy counsel determined before to be done," (Acts 4:27). "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, YE have taken and by wicked hands crucified and slain," (Acts 2:23). The brethren of Joseph had no knowledge of the purpose of God when they sold him to go down into Egypt, they meant it for evil, but God ordained it for good. When the Jews persecuted the disciples of our Lord Jesus into strange cities they knew not that God had ordained this very method of sending his "missionaries" everywhere preaching the Word. And amidst the abounding abominations of the present day, it is our consolation to know that God has ordained: "The wrath of man shall praise Him, the remainder of wrath Thou will restrain," (Psalms 75:10). We need only to understand this precious doctrine, and we shall most assuredly love it. The Christian exults in the thought that death and hell can do no more than what our Father pleases.

We might notice the objections commonly brought against this doctrine, but we shall wait until such objections are presented; and in the mean time earnestly request our brethren to examine the Word of God on this important subject. And that the God of all grace may give us light and wisdom from above, that in His light we may see light, is our prayer in Jesus' name, to whom be glory, power and dominion, now and forever, Amen.

February 6, 1833 Our Standard Lexicon defines absolute to mean, in its literal, or general sense, free, independent of anything extraneous. 2. Complete in itself; positive, as an absolute declaration. 3. Unconditional, as an absolute promise. 4. Existing independent of another cause, as God is absolute. 5. Unlimited by extraneous power or control; as an absolute government or prince. 6. Not relative, as absolute space. (See Webster's definition). As this word is nowhere used in the Scriptures to qualify the word predestination, we will not contend for it, especially as the word predestination when rightly understood needs no such qualification, as it cannot be otherwise than absolute. We merely use the word absolute to distinguish our views of predestination from those who, while they admit that the term is frequently used in the Scriptures; deny its plain and obvious meaning as though it were only vaguely used by the inspired writers without any positive or unequivocal meaning. On the signification of the word predestination, it means foreordination by an unchangeable purpose. But the grand question on which we are principally at issue, is, whether the predestination of God extends to the wicked actions of men or devils. We have rejoiced greatly in the firm belief that God's government is universal, that there is not a sparrow or a worm, but is found in His decree. That sin, and death, and hell are under His control, so that "the wrath of man shall praise Him, and the remainder of wrath He will restrain." If the Scriptures do not authorize us so to believe, we know not at what hour we may fall a prey to the unbridled rage of the enemies of God and of His people.

If the divine government of Jehovah only extends to the "good" conduct of His creatures, His government is much more limited in regard to this world, than we had supposed, for He has informed us that there is "none that doeth good; no not one." But that He has set limits to wicked men, we should infer from His declaration, "I have formed the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and bringeth forth an instrument for his work; I have created the waster to destroy. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that riseth against thee in judgment, thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of Me, saith the Lord," (Isaiah 54:16-17). If God has created the blacksmith, and the waster, to destroy, and so limited their operations that they cannot go beyond His decree, and if this is a part of the heritage of His servants, they cannot yield it up without marring our inheritance. We confess that to us this part of the saints' inheritance is too valuable to be sold for a mess of pottage, as Esau's birthright. Paul has said, that God "worketh all things after the counsel of His own will;" and God has told us, by the mouth of Isaiah, that He has declared the end from the beginning, &c., "saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth My counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass, I have purposed it, I will also do it." How unmeaning would all this language be to us in the absence of predestination! The end declared from the beginning, and yet not determined in the mind and purpose of God, how preposterous! We cannot believe that our God would declare a thing beforehand that He was undecided upon, and which might be quite different from what He had declared; and if He has only declared what He had determined on, that is the most "absolute"

predestination that we have any knowledge of. This predetermination of events extends throughout all the intervening space, from “the beginning to the end,” and consequently embraces “all things.” When wicked men conspired against the life and liberty of Joseph, and against the predestination of his and their own destiny, as signified by Joseph’s dreams, they intended evil, “but God meant it for good.” If God had not previously intended to harden Pharaoh’s heart, He would not have told Moses that He would do so. If He had not predestinated that the children of Israel sojourn in a strange land, and be afflicted cruelly by the Egyptians four hundred years, He certainly would not have told Abraham so, (Genesis 15:12-16). Let it be remembered that God told Abram this long before either the children of Israel or the Egyptians, who were to be concerned in it, were born, and the things which the Egyptians were to do to the children of Israel were such, as God told Abram He would judge and punish them for. The Son of God was delivered into the hands of wicked men, that they should, with wicked hands, do to Him what God’s “hand and counsel had before determined to be done.” He was, in fact, “delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.”

Paul writes to the Thessalonians concerning the manifestation of that wicked people, whom the Lord would destroy, and says, “God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned, (2 Thessalonians 2:11). God said by the mouth of Isaiah, that He would “choose their delusions,” (Isaiah 66:4). This is solid Bible testimony, and it is what we intend to express by the words absolute predestination. And pray brother, what objections have you to it? Would you wish the right, the power, or the government of God to be circumscribed? Would you wish to restrict His government, and confine His dominion to “good people” and their “good works” and leave the powers of darkness to rage at random, without the restraint of God’s predestinating decrees? Are you fearful that this view reflects upon the purity and holiness of God? But why these fears? Are not the inspired Scriptures sufficiently guarded to secure the honor of their supreme Author? If not, all our attempts to supply the supposed deficiency will be as vain, if not as presumptive, as Uzzah’s attempt to protect the Ark of God. Because God controls, restrains, overrules and disposes of all beings, and all events, precisely as He eternally designed to do, it does not BY ANY MEANS FOLLOW THAT HE IS THE FOUNTAIN FROM WHENCE IMPURITY PROCEEDS. He is perfectly holy, just and good; but He has all power to set bounds and limits to that which is unholy, unjust, and wicked. If it be admitted that God now has power to restrain the wickedness of men and devils, according to His sovereign pleasure, and that He is immutable, then it follows, that He always had that power. If it is denied that He has that power, where is the safety of His church? Or, if He has now a perfect knowledge of all beings and of all events, then He must always have had that knowledge. It certainly does not become us to say that either His wisdom, holiness, prescience or power, are at fault, that He has allowed His creatures to rebel against His government, when He had power and wisdom enough to have prevented it, if it had been His pleasure so to have done. We do not charge or brethren with attempting to limit Jehovah, or set bounds for Him to be governed by, but we would give and take the admonition, “Be still and know that He is God.” If we cannot comprehend Him, it still is our privilege to confide in Him, for He is too wise to err, and too good to do that which is wrong.

We have no disposition to press our views on those who do not understand the Scriptures as we do on every subject. But we wish all our readers to understand that we do as firmly believe, and as greatly rejoice in the doctrine of Predestination, and its extension to everything in heaven, earth

and hell, as we do in any other part of divine revelation.

July 1, 1855.

Predestination, as a highly esteemed writer in the Signs once remarked, does not require to be qualified by prefixing to it the word absolute, as the predestination of God must of necessity be absolute in every particular. Jehovah is an absolute God, and all that He purposes or performs must be absolute. There can be no fiction or anything merely nominal with Him. Pre-destination is destination beforehand, and as nothing can be beforehand, or subsequent with Him, the term as it is used in the Scriptures is used in reference to our finite state, as creatures of time; or rather as creatures of God, but for the present, in the time state of existence. God inhabits eternity, and all things are ever present with Him. The progression of time and development of events can add nothing to His stock of knowledge. We His creatures may and certainly do both live and learn. He has Himself called our attention to the fact that He “has declared the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure.” This declaration of the end from the beginning proves His prescience so conclusively, that but few are so hardened in Infidelity as to openly and in so many words, deny His foreknowledge of all events; for if He were deficient in knowledge He could not with unerring certainty declare the end from the beginning and from ancient times, the things which are yet to transpire. But there are those who, while they admit what is called the foreknowledge of God, deny that His knowledge is based upon His own purpose and determinate counsel. They urge the following objections to predestination.

It, they say, is fatalism, it destroys man’s free-agency, and his accountability, and makes God the author of sin; and some there are who go still farther and say if the doctrine of predestination be true, God in predestinating the events in time, etc., has transcended His right and therefore is unjust. Our friends, we think, will agree with us, that it verily becomes poor sinful dying mortals thus irreverently, not to say blasphemously, to question the eternal right of God to do what seems to Him good, “in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth,” or to set up their own standards of justice and denounce their Creator if He does not abide by their decisions. Let all such first meet the searching interrogative of the inspired Apostle, “Hath not the potter power over the clay, to form one a vessel of honor,” etc.? The holy prophet of Jehovah, by inspiration, has informed us that God is the potter, and we are the clay. Hence we must acknowledge His eternal right to dispose of all things, all events, and of all worlds according to His own pleasure. Let this be admitted and all murmuring against His predestination will cease.

It is not our purpose to meet the objections urged by men to the doctrine of divine revelation, and by logical argument to put them to silence; nor do we design to attempt to make the doctrine palatable to the natural mind of man which “is enmity against God,” for all such attempts are without the least prospects of success. The enmity of the carnal mind is fully demonstrated in the objections which they bring, but we design rather to search out and call attention of our friends to what God has revealed in the Scriptures on the subject, and this we will do, if God permit, whether men will hear, or whether they forbear. The term predestination, as we have intimated, has reference to the order and succession of events in time, by which the eternal designs of God are brought to pass. And, so far as God’s providence is concerned in bringing His designs to pass, predestination simply signifies that God had purposed, decreed, ordained, or destined the accomplishment of those things before they were, in order of time brought to pass. Hence to us, it

is pre-destination, with God it is destination, because His infinity connects and comprehends the end with the beginning, for He is Himself the First and the Last, the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending.

Predestination is a Bible Doctrine

Having, as clearly as we are able, defined predestination, we pass to enquire whether it is a Bible doctrine. If it is a Bible doctrine, we must admit it, or reject the Bible as a record of infallible and eternal truth, and take the open ground of Infidelity. And who can trace the sacred pages of the Holy Book and say that it contains no testimony in support of the doctrine? In the absence of predestination how was it that the prophets of Jehovah foretold the events of ages, thousands of years before those events were actually fulfilled? Who, or what directed the prophetic vision of holy men of old, to look down the vista of intervening centuries, and in the name of the Lord Jehovah predict the things that should come to pass down to the end of time, and even the resurrection of the slumbering dead, and the judgment of the last day. If these things were not before determined of God, how were they known by His prophets? and if they were unknown to God and man how were they foretold so precisely? And if they were foreknown of God, and He inspired holy men to foretell them, then that knowledge and purpose of God was what the Bible calls, predestination. But we have no need of ifs in this investigation. The Scriptures do most clearly and emphatically declare that "Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," that God "spake to the fathers by the prophets," and also that the Spirit of Christ, which was in the prophets, "did testify beforehand of His sufferings and of the glory that should follow," (Hebrews 1:1; 1 Peter 1:11). This was and is predestination. God spake by the prophets, saying, "It shall come to pass." Do not these words imply a decree when uttered by Him who speaks the Word, and it stands fast, who commands, and it is done? How harmoniously do both Testaments agree in this fundamental doctrine. Throughout the Old Testament, God, by His prophets, declared the things that "should come pass." Apostles and inspired evangelists in the New Testament respond, saying, "And it came to pass." This is predestination. But perhaps some may demand, "What came to pass?" We reply all that God by the prophets said should come to pass.

First, in reference to the advent of the blessed Savior, for He Himself declared that all that was written of Him in the law, and in the prophets and in the psalms must be fulfilled, and when dying on the cross of Calvary He exclaimed, "It is finished!" and in awful confirmation the retiring sun, prevailing darkness, the quaking earth, rending rocks, opening graves, rising dead, and rending veil of the temple gave ample demonstration. Daniel, in harmony with all the other prophets of the Lord, had predicted that at a specific time the God of heaven should set up a kingdom that should never be destroyed, that the Messiah should come, should be cut off, should make an end of sin, and bring in everlasting righteousness. The New Testament is a record of the faithful and precise fulfillment of these predictions. Long had the prophet slumbered with his fathers, before the accomplishment of his "seventy weeks," but the Word of our God could not die, it liveth and abideth forever. That is predestination. The Predestination of our God also embraces all the heirs of immortality. "For whom He did foreknow, them He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called, and whom He called, them He also justified, and whom He did justify them He also glorified," (Romans 8:28-30). This predestinated people is blessed with "all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as He (God) hath chosen us in

Him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before Him in love. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children, according to the good pleasure of His will. In whom we have received an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will," (Ephesians 1:4-6).

There are those who admit the doctrine of predestination, so far as it applies to the coming of the Savior, the work which He was to perform, the sufferings which He was to endure, and the glory which was to follow; and also in relation to the good works which God before ordained that His people should walk in; but reject the idea that His purpose and foreknowledge extends to the wicked acts of men and devils. This they claim would make God the author of sin. But for ourselves, it is our firm conviction that if a single event could possibly transpire from the creation of the world to the end of time, from the rise and fall of empires, to the falling of a sparrow, or a hair of our head to the ground, that such unforeseen and consequently unprovided for events would unavoidably endanger and render uncertain the execution of what is admitted to be ordained and decreed of God. How could it be otherwise? Can we consistently believe that it was predestinated that Christ should suffer on Calvary to redeem sinners, and yet that He did not foreknow that there would be any sinners to save? Did He decree that His dear Son should be delivered into the hands of wicked men; and yet not contemplate in that decree, either the existence of wicked men, or what they should do in condemning and crucifying Him? But aside from all human reasoning, or vain speculation on the subject, God has informed us, by His inspired Apostles, that Jesus was in fact delivered by His determinate counsel, and foreknowledge, and was actually put to death by wicked hands. And again, the inspired Apostles break forth in praise to God, in devout acknowledgement both of the decree and of its accomplishment, that, "And when they had heard that, they lifted up their voices to God with one accord and said, Lord, Thou art God, which hast made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is; who by the mouth of Thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against His Christ. For of a truth, against Thy holy child Jesus whom Thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever Thy hand and Thy counsel determined before to be done," (Acts 4:24-28). Here let it be observed the holy Apostles of the Lamb did not start back with horror, and exclaim, fatalism! This makes God the author of sin! Or this destroys the accountability of man! They saw nothing in all this reflecting unfavorably on the character or purity of the supreme God; but they saw such harmony in the purpose, decrees, and actual accomplishment of the designs of God, as led them simultaneously and with one accord to lift up their voices in devout adoration and praise to the Most High God, whose providential government was so clearly manifested in controlling all events. The things which they now saw brought to pass were distinctly spoken of by David in his day, and pointed out by the slaughtered lamb which Abel, by faith, offered to God some four thousand years before any of the actors in the crucifixion of Christ, were born. God had not only decreed what they should do, but He had also decreed what they should not do. "The enemy should not exact upon Him, nor the son of wickedness afflict Him." "A bone of Him should not be broken." "He should not be holden of the pains of death." His soul should not be left in hell, nor should His flesh see corruption. Neither death nor hell could go beyond the purpose and decree of God. None but Judas could betray Him, without involving a contradiction of the purpose and decree which was recorded in Psalms 109:1-31; the pieces of silver for which He was betrayed were all numbered and recorded in the

decree of God and His revelation as published by the prophet hundreds of years before Judas was born. The parting of His raiment, and casting lots for His garment, was all a matter of ancient record, together with all the minute circumstances which occurred; all of which we are informed were done "that the Scripture should be fulfilled." The murder of the infants by Herod, brought to pass the decree published by the prophet Jeremiah six hundred years before. "Thus saith the Lord, A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children because they were not," (Jeremiah 31:1-40; Matthew 2:18). The case also of Joseph and His brethren is a very clear and striking illustration of the overruling government of God, as embracing all events. And who shall dare charge God with unrighteousness, because He retains in His own hand a supreme control of all things and of all events, because He "worketh all things after the counsel of His own will"? Who has a right to infer that God is the fountain of sin or unholiness; when we are informed that men "with wicked hands," do "whatsoever His hand and His counsel before determined to be done"? Paul when declaring what God had said of Pharaoh, that for this very purpose He had raised him up to make His power known in him, etc., anticipated the blasphemous out breakings of the human mind in opposition to the predestination of God. "Thou wilt surely say unto me, Why doth He yet find fault," or hold man as an accountable being, "for who has resisted His will?" But the Apostle did not forbear to declare this doctrine because men resisted and blasphemed it; but says the Apostle, "Nay, but who art thou, O man, that replieth against God?" etc. When the enmity of the human heart is subdued by the quickening power and grace of God in regeneration, then the heaven-born child is reconciled to God, and loves to contemplate the power and glory of Jehovah. Then is he prepared, with the inspired psalmist, to rejoice that the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth; that all power in heaven and in earth is vested in the blessed Savior. But if left to doubt His all-pervading power and providence for a moment, now sinks his spirit at the fearful thought that some wheel in the vast, and apparently complicated machinery of nature might be suffered to revolve unbound by the wisdom and foreknowledge of God. If one of the wheels could work without the power and providence of God, its effects might be to ungear the whole system of divine government, and worlds on worlds be dashed in irretrievable ruin. When the enlightened mind of God's dear children contemplates the glory of this subject, they fall down before God in admiration, and with the four beast, and four and twenty elders, cry "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord, God, Almighty." They are filled with the most profound reverence for, and confidence in the God of their salvation.

One reason we have thought why some of the children of God have seemed to be unreconciled to this doctrine is that they have failed to discriminate between the overruling power and providence of God and the effusions of His Spirit. "Let no man say when he is tempted, that he is tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted, neither tempted He any man." When men are tempted to sin they are tempted of their own lusts, and by the devil. But how hopeless and desperate would be the condition of all who are tempted, if God had not the power and providence to control the temptation, and overrule its effect according to His eternal purpose and pleasure for the good of His tried and tempted children, and for the glory of His own great name. Our every temptation, though they flow not from God, are directed, and restricted and made serviceable to His saints, by Him, is absolutely certain. Hence Peter assured the saints that God would control this matter, "He will not suffer you to be tempted beyond that which ye are able; but will also with the temptation make a way for your escape." That glorious High Priest which becomes us, was Himself tempted in all points as His children are, and knows how to succor them that are tempted. Soon after He

was baptized, He was led up by the Spirit, unto the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. He was not led there by the devil; but by the Holy Spirit of the Lord God which was upon Him. Neither was He tempted of the Spirit of God which led Him into the wilderness; but He was tempted of the devil. The devil could neither afflict poor old Job, nor even drown the herd of swine, until he received permission of the Lord, and it is hard for us to think that any of the saints, however shy they may seem to be of the doctrine of predestination, really would wish or be willing that God should have less, or that sin or Satan should have more power. It is a blessed reflection to us that "Death and hell can do no more Than what our Father pleases."

Volumes have been written upon this subject, and volumes may still be written. It is too rich and boundless ever to be exhausted, but after all that we can say, it is the Spirit of the Lord alone who can present it in its beauty to the sons of men. He, the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, can slay the enmity of our carnal mind, and give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, shining in the face of Jesus Christ. May that Spirit in all its quickening power and grace be with our friends and all others who earnestly desire a knowledge of the true God and eternal life.

February 1, 1854.

Although it is common for all wise men to lay out their plans and predetermine, or predestinate what they intend to do, it is exceedingly hard for men to comprehend the doctrine in its application to Him who has "Declared the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure." Although our Savior has called that man a fool who without predestinating, pre-concerting his arrangements, or predetermining in regard to his undertakings, would attempt to build a house; yet it is thought by many incompatible with the divine perfections of our Lord that He should predetermine, pre-arrange or predestinate, in the building of a world. If God has declared the end from the beginning, He has so declared on the ground of positive knowledge of the end, and if He absolutely foreknew all things, all things must have been before determined, either by Himself or by some other power. If not predetermined by Himself it might well be demanded, "With whom took He counsel, and who instructed Him, or taught Him, when He measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and meted out the heavens with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?" (Isaiah 40:12-14). We must admit that God possessed all this knowledge of Himself independently, or deny His Omniscience; and we must acknowledge that His perfect knowledge rested on the counsel of His own sovereign will and pleasure, or, conclude that He was instructed by some other, which conclusion we think none who know the Lord will be likely to make. But we need not speculate, nor attempt to establish this matter by inferences, however clearly drawn, for in His holy Word we are informed that it is the theme of reverence and worship of the four beasts in Revelations, and the four and twenty elders, who, falling down before Him, and casting their crowns before His throne, continually cry, "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 4:10-11). And in His Word Jehovah claims that He has "created all things for Himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil;" and He says, in vindication of His supreme Godhead, "I form the light, and I create darkness; I make peace and I create evil; I the Lord do all these things." We cannot read these declarations from the mouth of God Himself, and resist the conviction that our God "worketh ALL THINGS after the counsel of His own will," (Ephesians 1:11).

We will speak more particularly on the words, "all things." There are those who profess to believe that God has predestinated some few things, but they cannot comprehend the idea that He has predestinated all things. Among the things which these allow that He has predestinated, are the redemption of His people from sin, and their eternal justification and immortal glory, the unspeakable gift of His dear Son, His advent to our world, His sufferings, death, resurrection and ascension to glory; but they cannot admit that God absolutely ordained that sin should enter into the world, that there should be any sinners to redeem, or that wicked men should, with wicked hands, crucify and slay the Lord of life and glory. Did the Lord predestinate that Joseph should lay up corn in Egypt, but had nothing to do with his dreams, the envy of his brethren, or any of the circumstances of their projecting his murder, had no hand in sending the Ishmaelitic merchants to intercept their wicked designs, or with his being sold to Potiphar, nor the strange course of Potiphar's wife, or the dreams of the butler and baker, who were fellow prisoners with Joseph? But we confess we cannot conceive how anything can be predestinated unless all things are. In regard to both the cases referred to, we are informed that God did control all the events. Peter, being inspired by the Holy Spirit, charged upon the Jews the murder of our Redeemer, in these words, "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands, have crucified and slain," (Acts 2:23). Again, "For of a truth, against Thy holy child, Jesus, whom Thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do what Thy hand and Thy counsel determined before to be done," (Acts 4:27-28). In regard to the case of Joseph, God had made known to his great-grandfather Abraham, His control over this matter, and that the children of Israel should sojourn in Egypt, and be entreated evil for the space of four hundred years (Genesis 15:13-14). So also we are informed in the Word that, "The wrath of man shall praise Thee, and the remainder of wrath Thou shalt restrain," (Psalms 75:10). From this last quotation we learn that God, in His providential government, according to His inscrutable wisdom and the eternal counsel of His own will, allows wicked men and devils to go just so far in wickedness as He designs to overrule for His own glory, and no farther; they would if they could, do more, but God restrains them. His providential government, which is based upon the pleasure of His own will, according to which He works all things, extends to the falling of a sparrow, and the numbering of the hairs of our heads, and it is and should be a consoling thought to all of God's dear children. But it is argued by the opponents of Predestination, that if God has predestinated all things, man is not accountable; and some go so far as to blasphemously say that God would be the author of sin. The Apostle Paul anticipates the blasphemous cavilings of the enemies of divine sovereignty. "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth He yet find fault?" or why doth He hold men accountable for their wicked actions? "For who hath resisted His will?" It is true that God's eternal and immutable will cannot be successfully resisted or thwarted, for He "doeth His pleasure in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of earth, and none can stay His hand," (Daniel 4:35). This the Apostle does not deny or modify to avoid their blasphemous cavils; but he says, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say unto Him that formed it, Why has Thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew His wrath, and to make His power known, endureth with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared unto glory," (Romans 9:20-23). As it is a mercy to us when God restrains us from sinning, and "leads us

not into temptation, but delivers us from evil;” so is a manifestation of His wrath, upon the vessels of wrath, when He endured with long-suffering, or allows them to fill up the cup or allotted measure of their iniquities, and when He “sends them strong delusion that they may believe a lie, that they all may be damned who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness,” (2 Thessalonians 2:11-12). That the purpose and predestination of all things do not exculpate men from blame, nor involve the supreme Jehovah as the author of sin, in the manner urged by the opponents of the truth, is very apparent from what is recorded in connection with the events to which we have made allusion. Although Christ was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God; those who were charged with His crucifixion were guilty of doing it with “wicked hands.” They acted as voluntarily and maliciously as though no such determinate counsel had determined beforehand what they should do. Joseph told his brethren that God had, for their sake, brought him to Egypt, and although they “meant it for evil, God designed it for good; to save much people alive.” Pharaoh was punished for his wickedness, although God had for that purpose raised him up, that He might make His power known in him, and from time to time hardened his heart that he should not let the children of Israel go until God’s wonders were displayed in Egypt.

Every intelligent being knows that in committing sin, he acts voluntarily, and follows the impulse of his own depraved nature, and every one who is born of God and taught by His Spirit, knows that sin is the opposite of holiness; that God is holy, and that sin is of the devil and man’s lust, and not of God. Still a consciousness of God’s supreme power and wisdom, to fix its bounds, and say to it as He has said to the waters of the deep, “Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed,” affords a strong consolation to all who look alone to God for succor, protection and support, while destined to remain as strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

S. The Atonement

The Atonement by Gilbert Beebe NEW VERNON, N. Y., April 13, 1846. Our correspondent "F." has laid out work enough to keep the editor and correspondents of this periodical busy for some time to come; and no doubt exists in our mind that the several points submitted may be discussed with greater satisfaction and far more profit to our readers generally, than the further discussion of those questions of Associational Order which have occupied so large a portion of our sheet for some months past. There are many subjects of importance involved in the inquiries of our correspondent, and, after we have filled out this article in reply, we shall probably leave room enough for abler pens.

We can conceive of no more direct connection between the atonement made by our adorable Redeemer, and the temporal mercies enjoyed by the human family, than there is between the atonement and the final perdition of the ungodly. There is, as we conceive, a connection existing, by which all the administrations of our God's providence, retribution and grace are placed in harmonious order, the one with all the others; so that, if it were possible that any part of the divine purpose or arrangement of God could fail, such failure would effect, confuse and derange the whole system of the divine government. Temporal mercies were enjoyed before sin corrupted the human family; nor have they been withheld since sin entered the world. Up to the present hour God in providence continues to send his rain upon the just and unjust; but instead of regarding the providential mercies of God as evidence of a reconciliation by the blood of Christ, embracing the recipients of those common or temporal favors, Paul speaks of them (Romans 9:22) as illustrative rather of the manner in which it is the pleasure of God to show his wrath, and make his power known; as in the case of Pharaoh, God exalted him for that very cause. The atonement made by our divine Redeemer, either was exclusively for those who shall finally reign with him in glory, or one of two things must be inevitable: first, all mankind will be saved by it; or, second, none will be saved by it.

If, according to the advocates of a general atonement and offered salvation, or, according to the mongrel vender of terms and conditions, in the vicinity of our correspondent, Christ died for his elect in no sense in which he did not die for all mankind; or, in other words, if he died for all mankind in every sense in which He died for his people, if all mankind are not finally and everlastingly saved from wrath and condemnation, then the blood of Christ does not cleanse from all sin, nor does his atonement reconcile the objects of it to God; in which case Christ has died in vain. Do not those who hold such heresy trample under foot the Son of God, and count the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing. If his blood lacks efficiency to secure the object for which it was shed, it is defective; and if defective, it must be an unholy thing. To this conclusion we cannot come without doing despite to the spirit of grace. But if it be admitted that his blood is a holy thing, and that it cleanses the sinner from all sin, it must follow unavoidably that all for whom it was shed, are by it cleansed, redeemed, saved and reconciled to God.

Many arguments of the most conclusive nature are at hand, to show that there was no partial atonement made by Christ. Of all that work of which he is the Author, he is also the Finisher; he is the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. The word atonement, or at-one-ment, signifies reconciliation; we are therefore reconciled to God by the atonement made, or there was no atonement made for us. Christ "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification," (Romans 9:25) or we are not of the number for whom he died. If he died for our sins, he arose for our justification; and if he has died and arisen for us without putting away our sins and effecting our complete justification, then He has died in vain, having failed to secure the objects for which He suffered.

If his object in suffering was to procure temporal mercies for us, that object is not attained, as we enjoy them to no greater extent since, than before he suffered; and we see those who fear not God, and who regard not man, in possession of a much greater abundance of temporal favors than the saints; insomuch that their eyes stand out with fatness, and they have more than heart can wish. If the object of his death, according to Wesley, was only to bring man into a salvable state, unless he has absolutely saved them, he has failed in this, because there is salvation in no other.—Acts 4:12. And as there is salvation in no other than Christ, salvation can proceed from no other.

We have not been able to find the passage where "it is expressly stated that Christ is the Savior of all men," in any sense. We think "F." has allusion to 1 Timothy 4:10 : "For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, specially of those that believe." We cannot understand this universal salvation to proceed from Christ in his official or mediatorial distinction from the Father; but the apostle very justly ascribes the salvation by which all temporal mercies are extended to the whole human family, to that "Living God," in whom all the apostles and prophets trusted. That common salvation which secures us from famine and death, to the full extent that it is enjoyed, is attributable only to the "Living God," in whom, as his creatures, we live and move and have our being; and from whom also the special salvation of all that believe proceeds. For he so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, (for what? that all might have opportunity to secure the salvation of their souls? By no means; but this was it) "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life"—John 3:16. Of believers, he is the Savior, in a sense differing from that in which he is the Savior of all men. Now, who are thus denominated? "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed."—Acts 13:48. "Because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; whereunto he called you by our gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."—2 Thessalonians 2:13-14. From these scriptures, with a multitude of other passages, the conclusion is unavoidable, that God gave his Son to die for the sins, and arose from the dead for the justification of as many as were ordained to eternal life, and for no more. "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."—Romans 8:29-30. Now, if the learned gentleman in Massachusetts can show that all these provisions are made alike for all mankind, he will do service to the doctrine of universal salvation. That all new covenant blessings, (salvation from first to last included,) flow to the heirs of promise through Christ as a federal Head, is so clearly demonstrated in the scriptures of truth, that

he who can remain skeptical upon the subject is strongly tainted with infidelity, let his professions of piety or his pulpit eloquence be what they may. The inspired apostle affirms that God has given him [Christ] to be the Head over all things to the church, which is his body, and THE FULLNESS OF HIM THAT FILLETH ALL IN ALL.—Ephesians 1:22-23. Adam was a figure of Christ (Romans 5:14) and the human family was the fullness of Adam. The second or anti-typical Adam was the Lord from heaven; but the first Adam was not spiritual, but natural, consequently the federal head only of his natural posterity which was created in him; but afterward, in the order of time, was the revelation of that second Adam or federal Head, which was spiritual; and as the natural federal head embodied and represented only a natural progeny, so his spiritual anti-type as a federal head represented that spiritual seed which was created in him, and which constitutes his body and fullness. Not in his Godhead, but in his mediatorial headship of the church, Christ is the beginning of the creation of God, and the first born of every creature or created thing. "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation."—Psalms 22:30. As his seed, his people existed in him before they were generated by him. They are a chosen generation because they were "chosen in him before the foundation of the world."—Ephesians 1:4. "His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me," saith the Lord. Psalms 89:36. The seed of David and the seed of Israel are figuratively used to illustrate the relationship of God's people to Christ, their spiritual Head and Progenitor. "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory."—Isaiah 45:25. "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 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 53:10-11. From these scriptures it is evident that by virtue of real vital relationship Christ has borne the grief's, carried the sorrows, and suffered the chastisement of his people's peace; so that by his stripes they are healed.—Isaiah 53:4-5. How preposterous is the theory of the miscalled Baptist minister in the vicinity of our correspondent! "He does not view the atonement as canceling any sin, but as necessary to show God's regard for holiness; not because men could not have been saved equally well without it, if God had so willed." Without what? Atonement, or reconciliation, or justification! In the estimation of the minister alluded to, it would have been equally well to save sinners in their sins without reconciling them to God, &c., if God had so willed. Glory to God in the highest! He did not so will. His will was to save people from their sins, and to constitute them a holy nation, and a peculiar people. How could the acceptance of Christ's sufferings in lieu of the sinner's punishment display God's regard for holiness, if Christ was not legally viewed as federal head of those for whom he died? Nothing can be more repugnant to all the perfections of God, than the which the Yankee preacher represents as God's chosen method of showing his regard for holiness. "He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they are abomination to the Lord."—Proverbs 17:15. Can it be supposed that God has chosen abomination to show or illustrate his regard for holiness? Away with such madness blasphemy! Deny the previously existing union, relationship and identity of Christ and his church, and you deny the only principle on which divine justice could admit of the offerings of Christ for the transgressions of his people. Well might the ministers of our civil law admit of the punishment of the innocent for the crimes of the guilty, to see that ours is a justice loving government.

Again; if Christ's death did not cancel the demands of the law, for the sins of those for whom he died, how they are justified by his blood? (Romans 9:9) Seeing, in that case, their sins remain in

full force against them. But, notwithstanding all the cavilings of men, men must be purged from all sin and guilt by the blood of Christ, or they can never see God. The legal and righteous demand of the law was, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." What the soul is to the natural body of man, Christ is to his church. When Christ died, the soul, life and immortality of the church, which is his body, was delivered up for the offenses of that body, and accepted by law and justice for the offenses of that body, and raised from the dead for the justification of that body, and by his stripes that body was healed; for he put away the sins of that body by the sacrifice of himself. "Much more then being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. 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 5:9-10.

We will now attend to 1 John 2:2, and see if it conflicts with the doctrine of the foregoing scriptures. "And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but for the whole world." The term propitiation, according to Walker, signifies atonement. Butterworth renders it peace or reconciliation, which definitions seem to agree with the Greek Lexicon. But the difficulty in understanding this text, is to decide in what sense the term whole world is to be taken. In this text the whole world is reconciled to God through the atonement of Christ; and in the text, same epistle, (1 John 2:19) we are informed that the whole world lieth in wickedness, or unreconciliation to God. The apostle was evidently writing to the scattered saints of Jewish descent, according to the flesh, and would have his brethren know that the advocacy of Christ, and the reconciliation by him effected, had the same application to his people among the Gentiles as to those among the Jews.

(Concluded.) NEW VERNON, K. V., May 1, 1846.

IT was common thus to speak when both Jews and Gentiles were intended, although all Jews and Gentiles were not intended, as for instance: These went out a decree from Caesar that all the world should be taxed.—Luke 2:1. All the world in this case did not include the inhabitants of Sodom, Gomorrah, and those of the antediluvian world, but it was used in a sense common at that day, and embraced all the Provinces which were tributary to Rome. "If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him, and the Romans shall come and take away our place and nation."—John 11:48. The sense of the text is simply this: Little children, we have an Advocate with the Father, even Christ, who is our peace, or the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for those of all his people throughout the world. There is no other Savior, Advocate with the Father, or propitiator for sin, but Christ, and he is our Advocate. He is our peace, our Redeemer, and our life; in him we are reconciled to God, and delivered from wrath. This view is in harmony with the words of Isaiah, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." But why should all the ends of the earth look for salvation to him? The reason is given: "For I am God, and there is none else." It requires no less than God to save a poor guilty sinner, and there is no other God therefore salvation is to be looked for only from him. A just God and a Savior, there is none beside me," saith God, neither is there any propitiation or atonement for sin, that which is in Christ, and that is for his people throughout the entire world, from Adam to the burning day, and east to west, from north to south. The view we have of this text we conceive to be in perfect harmony with the doctrine of federal union of the church to Christ, atonement and eternal redemption. But give to this the interpretation urged by arminians, and suppose the apostle to affirm that Christ is the reconciliation of every son or daughter of Adam, that he has redeemed them all from hell, washed

them all in his blood, freely justified them from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses, that he was delivered up for their offenses and raised for their justification, and that by his stripes they are healed, how shall this construction of the text be made to harmonize with those scriptures which inform us that before Christ came and suffered some of the human family were suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, and that others cannot escape the damnation of hell? The proof then, that Jews and Gentiles are alluded to in the text, lies in the fact that these terms whole world cannot mean anything else, and be in harmony with the general tenor of the scriptures.

What we have written, imperfect as it may be, must suffice for the present on the first part of our correspondent's letter, and we will close by offering a few remarks on her allusion to a foreign communication on the subject of free agency. We have no means of testing the precise amount of power, mental, physical, or moral, that man had before the fall, so as to compare it with his present power, and strike the balance. "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions."—Ecclesiastes 7:29. We believe that man generally acts voluntarily in sinning against God; but we read of "cursed children, that cannot cease from sin."—2 Peter 2:14; but still we believe they act voluntarily in the development of their sinful propensities. As to their ability to keep the law, they have neither disposition nor power, for the law requires perfect and perpetual obedience to the will of God, and unremitting obedience to all its requirements. In short, it requires that they should be as perfect as Adam was in his first estate; and if they could keep it they would be justified, but not prepared for spiritual enjoyments by it; but, by its deeds, no flesh can be justified. The redemption of the church by the blood of Christ redeemed her from the dominion as well as from the curse of the law, else they could not be legally married to Christ. The righteousness of the law which required that those to whom it was given should "Love the Lord thy God," &c., is fulfilled in them by their vital union with Christ. The saints are as dead to the law as though they were never under its dominion; it has no power to command them; they are now under a new and better covenant. The old could only command and demand everything, but could furnish nothing; the new covenant demands nothing, but furnishes everything. The old was written and engraven on tables of stone, but the new is written on their inward parts, and engraven on their hearts. So if Christ has set us free, we are free indeed; if under grace, we are not under the law.

Arminian workmongers, who, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, see in the absence of Sinai's thunder, any cannot incentive to holiness; but the in whose hearts God has recorded the law of the spirit of life, cease not to pray that they may be found in Christ, not having their own righteousness, which is of the law. Their desire is that they may know him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, and be made conformable to his death. As to our being released from loving our neighbor, or from anything enjoined in the law, we say, "We do not make void the law, but we establish it." For love is the fulfilling of the law, and the love of Christ constrains us. His love is shed abroad in us, and that will invariably centre in that which is lovely in the divine estimation. But if the love of Christ be not in us, in vain shall we strive to fulfill the requisitions of the law, in love to God, or love to man. That which is known to legalists only as duty and obligation, becomes the sweet privilege of the renewed soul, by the abounding of that grace which "Changes the slave into a child, and duty into choice."

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S. The Biblical Definition of "Gospel"

The Biblical Definition of "Gospel" by Gilbert Beebe

Like so many Bible terms, the word GOSPEL has been given various definitions contrary to its original and proper meaning. The word has its origin "in Christ before the foundation of the world." This was contained in the "promise" God made before the foundation of the world. (Titus 1:2) The "gospel," the "good news" or "good tidings" is the declared fulfilment of that promise. In Isaiah 61:1-3 is found the outstanding proclamation made by the Sum and Substance of the good tidings, -- Jesus Christ Himself: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the meek, He has sent Me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the 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 to them that mourn in Zion, to give to 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." The Redeemer repeated this same proclamation of Himself in the synagogue.

While this prophetic statement is often quoted, its full significance is rarely understood. In this one sweeping declaration, there is encouched - not the beginning of the gospel, not a part of its fulfilment, - the grand total of what the Son of Man declared on the cross: "IT IS FINISHED"! The Greek word "evangelion" is translated "gospel" in the King James Version. This word, together with its rendering of "good tidings," "glad tidings" and "preach the gospel" occurs some one hundred and eight times in the New Testament, none of which intimate anything less than "finished redemption" in Christ. In no instance does the word convey any thought of a mere "free-offer of grace." When Jesus stood and cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink," He no more invited the thirsty, than He invited the light when He said, Let there be light. In the first place there is not a soul on the earth that does or can thirst for the living waters which flow from Him, until He quickens it, and makes it thirst, and when made to feel its thirst, and even when the tongue faileth for thirst, it can no more approach the living fountain than it can make a world, until Jesus applies, not the invitation, but the word, "Come unto Me." His words are spirit and they are life; and His sheep hear them, and they know His voice, and they follow Him; because they have no power or even disposition to resist their Shepherd's voice. The calling of the saints is nowhere in the scriptures denominated an invitation. He calleth His own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. If he only invited them they would have to get out themselves, or stay behind. But when he calls, the dead hear His voice, (not His invitation,) and they that hear shall live. How would it suit the condition of a poor, lost, helpless soul, one that feels his poverty, inability and impotence, to read the word thus: The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall be invited to live, and they who accept the invitation shall live. And when He inviteth forth His own sheep He goeth before them, provided they accept the invitation. It is perfectly in keeping with every feature of Arminianism for workmongers to talk of invitation of the gospel, because the very term implies the willing and the doing power to be in the creature. But it is neither in harmony with the doctrine

of experience of the saints of God to so speak of His communications to them as to imply that He has yielded up the government to them; that He has hinged the effect and result of His communications on their will instead of His own will. It is derogatory to His character, it reflects on His wisdom, power, and grace.

Gilbert Beebe, July 15, 1846

S. The Efficacious Power of the Blood

The Efficacious Power Of The Blood From Signs of the Times-June 1, 1869 By Gilbert Beebe 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 sprinkled 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, Hebrews 9:15.

"And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

– 1 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."

– 1 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."

– 1 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.

“Dear dying Lamb, thy precious blood, Shall never lose its power, Till all the ransomed church of God, Be saved to sin no more.”

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,” &c. “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.” – 1 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 unreprieveable 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.” – 1 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.” – Revelation 12:11. 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 & Zechariah 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 swore 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 by."

S. The Gospel Bed of Rest

The Gospel Bed of Rest Song of Solomon 3:7-8 From Signs of the Times Sept. 15, 1862 by Gilbert Beebe

Dear Brother Beebe: —Some time ago I requested your view on Solomon's Song of Solomon 3:7-8, and still desire you to give them, and oblige your friend, William Robertson Gentryville, Ind, August, 1862.

If we do not in all cases comply with the desires expressed by our brethren for our views on such passages of the Scriptures as they send us, it is not from any indifference felt by us in regard to their wishes, or from lack of inclination to oblige them. Sometimes it is for want of time to attend to so many calls as are made upon us, but more generally because we have no satisfactory light upon the subjects on which light is sought for. The passage now proposed by Elder Robertson reads as follows: "Behold his bed, which is Solomon's; threescore valiant men are about it, of the valiant of Israel. They all hold swords, being expert in war: every man hath his sword upon his thigh, because of fear in the night."

Solomon throughout this song very fitly personates our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom, as the son of David, king of Israel and builder of the temple, he was a brilliant type, and the spouse is quite as clearly a chosen and appropriate figure of the church of God, which is known as the bride, the Lamb's wife. In the text, before us our attention is called to behold Solomon's bed. As Solomon himself is a figure, his bed must also be considered in a figurative sense, and is used to signify something of importance in regard to Christ, which is particularly interesting to the church of God. Beds are commonly regarded as places of rest and comfort, for the weary, and are exceedingly useful in the night, when the feeble way-worn pilgrim or weary laborer can stretch himself upon it and enjoy a peaceful and refreshing slumber. But, there were some peculiar excellencies in the bed which is Solomon's, which, especially to his love, his undefiled, could be found nowhere else.

Solomon's bed was in a royal pavilion, possessing elegance and comfort suited to the high position of its august proprietor. It was a place of comfort as well as a place of rest, and in addition to these advantages, it was a place of safety, as we see it was guarded by valiant armed men.

All these figures, we think, are applicable to the glorious gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, which gospel is the place of the sweetest rest that was ever enjoyed by the weary and the heavy laden, who have been permitted by abounding grace to recline upon its ample space for rest and comfort. The gospel is set forth by the apostle as a rest that remains for the people of God. It was figuratively set forth in the beginning when God created and the heavens and the earth, and rested on the seventh day from all the works which he had made, and blessed and hallowed that day. The seventh day Sabbath instituted under Moses, and all the Sabbatic days and years in the ceremonial law, were typical of the gospel as the rest for weary and heavy laden sinners who are called by grace. The inspired exposition of the subject in the New Testament, especially in the epistle to the Hebrews, thus explains their figurative import and design. Every weary and

sin-burdened sinner that ever came to Christ is a witness that we which have believed do enter into rest, and that “He that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his,” (Hebrews 4:10). The prophet foresaw and proclaimed of Christ that his rest should be glorious.

We think then that the royal bed of Solomon must refer to the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the only place of rest and comfort for those who can rest nowhere else. Taking this then as the correct design of the figure, let us notice this bed of Solomon’s, namely, the gospel. First, we observe that it is Solomon’s, or, as the figure implies, it is Christ’s, —it is the gospel of Christ, the gospel of the Son of God. Paul speaks of some who preach another gospel, which is not another, etc., but he would admit of none as genuine but that gospel of Christ, of which he said he was not ashamed.

Men may invent a multitude of schemes and theories to rest upon, but their beds are too short for one to stretch himself upon, and their covering is too narrow to wrap themselves in it. The strange woman in the seventh chapter of Proverbs boasted that she had decked her bed very extravagantly, and in a very costly manner, and perfumed it with myrrh, aloes and cinnamon, but with all the allurements of her harlot bed no weary sinner ever found either rest or comfort on it. Her house, we are told, is the way of hell, leading down to the chambers of death, and the prophet of the Lord proclaims in thunder tones that, “The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest,” (Isaiah 57:20). No, it must be his bed.

“Behold his bed, which is Solomon’s.” The bed, or resting-place, of Solomon, was the resting-place of his spouse. To her alone belonged the right and privilege of resting with her beloved in all the comforts of the consecrated couch. So in the glorious gospel of the grace of God, none but the bride, the Lamb’s wife, shall rest upon the gospel bed. Her marriage bed is undefiled, no stranger ever has or shall be allowed to pollute it. There certainly is this peculiarity in the comforts of the gospel, none but the members of Christ can possibly rest in them; nor have they in reality any desire, for it is not calculated to be appreciated by them.

“The softest couch that nature knows Can give the conscience no repose.” But the gospel gives rest and comfort to all who are allowed to enter into his rest, and this embraces the weary, to whom Christ says, I will give you rest” and the troubled saints, to whom Paul says, “To you who are troubled rest with us.” Even the Christian can rest only on this bed, for the spouse says in the first verse of this chapter, “By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth—I sought him, but I found him not,” It is a restless place, for the children of God when they get upon their own bed, they cannot find him there who alone can calm their fears and cheer their hearts.

“And whilst upon my restless bed, Among the shades I roll, Till my Redeemer shows his head, ‘Tis restless to my soul.” The perfect security of Solomon’s bed is indicated by the royal guard of armed and valiant men which were stationed around it. It is true the gospel of Christ cannot be endangered by all the powers of earth and hell, but still the gospel church is now in a militant state, or in a state of warfare; hostile enemies have conspired to invade and spoil the resting-place of the church of God, and they sometimes succeed too well in terrifying the timid saints. Doubts, fears, unbelief and lack of confidence often cause the saints to tremble, and forbid their rest, but to protect the saints from these a royal guard is provided.

“Threescore valiant men.” These may represent the gospel ministry, they are entrusted with the watch-care of the churches, and made overseers of the flock and their business is to stand upon the watch-tower and in the faithful discharge of their duties to meet every invading foe at the threshold, whether such foes approach in the form of men, or devils, or in doubts, fear or unbelief. Hence valiant men are required; those timid ones who leave the flock as soon as they see the wolf approaching are not reliable, for they are not of the valiant of Israel. The number, “threescore valiant men,” makes a strong and sufficient guard; it is not to confine the number of the ministry to that number literally, but as in the figure, sixty men, well armed, would seem to be a very strong guard for one bed. So we infer that the gifts for the comfort and protection of the church from surprise or invasion is full and complete, embracing the apostles and all who are called, equipped and placed for the defense of the gospel of Christ.

“They all hold swords.” They are prepared for the conflict, and ready to confront any approaching foe. Their swords are not made of steel to shed the blood of their opposers, for the weapons of their warfare are not carnal, but spiritual, and mighty through God in pulling down strong holds. The apostles understood the sword to be the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, as it comes from the mouth of God. John saw in his vision a sharp two-edged sword proceeding out of the mouth of him whose name was written upon his vesture and on his thigh, and whose name is called the Word of God. It is with this sword (namely) the words which God hath spoken, that apostles, evangelists, pastors and teachers are to resist error, contend for truth, and with this two-edged sword, which cuts both ways, offensively and defensively, they are to fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life. “They all hold swords.” What would all their valor be to them when assailed if they could not meet the adversary with a “Thus saith the Lord?”

They are all expert in war, —God has taught their hands to war and their fingers to fight, as he did David and Paul. He makes them expert, for they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful; novices will not do, lest being lifted up with pride, they fall into the condemnation of the devil; not such watchmen as Isaiah described, which were dumb dogs, that could not bark, sleepy dogs, lying down, loving slumber, nor greedy dogs that can never have enough. The wisdom of Solomon would be impugned by the supposition that he would entrust the security of his bed to an inefficient guard, and behold a greater than Solomon is in the church, to order all things in wisdom and righteousness.

“Every man hath his sword upon his thigh, because of fear in the night.” The sword of the warrior is usually fastened on his thigh, as the most appropriate and convenient place, ready to be drawn in an instant. He has not to go to some distant armory to procure a sword, every man on guard has one with him. The word is nigh thee, even in thine heart, and in thy mouth; even the word of faith which we preach. This is very essential, because of fear in the night. The night is the time when thieves and robbers and murderers are busy in pursuing their work, the night is the time for those who love darkness more than light, and it is in the darkness of the night the psalmist says all the beasts of the forest creep forth. It was in the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night, that Solomon saw the strange woman (Antichrist) sally forth on her errand of abomination. Naturally, men are more timid in the night than in the daytime, and it is truly so in a spiritual sense with Christians, when the light of the countenance of the Redeemer is hidden from their view, dark, dismal thoughts and boding fears intrude, and then the valiant of Israel require to use their swords.

“Happy the church that sacred place, The seat of thy Creator’s grace;

Thy holy courts are his abode, Thou earthly palace of our God.

Thy walls are strength, and at thy gates, A guard of heavenly warriors waits; Nor shall thy deep foundations move, Fixed on his counsel and his love.

Thy foes in vain designs engage, against his throne in vain they rage, Like rising waves, with angry roar, That dash and die upon the shore.”

Much more might be written on the subject, if we have not missed the true design of the figure. The subject is instructing, and full of comfort and interest to those who can find rest in the gospel; but none but quickened souls can be weary, therefore none other can truly appreciate rest. The dead can no more rest with the saints upon Solomon’s bed than on the stormy billows of the troubled ocean; the gospel is the rest that remainieth, and shall evermore remain to the people of God; therefore we say:

“Go, ye that rest upon the law, And toil and seek salvation there.

Look to the flame that Moses saw, And shrink, and tremble, and despair. But I’ll retire beneath the cross, Savior, at thy dear feet I’ll lie, And the keen sword that justice draws Flaming and red, shall pass me by.”

S. The New Heavens and the New Earth

The New Heavens and the New Earth From Signs of the Times— December 1, 1855. by Gilbert Beebe

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride for her husband.” Revelation 21:1-2

We are aware that there is a difference of opinion among even our most enlightened brethren in regard to the application of this, as well as many other portions of the book of Revelation, particularly in regard to the period to which these portions refer. Some have understood this passage to refer to the gospel state of the church in the primitive age; others have thought it applicable to a state of primitive purity to which the church shall be restored before the dissolution of the world, while others again have regarded the language as descriptive of the final triumphant state of the church, after the resurrection of the dead. But while these differences have been held and expressed without giving the least offense, or disturbing the fellowship of brethren, all experimental Christians have agreed in applying this Scripture to the church of the living God; and in understanding the striking and beautiful imagery as expressive and illustrative of the distinguishing doctrine of the gospel.

Without any design to controvert the view of any brother, we will simply present such views, imperfect though they may be, as the subject suggests to our mind, and leave our readers to examine and receive or reject them, as their judgment may dictate. To us, the new heaven and the new earth which John saw, is the same which he also calls the holy city, the New Jerusalem, and both figures mean the church of Christ under the gospel dispensation. This church has existed in such form and manner as to answer the description in the text and its connection, from the time of her organization on the day of Pentecost, to the present time, and will so continue until the end of time; but her peculiar beauty is not always apparent. Since her gospel organization, she has, to all human appearance, seemed to wax and wane like the moon. Sometimes she has been involved in clouds and thick darkness, and sometimes she has looked forth as the morning-shining in the heavenly radiance of the Son of righteousness. Sometimes driven into the wilderness, and anon, she is seen standing on a sea of glass, or appearing before the throne of God and the Lamb, and sounding her loud Alleluias to the Lord. John seems to have had a view of her, in his visions, in every variety of attitude and circumstance which she had then, or ever should present. As the new heaven and the new earth, and as the holy city, the New Jerusalem, her gospel comeliness, as the perfection of beauty, in distinction from the old receding heaven and earth and sea, of the legal dispensation, appears. The same figurative idea is also presented by the old and new Jerusalems. As the old Jerusalem, according to Paul’s allegory, was in connection of Hagar, or Mount Sinai in Arabia, signifying her identity with the old covenant, and her bondage with her children, (Galatians 4:25). The new Jerusalem is free, and the mother of us all, who, as Isaac was, are the children of promise; so the old heavens and earth which had passed away, must, if we are correct in

understanding their figurative import as being the same, refer to the abolition of the ceremonial covenant, and the new heaven and earth, must refer to the new covenant and its dispensation.

Israel, under the legal covenant, embraced or embodied those elements which were destined to melt with fervent heat, when the old heavens should be rolled together as a scroll, and as a vesture be laid aside. As an old heaven, that order of things had its elements, as the sun, or inspired revelation; its moon, or the embodied types, which borrowed light from the sun, and reflected it upon the people of God under that dispensation, and its stars, the prophets of the Lord; but all these were shadows of good things to come, the substance or body of which is Christ. The glory of the new heaven is beautifully set forth in the sublime language of the inspired psalmist; "The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the Son; which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the ends of the heaven, and his circuit unto the end of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof," (Psalms 19:1-6). Philosophers, astronomers and wise men of the earth, have ever found much to admire in the contemplation of the natural heavens, where worlds of living light and beauty proclaim to all the families of the earth, the surpassing workmanship of God. But how much more sublime and elevated must be the contemplation of the new heaven and new earth, when the mind, illuminated by divine revelation, is permitted to "mount up and view the glories of the eternal skies." The church of God, under this figure, presents her sun, her moon, her stars, and all in perfect harmony pour forth their floods of living light in honor of him who has garnished the heavens, and marshaled all the heavenly hosts. In the new heaven which John saw, and which all enlightened Christians may see, our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Sun of righteousness with healing in his wings, comes out of his chamber, as a bridegroom. Riding upon the heavens in the help of his people, and in his excellency on the sky. Like a strong man, and as the man whom God has made strong for himself, the man Christ Jesus, rejoiceth to run his race. One and identical with the Father in absolute Deity and eternal Godhead, yet filling, as Mediator, the place of Days-man, "who can lay his hand on both," he is worshiped and adored by all the angels and spirits of the just, before the throne of heaven. He bows his heavens and comes down to find and fill that tabernacle which he has set in the new heaven for the Sun. His brightness, says the prophet Habakkuk, was like the light, he had horns coming out of his hand, and there was the hiding of his power. He is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person. As the natural sun rises in the east, and pours his radiance unto the extreme west, so the Sun of righteousness is from everlasting to everlasting. His going forth is from the end of heaven, even from everlasting, and his circuit is unto the ends of it. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending, the Almighty. How gloomy would be the natural heavens without the natural sun; but how much more gloomy would be the spiritual heaven without Christ. He is the fountain and source of all spiritual light. He is the light of the world; for there is no spiritual light in the world but what is in him. He shines in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. He has bespangled the new heavens with stars, which he holds in his right hand; but all their brilliancy is by the light reflected from him through them. He has given gifts for the edification of the body, the church, and these he has marshaled in their appropriate orbits, and they cannot, nor do they desire to turn either to the right hand or to the left. The apostles had their spheres appointed, and so with all the

gifts of prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, for he holds them in his right hand; nor will he allow the voluntary associations of men, or mission boards, or ecclesiastical dignitaries to pluck them from his hand. His clouds of witnesses are in the new heavens, charged with the thunder of his word, and the lightning of his truth. "Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall make bright clouds," (Zechariah 10:1). Through his bright clouds his doctrine shall drop as the rain, and his speech shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as showers upon the grass, (Deuteronomy 32:2). In the clouds of this new heaven he makes the rainbow of the covenant appear. John saw a rainbow encircling the throne on which the Prince of glory presides, (Revelation 4:3; Revelation 10:1).

Time and space and ability fail in our attempt to describe the superior glory of the new heaven and the new earth. All the elements of the holy Jerusalem are new; nothing of the old remains, they are like a vesture laid aside, and their elements are melted with fervent heat. Behold, says Christ, I make all things new. Paul was caught up to the third heaven, and saw what he was unable to describe of the new heaven, and it is not surprising that our limited powers should utterly fail to express things which are so indescribably glorious.

John says, "And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven." It is impossible for the wisdom of this world to comprehend the origin of the church of God. Many imagine that it is composed of flesh and blood; that it comes by observation; that men are employed, and money invested, for the purpose of procuring from the earth a kingdom for our Lord; that men are to win a bride for the lamb. But they do not know that his bride is already betrothed, and already prepared as a bride for her husband. They do not know that this kingdom was with God, as a prepared kingdom from the foundation of the world, (Matthew 24:34). The holy city was not seen coming up, but coming down from God; her origin is above, her life is hid with Christ in God. Nor does she descend to earth to procure a bridal dress, or to make preparation for the consummation of the marriage; for, like everything that comes from God, she comes already prepared. A boundless theme for contemplation is presented in the ancient preparation of the bride for her husband. As set forth in the figure of the first Adam, whose bride was provided in his original creation and formation, so as far back into the ancients of eternity as we can trace the goings forth of Christ in his Mediatorial capacity, we may contemplate the church of God set up in him who was set up from everlasting, chosen in him, blessed with all spiritual blessings in him, by which she is not only prepared, but also adorned as a bride for her husband. She is and was clothed with salvation before the world began; for Paul says, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," (2 Timothy 1:9). Clothed in his salvation, and covered with his righteousness, and adorned with all the rich gifts of the Spirit, shod with the preparation of the gospel, wearing the helmet of salvation, the shield of faith, she is well described as the perfection of beauty. And her language is, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God: for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with jewels," (Isaiah 61:10). He whose works were all finished from the foundation of the world, (Hebrews 4:3), hath thus clothed, beautified and adorned her; and, thus prepared, she is made manifest by revelation. So we see that this holy city, this New Jerusalem, is not only adorned for her Husband; but she is adorned by her Husband. She has not clothed herself with

salvation, nor covered herself with righteousness. He hath done it all, and in thus clothing and adorning her, he hath done it all in a manner calculated to express the union and relationship of the Bridegroom and the bride. He has clothed and covered her with salvation and righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself, not as he decketh another; for she is recognized by him as the bone of his bones, and the flesh of his flesh; and in adorning her with ornaments, and decking her with jewels, it is all done by him as unto himself, and not as for another. Thus the church, though viewed in any other light than that of her relationship to Christ, is black as the tents of Kedar, yet in the comeliness which Christ has put upon her, she is as white and spotless as the curtains of Solomon, (Song of Solomon 1:5).

“And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men,” &c. The great voice which John heard, is the voice of the Bridegroom, and the voice of the bride; or in other words, the voice of Christ, by his Spirit through the gifts which he has bestowed upon his members; and this is truly a great voice in many respects. It is great, as being his voice by which the worlds were made, by which dead sinners are made alive in a spiritual sense, and by which all that are in their graves shall be raised at the last day. Great, as emanating from him who has all power in heaven and in earth. Great, because of the importance of the proclamation uttered, and great as being proclaimed in every nation, language and tongue, throughout the world, through the gifts bestowed upon his church. The heaven from which John heard this voice, is the new heaven of which he had a revelation as declared in this text, and evidently means the church of the living God, which is the ground and pillar of the truth. The gospel of the Son of God proclaims what John heard, namely, “Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them,” &c. The tabernacle which Moses made in the wilderness, according to the pattern which the God of Israel showed him in the holy mount, was a type or figure of the tabernacle intended in our text, and was to be set up in manner and form precisely as it stood in the mount of God when Moses first saw it, and to be made of the materials which God had before designated, and it was to be consecrated to the purpose by him ordained, and to contain the ark of the covenant, the mercy-seat, the cherubims of glory, and to be the place where the God of heaven would meet his chosen tribes, in the person of their High Priest, and commune with them from between the cherubims, and from over the mercy-seat. The body in which Christ appeared in his incarnation, may be viewed as a tabernacle of God, for God was manifest in the flesh, and in that body all the church of the first-born was represented. The fullness of the Godhead bodily and the church was and is complete in him. But in the immediate sense of the text under consideration, the mystical body, the church, is in our view, intended as the antitypical tabernacle of God. The psalmist says of the church, “God is in the midst of her,” (Psalms 46:5). And again, “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. I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread,” (Psalms 132:13-15). The application of the figure of the tabernacle in the wilderness, as designed to prefigure the true tabernacle into which Christ has, by his own blood, and through the eternal Spirit, entered, is very clearly stated in Hebrews 8:2-5 and Hebrews 9:2-14. It is a tabernacle made without hands. For God dwelleth in the church, as we have proven, but we are told that God dwelleth not in tabernacles made with hands, therefore the church is a building of God, a house or tabernacle not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, (2 Corinthians 5:1). A kingdom prepared for the saints from the foundation of the world, (Matthew 25:34). A stone cut out of the mountain without hands, (Daniel 2:45). But in the revelation made to John, Behold it is with men. This holy city, New

Jerusalem comes down from God, out of heaven, and is set up in gospel order, according to the pattern in the mount of God, and God, in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, comes down to dwell in it, because he has desired it, and he will dwell in this tabernacle forever. The church is frequently spoken of as the temple as well as the tabernacle of the Lord, which signifies his special dwelling-place. In the mystical body of Christ what wonders are revealed. The eternal God and redeemed sinners meet together there. The saints are redeemed unto God, and God is in Christ. Here the fullness of eternal Godhead is embodied, and here the church is complete; the fullness of him that filleth all in all. And he, the eternal God, will dwell with them, (Ephesians 1:23; Colossians 2:9-10) with men redeemed from the earth. What a wonderful household is this! God dwells with his people: "And they shall be his people." "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels," (Malachi 3:17). And this is the special provision of the new covenant, I will be their God, and they shall be my people, (Hebrews 8:10; Jeremiah 31:33). And God himself shall be with them, and be their God. He will never leave nor forsake them; and he will put his fear in their heart, that they shall not depart from him, and he will not turn away from them to do them good. He will be their God, to protect and defend them, to feed and comfort them, to wipe away all their tears. He will be their God, as the object of their worship, their adoration and praise; they shall trust alone in him, and have no other God before him. They are safe while he condescends to be with them as their God. The eternal God is their refuge, and underneath them are his everlasting arms; their place of defense is the munitions of rocks; God is a wall of fire around about, and a glory in their midst. He is their Shepherd, they shall not want. He leads them in green pastures by the living waters. And "The Lamb, that is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes," (Revelation 7:17).

S. The Old and the New Man

The Old and the New Man by Gilbert Beebe

“So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.”—Romans 7:25.

If Paul had in him these two opposite principles, and both to identified with his person that with the one he himself served the law of God, and with the other at the same tune he himself served the law of sin, was he like all other christians in these respects? Have all christians in them a mind with which they themselves serve the law of God, or can any man be a christian who has not such a mind? And have all christians, like Paul, a principle or law in their members which is at war with this law of the mind, and with which they themselves serve the law of sin? Or is the flesh of some christians so purified by regeneration that they are unlike Paul, and have no wicked propensities in their flesh whereby they serve the law of sin?

If all christians are like Paul in these particulars, and like him serve the law of their God with the mind, and with the flesh serve the law of sin, are both of these opposites born of God; Or is that flesh in them which wars against the Spirit, only born of the flesh: or has it been born over again and made holy by a spiritual birth? And if it has, why does the apostle admonish christians to crucify it with its affections and lusts, and how can the christian with it himself still serve the law of sin? If in our flesh there dwells no good thing, and in that which is born of the Spirit there dwells no evil thing, if that which is born of God cannot commit sin, because his seed abideth in him, and he or it cannot sin because he is born of God, is it heretical or wicked for a christian to believe that all the corruption's within him are born of the flesh, and none of them are born of God, and that tall that is pure and holy within him, is born of God, and no part of it is born of the flesh?

I Of this mind with which the christian himself serves the law of God, the apostle says, “We have the mind of Christ,” and another mind, or law, which he saw in his flesh he calls a carnal mind, which signifies a fleshly mind. With the mind of Christ he serves the law of God; but the carnal (or fleshly) mind is enmity against God, it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. These two minds must be very opposite. One of them is not, and cannot be subject to the law of God, and with the other we serve the law of God. Are both of these minds born of God, or is that mind which cannot be subject to the law of God, born of the flesh? The carnal mind is enmity against God, while the law requires love to God, and love to our neighbor, and on these hang all the law and the prophets. Is that fleshly mind which cannot obey the law of love, born of God? Or is that mind which can and does love God, with all the heart, might and strength, born of that flesh in which there is no good thing?

We think all christians will unite in the conclusion that all within them that is carnal, earthly, depraved and vile, is born of the flesh, and will continue to annoy them until they shall be by death delivered from these bonds of corruption, until this earthly house or mortal tabernacle shall be taken down, dissolved and fall, and our mortal bodies will not be animated with immortal life until

God shall change them and fashion them like the glorious body of their risen Redeemer, and that change will not come until the resurrection, when if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in us, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken their mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwells in them. Then, and not until then, shall they be satisfied: when they awake in his likeness.

Strip the subject of all vain speculations, and all futile attempts to analyze the natural soul, body, or spirit of man, in trying to make out what we possess that is born of earth, or born from above, and it will be easy for every heaven-born child to perceive that all that we possess as identified with our persons in our present state that is born of God, bears the image of the heavenly, and all within us that does not bear the heavenly image is born of the flesh, and not of the Spirit. With a clear understanding of their complex character, as now in an earthly body which clings to the earth, and lusts after the things of the earth, and wars against the spirit of their mind, and makes them groan, being burdened, and also clearly understanding that they also are the happy recipients through grace, of eternal, or immortal life, that Christ is formed in them the hope of glory, that God has revealed his Son in them, that God has shined in their hearts to give them the light of the glory of God, shining in the face of Jesus Christ, they will be prepared to appreciate what the inspired apostles have said of the old man, and new man, the outer man, and the inner man, together with the admonition to put off the old man with his deeds, and to put on the new man, which after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness. A clear scriptural understanding of this subject will serve also to obviate the difficulties which may harass their minds in regard to the nature of the christian warfare. The saints are often tempted to doubt the reality of their own experience because they find in them so much of what is earthly, sensual and devilish, so much unreconciliation to God, so much murmuring, such vile affection, and strong propensities to depart from the living God, and to run into forbidden paths. If, say they, we were born of God, would it be thus with us? Can a nature which is born of God, grovel in the dust, and be so opposite to the spirit and purity of God? Certainly that which is born of God cannot commit sin, cannot disbelieve or doubt what God has said, 8w. But when they hear an inspired apostle declare that it is no more I that doeth it, but sin that dwelleth in me, that the new man in them only, is born of God, loves God, loves holiness, loves the brethren, and serves the law of God, and that with his flesh, or earthly nature, he serves the law of sin, and does the things which he would not, and leaves undone the things which he would do, it gives them sweet relief. "From whence come wars and fightings among you?" Thus the apostle James interrogates the saints. Do they arise from that new man which is after God created in righteousness and true holiness? Certainly not. They cannot proceed from that in us which is born of God, for that cannot commit sin, for the seed abideth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. Whence are they then? "Come they not of your own lusts?" Our flesh lusts against the Spirit, and that which is born of the flesh is flesh. Here is the source of wars among christians. But as that which is assailed by the flesh is Spirit, and is born of the Spirit, it wars against the corruption's of the flesh. The life, or animation in the christian which is of the flesh, shall die, and if we walk after the flesh, as the body is death, and it is dead because of sin, ye shall die. There is nothing else in the flesh; but if ye through the Spirit (which is born of God) do mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live; for the Spirit is life, because of righteousness. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." Let us remember that if we walk after the Spirit, we shall not fulfill the desires or lusts of the flesh. If the saints could at all times walk after the Spirit, there would be no wars and

fighting among them; that is, no biting and devouring of one another; they would lay aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speaking, and as new-born, heaven-born, spirit-born babes, we would desire the sincere milk of the word that we may grow thereby. This spiritual food is adapted to the child of the new birth; it will not nourish the child of the flesh. Our fleshly natures are of the earth, all their sustenance must come from the earth, and be obtained from thence by the sweat of the face. But that birth which is of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever, must be sustained by the milk of that living and abiding word.

S. The Relative Duties of Ministers and Churches

The Relative Duties of Ministers and Churches Signs of the Times—May 1, 1857 by Gilbert Beebe

NOTE: Providence Baptist Ministries does not hold to the idea presented by Elder Beebe that Seminaries are of no use to the development of men called into the ministry. Elder Beebe seems to think that there is a greater need for the development of the English language than the use of sound Biblical study. Indeed, seminaries are not all that they could be, however to discount their usefulness is careless and ignores the training noted in the Scriptures of the Apostles under the teaching of Christ.

Great care is required in the discussion of so delicate a subject, lest on the one hand we give countenance to the popular notion of manufacturing our own ministry, and offering inducements for ungodly and covetous men to crowd themselves into the work, uncalled of the Lord, and for filthy lucre's sake. Or, on the other hand, in avoiding that disorder, we run so far into an opposite extreme as to overlook, and thereby fail to obey such instructions as are clearly laid down in the Scriptures.

We would observe first, that no man is to take this work on himself unless called thereto of God, as was Aaron to the priesthood. We can find no authority in the Word for human interference in offering inducements to draw out young or old men into the work, until such gifts are developed as afford satisfactory evidence to the church of God that they are called of God to that work. When such evidences are obtained, the church is required to consider them carefully and prayerfully, in the light of the Scriptures. Then it becomes us to inquire, first, has God by his Spirit made them willing to serve in that calling? For they must enter the work, not for filthy lucre's sake, but of a willing mind. Paul says to Timothy, "This is a true saying, If any man desire the office of a bishop (or pastor) he desireth a good work," (1 Timothy 3:1). Finding in the church a brother entertaining this desire, we are taught to examine closely to see if he possesses the following indispensable qualifications, (for some may have a desire to render themselves conspicuous in the church, and may covet the ministerial work from very improper motives, and such have given the churches great trouble. Some have been licensed to the work to get rid of their clamor, or as the easiest way to dispose of them, instead of saying to them that the church lacks the evidence of their calling. But in all such cases, the church has suffered from their disregard of the divine rule). Let them first be proved, and here is the rule: "A bishop must be blameless, the husband of one wife: vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach," (1 Timothy 3:2). These are put down as indispensable qualifications, and the church of God is to be the judge whether the proposed candidate, or volunteer for the work is in possession of them, as positive and indispensable qualifications. If in all these particulars all is satisfactory, we are next to consider the negative, or the disqualifications, not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre, but patient, not a brawler, not covetous, one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity. (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?). Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil, (1

Timothy 3:1-7).

There are many other portions of the New Testament which treat upon the qualifications of the ministers of Christ, but our limits will not allow us at this time to present them. From the above established rule we learn that the brother to be recognized as a minister of Jesus Christ must sustain an unblemished reputation in the church, and his walk and conversation before the world, (those that are without) must also be irreproachable. Of course we are not to understand that the world are to speak well of his doctrine, or allow him to escape reproach and persecution such as Christ and his apostles bore. But he is not to be known in the world as a brawler, a striker, a man given to wine, or greedy of filthy lucre, not covetous, or, like the daughters of the horse-leech, crying, Give! give!!

Next in importance to the unblemished character sustained by the candidate for the Christian ministry is, Is he apt to teach? Many men of intelligence and of grace are destitute of this qualification, and the church would starve under their ministry, if they were not otherwise fed with knowledge and understanding. And if the minister cannot command intelligible language, how can he be apt to teach? We would not insist upon eloquence of speech, as these terms are used by men, for Paul, who as a learned man could have commanded. He, refrained from it in his ministry, and came not in the excellency of speech, or of wisdom, but he was with them in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling, and his speech and preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that the faith of the saints should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Still there may be, and unquestionably is, a fault with at least some of our brethren in the ministry, and an inexcusable carelessness in regard to their language. If to be apt to teach requires that the instructor should, like the wise man, search out suitable words, and if, as he has by the spirit of inspiration told us, that "words fitly spoken are like apples of gold in pictures of silver," it must be proper and right that preachers of the Gospel should at least make themselves familiar with their mother tongue. To do this, we presume there are very few cases, if any, where anything more is necessary than a trifling effort on the part of the preacher himself. If the church be at fault, it is that they do not urge upon their preachers who are deficient, the necessity and importance of spending some of their leisure hours in studying their grammar and dictionaries. We have known young men to enter the ministry whose opportunities had been very limited, and consequently were very deficient in their language, who have grown to be old men, without any perceptible improvement in that particular, but it would be hard to find a case where a good practical knowledge of the rules of grammar might not have been acquired by them in that time without in the least restricting their ministerial labors, or detracting from their opportunities to labor for the support of their families. There certainly can be no good reason why a young preacher should idle away time which might be employed in the attainment of profitable knowledge, and in mental improvement. No brother is at liberty to construe our remarks as intending any reflection upon our aged brethren in the ministry, who have never been privileged with opportunities which are common in our day. Many of our aged fathers in the ministry were raised amid the turmoil and strife of the Revolutionary War, or in parts of our country where the country was new, and opportunities were very limited for mental improvement, still their usefulness has been realized very extensively, and their praise is in all the churches. We only design to call the attention of the young to this subject, and not only ministers, but all others, would realize an advantage by applying themselves as opportunity presents, to the attainment of useful knowledge.

To secure all the advantages which we recommend, we see no need of building or establishing Theological Seminaries, or of waiting one moment after being called to the work of the ministry. The most stupidly dull and clownish preachers we ever met with have been among the students sent forth from Theological Schools. One from Hamilton Seminary, in our State, once edified the people in our vicinity, by informing them that the Ganges, where pagans sacrifice their children to its waters, was located in the Canada's. But aside from their deficiency in geography, they are uniformly, so far as our acquaintance with them extends, by no means in advance of pagans in the knowledge of divine and spiritual things. The things of the Spirit of God can only be taught by the Spirit, and all our spiritual preparations for usefulness in the church of God most come from above. Still public speaking requires the articulation of sounds, by which ideas are expressed and conveyed, in order to which our natural and physical organs are employed, and our natural understanding is brought into requisition. Hence the propriety of correct language. "How forcible are right words." Some have betrayed an unwillingness to take the trouble to learn the proper use of words, and their precise meaning, lest it should encourage pride and vanity, either in themselves or in their hearers, but that very class of speakers are more frequently than any others found straining to use high-flown words that they do not understand themselves, and very incorrectly imagine that their hearers are as ignorant of as themselves. Our impression is that the most simple language we can possibly command, if well understood by the speaker, in public preaching, is by far more suitable and instructive, and to our ear, it is the most eloquent and forcible. None but coxcombs, and vain, conceited fops, will strain to use terms in public speaking which they imagine their hearers do not generally understand.

While on this subject, the reader will permit us to say, that there are many disagreeable faults into which preachers are very liable to fall, such as speaking with a sing-song tone, or with affection, an unusual key, with unbecoming and awkward gestures which a little care on their part with some occasional hints from faithful brethren, would serve greatly to relieve them from, and render them far more acceptable and pleasant to their hearers. But we have pursued this part of our subject as far perhaps as is profitable at this time, especially as we are conscious that the writer has very many faults to correct in himself, as well as to point out in his brethren. The improvements suggested can be acquired without money, or exemption from labor. We know a precious brother who has attained a high elevation in literature without the aid of schools, or exemption from labor. He told us that he had often carried a book in his bosom when ploughing, and while his team were resting, he would employ the moments in study until he had acquired the education which he now finds of priceless value to him as a minister of Jesus. There are many other important requisitions for a preacher of the Gospel, which we have not time nor space to dwell upon in this article; and our remarks on the duty of the church to the preachers of the Word, must also be deferred for the present.

S. The Sabbath

The Sabbath Signs of the Times—January 1, 1855. by Gilbert Beebe

There is much said at the present day on the subject of a Sabbath day, as being of perpetual obligatory force on all mankind throughout all time. But in what part of the Scriptures they find a precept to that effect we are not informed. They certainly but seldom, if ever, refer us to the fourth commandment of the Decalogue; and we have supposed their reasons for not doing so were obvious.

1. Because we are expressly informed by Moses himself that, that very covenant, or law, was made exclusively with those Israelites who were all of them then present, and alive on the day that the ten commandments were presented to them from the Mount of God. It was a law which, had not been given even to the patriarchs, (See Deuteronomy 5:1-4).

2. Because the fourth commandment required those unto whom it was given, to observe the seventh, and not the first day of the week, as the Sabbath of their God—because that God had rested from the work of creation on the seventh, and not on the first day of the week.

3. Because the children of Israel were by the fourth commandment required to observe the seventh day altogether differently from the manner in which professed Christians pretend to observe the first day. The children of Israel were to totally abstain from all labor, themselves, their wives, their children, their servants, and even their cattle; no fires were allowed to be kindled, no horses to be harnessed, no meetings to be attended, no Sabbath Schools to be kept, no collections for mission or other purposes, to be taken up on that day.

4. Because the penalty for a transgression of that precept, was altogether different from that inflicted by modern Sabbatarians for a breach of the Sunday laws of our own, or any other lands. That provided in the Jewish law, being death by stoning, and the laws of men only requiring fines and imprisonments.

5. The fourth commandment required those unto whom it was given to labor six days, including the first day, and the Sunday laws of our land forbid our obedience to that part of the fourth commandment which requires us to labor on the first day of the week.

We know of no partial obligation to keep the law. If the Sinai covenant, which was given exclusively to the children of Israel, is binding on the Gentiles to any extent, it must be binding in its full extent. An inspired apostle has settled this question beyond all reasonable dispute, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all," (James 2:10). And Paul to the Galatians 5:3, shows who are debtors to keep the law. He says, "For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law." But in searching the Scriptures, we can find none who are obligated to obey part of the law, or partly obligated to do the whole law. "Whatsoever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law," and they are of course bound to go according to the letter of the commandment. The grand question then is,

whether the whole Sinai law is binding on all men, and throughout all time? If so, then all are involved in the curse, and the salvation of any of the human family is impossible. For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for all have sinned; and consequently by the deeds of the law, no flesh shall be justified in the sight of God. The doctrine of redemption is very prominently set forth in the gospel; and Christ has not only redeemed his people from the curse, but also from the dominion of the law; and the apostle has made the emphatic proclamation to the saints, "Ye are no more under the law, but under grace." The inquiry then is reduced to this, How far are we obligated to keep a law that we are not under? When Paul found some of the brethren inclining to the works of the law, he was afraid of them, lest he had bestowed on them labor in vain, for they observed days, and months, and times, and years. In his allegory, (Galatians 4:21-27), Paul sets forth the old Sinai covenant, by the person of Hagar, the bond woman, who could not be the mother of a free child. For this Agar is Mount Sinai, in Arabia, which answereth to Jerusalem, which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem, which is above, is free, which Jerusalem he affirms, is the mother of all those saints, who, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. In the second chapter to the Colossians, we are informed that Christ has blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took them out of the way, nailing them to his cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect to an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ. This language would seem to be plain enough for an ordinary Christian, taught of God. These ordinances of the old covenant were a shadow of things which are realized in the body of Christ, or in the gospel church, which is his body, his flesh and his bones. We trace the shadowy import of the Sinai Sabbath to the body of Christ, or to the gospel church, and there we enter into that rest which was shadowed forth by the legal Sabbaths of the old covenant. The antitypical Sabbath, being found alone in that rest which remaineth for the children of God, and into which all those who, with a true and vital faith, believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, have entered, is clearly set forth in the New Testament, particularly in the third and fourth chapters to the Hebrews. This gospel Sabbath we understand to be the whole gospel dispensation; in distinction from the old covenant dispensation, and it begins severally with each believer in Christ, as soon as they truly believe in our Lord Jesus Christ; and are enabled to rest alone on him for their justification before God. We have not the time nor the space necessary to show the analogy which the typical Sabbath of the law bears to the rest which is enjoyed by the saints in the gospel. A very few particulars must for the present suffice, and,

1. The old covenant Sabbath was given exclusively to the circumcised children of Israel, and to no other people; so the gospel Sabbath, or Rest, is given exclusively to the spiritual Israel, who are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

2. The children of the old Sinai covenant were often charged with the sin of Sabbath-breaking, and that sin, with them, consisted in their performing on the seventh day, such labor as was only lawful for them to perform in the six days in which they were commanded to do all their labor. So under the gospel dispensation, the saints, by adhering to the abrogated institutions of the old working dispensation, observing days, and months, and times, and years; or by looking for justification before God by anything short of the blood and righteousness of Christ, do violence to the holy

Sabbath of the gospel. As in the types, many of the children of Israel could not enter into rest, because of unbelief, so we find that our doubts and unbelief, which often press us down, render it impossible for us to enter into that rest which remaineth for the children of God. Our own experience teaches us that when we doubt the reality of our interest in Christ, or the application of his promises to us, we are like the troubled ocean that cannot rest: we labor, and toil to do something ourselves, to reinstate ourselves in the favor of the Lord. When we feel cold, we are prone to kindle fires of our own, and to comfort ourselves with sparks of our kindling, and endeavor to walk in the light of our fire; but if we are truly the children of God, we shall for all this lie down in sorrow; for this Sabbath-breaking. No fires were to be kindled by the Israelites on that day. Nor will the Lord suffer us to warm or enlighten ourselves by any fires that we can make. Christians are commanded to forsake not the assembling of themselves together for the worship of God, and for their mutual edification. To obey the command, suitable times must be appointed for such meetings; the first, or any other day of the week, may be designated, provided that we attach no special sanctity to the time; and the first day of the week is as suitable as any other day. The apostles met frequently on the first day, and also on all the other days of the week, they were daily in the temple praising God, &c. So we conclude that the Christian church is at liberty to make her own appointments, as to time—provided that she allows no man, or set of men, to judge her in regard to the time, and when she makes such appointments, each member is in duty bound to attend the appointment, unless providentially detained. As Christians we have no right to observe any day religiously in obedience to human legislation; either Sabbaths, first days, or thanksgiving days; because God has forbidden that we should allow any man to judge us in these things. We require no human legislation on the subject. The order and decision of the church is more effectual with the saints than all the pains, penalties and fines, ever imposed by the rulers of the darkness of this world. Let us observe the admonition of the apostle, and “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free; and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.” The Sabbath of the Jews, required no grace in the heart, no spiritual emotion of the new man, to qualify those to whom it was given, to observe it. Their service was in the oldness of the letter, and theirs was a worldly sanctuary, and carnal ordinances. Any circumcised Jew, whether a believer or an infidel, could abstain from labors on the seventh day, and that was all that was required of them. But the antitypical, or gospel Sabbath, requires faith in Christ; for none but believers can enter into that rest which remains, for the people of God. The hour has is come and the true worshipers must worship God in spirit and in truth. Not only the Scriptures of the New Testament declare it, but the testimony is corroborated by every Christian’s experience. Christians know that they cannot believe only as the Lord gives them faith; and equally well do they know that they cannot rest unless they believe. When faith, which is of the operation of God, is given, the recipient requires neither the thunder of Sinai, nor the arm of secular legislation, to incline him to keep the Christian Sabbath of gospel rest. The starving soul requires no coercion to incline him to eat, nor does the weary, heavy laden soul require legal enactments to drive him to his rest. As the Sinai Sabbath required the carnal Israelite to abstain totally from servile labor, so the gospel Sabbath requires the spiritual Israelite to cease from his work, and trust, and rest alone on Christ, for his justification and acceptance with God. As the Sabbath-breaker under the law was to be stoned to death, by all the children of Israel, so the legalist who would attempt to drag the ceremonies of the legal dispensation into the gospel church, or to justify himself before God by the works of the law, is to be stoned, (not with stones literally, but with the smooth stones from the brook of gospel truth), by

all his brethren, until his legal spirit yields up the ghost.

Those who have no higher conception of a gospel Sabbath than to suppose it consists in the literal observance of one day out of seven, have yet to learn that “Whom the Son makes free, are free indeed.”

S. The Sabbath

The Sabbath by Gilbert Beebe Alexandria, D. C., December 28, 1838 "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." - Hebrews 4:9.

We do not wish to anticipate our brethren who are called on to give their views on the subject proposed for consideration by our correspondent; neither will we attempt to give the views of the Old School Baptists on the subject, as they have not authorized us to publish creeds for them; but they; being of age, can speak for themselves, as they may possibly differ in their opinion on this question; but we will give a few thoughts on the subject, and hope they may be blessed to the edification of any who may be troubled, or in the dark.

We frankly acknowledge that we know of no divine law requiring either Jew or Gentile to remember the first day and keep it holy. If there be any such precept in the bible, it has escaped our notice. Nor do we know of any instance in the Old or New Testament where the Lord has commanded the Gentiles to observe this law which was given to the Jews, as God's sign between himself and national Israel forever - throughout their generations. For about two thousand three hundred years from the creation, we have no account of any Sabbath being observed by the human family, or of their being charged with Sabbath breaking among the long catalogue of crimes charged on them. The first account of the institution of a Sabbath, which we have in the scriptures, is at or about the time the Lord gave manna to the children of Israel in the wilderness; and then they were strictly forbidden to gather manna on the seventh day. After this period the subject is often mentioned, and even in the decalogue is included and engraven by the finger of God on the tables of stone. From the date of this law the children of Israel were frequently charged with the sin of Sabbath breaking. To arrive at the true meaning of the subject, we must take into consideration, first, the nature of the Jewish Sabbath; second, the limitation of its authority, and third, the design of its institution.

First. Its nature. It was not instituted as a day for worship, or religious service, but of rest; all servile labor was strictly forbidden on that day. To kindle fires, gather sticks, or manna, on that day, would subject the offender to the dreadful penalty of death. Neither the Jew, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, were to labor, without the forfeiture of life. Neither faith nor grace were necessary to qualify an Israelite to keep the day holy, as all the law required of them was a cessation from all manner of exercise.

Second. The limitation of the law is clearly expressed in two very important particulars. First, it was given exclusively to national Israel, and not the Gentiles, and secondly, it was to be observed throughout their generations; and their generations are summed up by Matthew and Luke as beginning with Abraham and extending to the coming of the Messiah. This law came in force from the time of its promulgation in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, and extended of course to all the circumcised Jews, until the days of John the Baptist, (for the law and the prophets were until John,) and then its obligation ceased, according to its own limitation. Hence, from the coming of the Messiah, who is Lord also of the Sabbath, the apostles have preached the "blotting out of the

hand-writing of ordinances," and have charged the gospel church to "Let no man judge them in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moons, or of the Sabbath days, which are a shadow of good things to come; but the body is of Christ." - Colossians 2:14.

Third. The object of the institution. It was God's sign with the children of Israel to prove them, as a test of their obedience to him as their God; and if it was God's sign, it must, as a sign, signify something. Paul tells us, in the text quoted above, that it was a shadow, and that the body, or substance, or thing signified, was Christ. In the epistle to the Hebrews, especially the third and fourth chapters, the figurative import of the Jewish Sabbath is clearly illustrated as signifying that rest which we that believe do enter, viz: the gospel rest. In tracing the analogy which this feature bears to the substance pointed at, we mark, the Jewish Sabbath was to be preceded by six days of labor; men who have not labored, or became fatigued, cannot keep the Sabbath, for they cannot rest, as they are not weary; and Israel was as strictly commanded to labor and do all their work in six days as they were to rest on the seventh. The gospel thus set forth in the figure is, as we conceive, that the legal dispensation, or covenant of works, was ordained to precede the gospel dispensation, or new covenant; and under the former all our legal service was to be performed, as nothing of the legal was to be allowed in the gospel dispensation. Under the law the oxen and fatlings were killed, and all things were made ready; and the supper being prepared, the feast of fat things, full of marrow, is announced in the gospel, and all who who are brought by the King unto this banqueting house find rest to their souls - they enter into rest. Hence we understand the legal Sabbath was typical of the gospel rest, which the six days in which men were commanded to work shows the legal dispensation, which must be done away before we can keep the gospel sabbath. This illustration is not only applicable to the people of God collectively, but it applies to the individual experience of all the sons of God. Christ, you may read it in living characters in your own experience. When you was first quickened, the commandment came, you found yourself engaged under a covenant of works; and you had to do with a law, or yoke, which neither you nor your fathers were able to bear. Here you labored out your six days' work, that is, you worked yourself to death, and sinking in despair, you felt yourself ready to perish forever, "Without one cheerful ray of hope, Or spark of glimmering day."

Fatigued and faint, heavy laden and ready to sink under your load, you was sinking down, when Jesus caught you as you fell; a glorious sabbath of rest dawned upon your soul, light peace and comfort broke in upon your mind, when Jesus said to you, "Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you" - what? Work? No, rest. "Take my yoke (or law) upon you, and learn of me, (not of Moses) for I am meek and lowly, &c., and you shall find rest to your soul." The Jews, because of unbelief, could not enter into rest; nor could you until you received faith; but when you was enabled to believe, you entered into that rest which remaineth for the children of God. To the church collectively, the christian or anti-typical Sabbath was ushered in, when the day-spring from on high visited us, when Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, arose with healing in his wings; to the saints individually when brought to believe in Christ.

Now the labors of the six days are not to be brought into the seventh day. "For he that has entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." - Hebrews 4:10. By examining what was considered Sabbath breaking under the law, we may form a just idea of what constitutes spiritual sabbath breaking in a gospel sense, and so determine who are the Sabbath breakers of the present day. Israel, under penalty of death, were forbidden to kindle any fires on

the Sabbath, or gather sticks. Christians sometimes become very cold, and especially when exposed to the chilling east wind of New England divinity, or the winter fogs of modern doctrine of men and devils; under such circumstances they are apt to feel tempted to kindle a little fire, and compass themselves with the sparks; and for that purpose they often set themselves about gathering sticks, or as they call it, using means. Sometimes the Lord permits them to collect a large heap of combustible matter, hay, wood and stubble, but mostly stubble; such, for instance, as protracted or camp meetings, Arminian preaching, wildfire new light, anxious benches, and all that kind of stuff so common and so popular at this day. Satan stands ready to stick in his match and set all in a blaze, by working up the passions of the flesh and then the poor infatuated creates cry out, "Ah! ah! I am warm! I have seen the fire!" But, dear reader, this is Sabbath breaking, this is spiritual wickedness in high places, and God has promised that from his hand they shall lie down in sorrow.

Another description of Sabbath breakers are mentioned by Nehemiah, when he came to re-establish order in Jerusalem. He found the gates of the city neglected, and aliens, men of Tyre and others, come into the city selling victuals on the Sabbath day, and some he saw lading asses, &c. Is it not a fact that for years past the gates or avenues of the church have been neglected, until these wretched foreign peddlers (men who are not of the household of faith, nor fellow citizens with the saints) have broken in upon our churches like a flood, bringing in their filthy doctrines as victuals for the poor half-starved saints, and even this foul stuff is to be sold; these peddling, dandy priests must have high salaries, for they will not divine without money. And some Nehemiah saw treading wine-presses, bringing in sheaves, and lading asses on the Sabbath day with all kind of burdens, and bringing into Jerusalem all manner of wares. How fitly these things represented what we see going on in the present day. How many poor stupid asses go to the Theological Seminaries to receive their load of foreign merchandize, and all manner of stuff that will bring money. And when the poor animals are laden with Fuller, Gill, Clark, Lightfoot, Chesterfield and Milton, and polished off with a smattering of the dead languages, if they cannot make out a full load of fish, the deficiency can be supplied with tadpoles, and then started off to sell this motley load in Jerusalem, and that on the Sabbath or gospel day.

We might, if we had time and room, extend our remarks, but perhaps sufficient has been said to satisfy our correspondent what our views are in regard to a holy day.

S. The Salvation of Infants

THE SALVATION OF INFANTS The Signs of the Times -December 1, 1856 by Gilbert Beebe The doctrine of salvation by grace alone, as held by all consistent Old School Baptists, is the only doctrine ever published in the world that affords the least hope for the salvation of those who die in infancy. This we propose to prove by the most clear and positive testimony. All other doctrines represent salvation to be conditional; but the theories of men vary much in regard to what the conditions are on which salvation is to be secured, but all conditionalists agree that something is to be done by the sinner, in order to secure salvation. Some assert that the condition is faith and repentance; some that it is the giving up of our hearts to God, while others contend that a law of righteousness must be worked out, and "except we be circumcised and keep the law, we cannot be saved." Some again represent the salvation of infants to rest upon the piety of their parents, and their work in having them baptized, or sprinkled into the pale of the church. Perhaps the most common theory among the Arminians is, that infants are not sinners, consequently are not lost, do not require to be saved. This last position is generally taken by conditionalists, to avoid the inconvenience and impracticability of showing how any infants can be saved on their conditional plans. Hence they set forth one way for adults, and another for infants. But if infants were not sinners, they could not die. "The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law." "Death has passed on all men, because all have sinned." As Adam embodied all his posterity when he transgressed the law of God, all the human family sinned in that transgression. "By one man's offense death reigned by one." "Therefore as by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation," (Romans 5:18). The Scriptures fully demonstrate the fact that all infants and all adults have sinned, and as sinners judgment has come upon all unto condemnation, and it is therefore "appointed unto them all once to die." And the fact that some infants do die, corroborates the testimony of the Scriptures, that all have sinned and are sinners. By these two witnesses the solemn fact is so clearly demonstrated as to defy successful contradiction. Certainly if it were not so, they could have neither part nor lot in that redemption and salvation which is by and through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Admitting, then, what cannot be denied, that all infants are conceived in sin, shapen in iniquity, and that they all go astray from the womb, speaking lies, the question arises, How can they be saved from sin, and the consequences of sin? Divine revelation declares positively that there is but one way. Our Lord Jesus Christ has said, "No man can come unto the Father but by me." "There is no other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved." If then there is but one way whereby a sinner can be saved, and that one way is Christ, then the notion that infants are saved by the piety, faith or works of their parents, is swept by the board. How strange the infatuation, that the piety and works of parents can save their infants, when neither can avail anything in their own salvation. For salvation is "Not of works, lest any man should boast." As parents, therefore, cannot save their children, and God has said, If Noah, Daniel and Job stood before him, they could neither save son nor daughter, let us examine the conditional plan. Supposing salvation were offered to all sinners, on condition of something to be by them

performed, could the infant perform it? Tell them that they must believe a preached gospel, repent of their sins, make themselves a new heart and a right spirit that they must love God, reverence, obey and worship him, that they must give up their hearts, and that if they fail to do so, they must be damned, (for in this kind of language all conditionalists talk and preach to adult sinners,) On that plan who could hope for the salvation of a single infant very few, if any, even of the Arminians, will claim that infants can be saved by their own compliance with terms and acceptance of overtures, or even use of means.

Some contend that infants come into the world pure and sinless, and go so far as to fix for them a period in life at which they become accountable to God for their conduct; previous to which, they affirm, the infant is not accountable To fix the precise time at which they cross the line, and become responsible beings, has been a matter of grave and perplexing deliberation among them. But in direct contradiction to this theory, the Scriptures of truth declare that they are conceived In sin and shapen in iniquity, and all infants and adults became accountable beings to God, as soon as God breathed into Adam's nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. To deny this, is an attempt to impeach the justice of God himself; for if in their creation in Adam they were not accountable to God, what right had God in justice to pass on them the judgment to condemnation, of which we read in Romans v. 18? Did the holy and righteous God enter judgment on any that were not accountable beings? Did, or did not death reign by one man, and from Adam to Moses, over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression? Most certainly it did; see Rom. v. 14. And could it have so reigned in justice over unaccountable beings? What daring impiety! What blasphemy then, to say that children come into the world holy and sinless, when the Scriptures, which are inspired by God himself, declare the very reverse. Perhaps we have written enough for this time, in defense of our position that all infants and all adults are sinners, and by nature children of wrath. The object of this article is to give our views on the subject of their salvation. We have already said, and proved, too, that there is but one way of salvation for any of the posterity of Adam. To show then that this one only way of salvation is perfectly adapted to the condition of infants, let us examine the doctrine of salvation by grace, and that in the light of what God has revealed in his word on the subject.

First: The doctrine of eternal and personal election is essential to salvation. We must admit this, or charge God with doing that which was not necessary to secure the salvation of his people. For the apostle has said, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which hath 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," (Ephesians 1:3-4). This was God's method of securing his object, namely, that we should be holy and without blame Arminians may think election unnecessary to secure our holiness and blamelessness before God, but it is enough for us to know that "So it seemed good in his sight." And whether men like it or not, God hath chosen us (his people) in Christ, before the foundation of the world.

Second: As we have proven that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, and that the chosen people of God were all by nature the children of wrath, even as others, and all were under condemnation by the law, as sinners, therefore redemption was also indispensably necessary to our salvation. And we are happy to find the testimony, "engraved as in eternal brass," that, "By one offering Christ has perfected forever them that are sanctified." That he has carried their sorrows, borne their grief's, and the chastisement of their peace was upon him, and with his stripes they are

healed.

Thirdly: Regeneration is indispensable to our salvation. "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God," (John 3:3). And that birth must be "Not of blood nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man; but of God," (John 1:13).

Election, redemption and regeneration, and every other requisite brought to view in the gospel of our salvation, are so essential to our salvation that in their absence, all, whether infant or adult, must forever perish in their sins. Now let us inquire if it was or is any more difficult for God to elect, redeem or regenerate infants than adults? Election being before the foundation of the world, must have been wholly of God, and in that matter the people chosen must have been perfectly passive, "Ye have not chosen me; but I have chosen you," (John 15:16). Adults then could have no more to do in effecting their election, than infants, for it is all of God, "Who hath saved us, and called us, with an holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," (2 Timothy 1:9).

Redemption also was a work in which all infants and adults were equally passive. "For our Lord Jesus Christ is of God, (not of us) made unto us, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption." We had no hand in this work. He, Christ, gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Can there then be anything in redemption better adapted to adults than infants? Neither adults nor infants could have any agency, directly nor indirectly in their regeneration. None are so silly as to pretend that they were the agents of their own natural generation, and if that was impossible, is it not a still greater impossibility that an earthly, fleshly being could beget, conceive and bring forth immortality? That which is born of the flesh is flesh, nothing more, but that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. "It is," says Jesus, "the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words which I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are life." But generation and regeneration imply a prior existence in a progenitor. Levi was in the loins of his great grandfather, Abraham, when Melchisedec met him and blessed him. And all the saints were in Christ Jesus, their spiritual immortal progenitor, when the eternal Father blessed him, and all his saints in him, with all spiritual blessings, according as he had chosen them in him before the foundation of the world. What agency could infants or adults, or adults more than infants, have had in that before the foundation of the world? But the inspired testimony of God allows no room for caviling on this subject, for, as we have already quoted, "They were born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God," "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man; but of God." From what we have said and proved, it appears that in all that is essential to salvation, the subjects of it are as passive in the hands of God as is the clay in the hands of the potter. The mightiest man that ever trod upon the earth, is just as powerless and helpless in the matter of salvation, as the feeblest infant that was ever inspired with human life, and neither the one nor the other can possibly be saved by any other than by the power of God. To all who are saved it is said, "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast; for ye are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that ye should walk in them." The hope and prospect of the application of this salvation which is altogether of God, in regard to its application to any of the children of men, is founded on the eternal purpose purposed in himself before the world began, and not on anything to be done by us, after the world began; and on the faithful pledge which God has graciously

given. Hence Paul says, "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began," (Titus 1:2). "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Can any child of grace ask for more?

"Enough, my gracious God, Let faith triumphant cry; My heart can on this promise live, Can on this promise die."

We have redeemed our pledge, and proved that the doctrine of salvation alone by grace, as held by all consistent Old School Baptists, is the only doctrine that can possibly save infants. But still the question returns, Are all infants saved? The answer to this inquiry God has seen proper to withhold from us, it is not our privilege therefore to answer it. Why he has not told us plainly, may be that from necessity on our part, we should trust the whole matter to him. The trial of our faith is very precious, and when we are called to give up unto his hands our little ones, our faith and confidence in him is put to a trying test. Job said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; and blessed be the name of the Lord." David said, "I was dumb, because thou didst it." And our God has said, "Be still, and know that I am God." Are we afraid to resign our infants to his hand? Why should we be? We know that he is too wise to err, and too gracious to be unkind.

We may take another view of this subject. Had the Lord plainly told us that all who should die in infancy should certainly be saved, would we not beg of him to take all our infants away in that state? But there is no saving virtue in their early death, for in their death, as in their birth, they are passive. The bounds of their habitation, as well as the number of their days, are with the Lord. It is infinitely better for us, better for our infants, and more sure to promote the glory of God, that it should be even so. The writer of this article has been called in the inscrutable providence of God to surrender four lovely babes to him who gave them, but he has never felt in the least uneasy about their future state. They are taken from the evils of this mortal state. And we do believe that God can and does regenerate infants as well as adults. That quickening power and grace which could reach the thief on the cross, in his expiring moments, or could impart spiritual life to John the Baptist even before he was born, can and does reach the dying infant. Without being born of the Spirit no infant or adult can enter into the kingdom of God, but that preparation being wholly of God, will never be withheld where its bestowment would be for the glory of God, or the best good of his saints. How ready Abraham was, when exercised by that faith which God had given him, to offer up his only son to God, and if we have that faith which Abraham had, will it not subdue our fears, and lead us to yield up our children, in death and in life, into his gracious hands? Living or dying, may God direct their course, and ours, and may his will be done on earth as in heaven. Be it our prayer that he may reconcile us to his will, conform us to the image of his Son, and save us with an everlasting salvation. Amen.

S. The Water of Life

THE WATER OF LIFE Signs of the Times—March 1, 1858.

“But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” John 4:14 by Gilbert Beebe This text presents a part of what our Lord said to the woman of Samaria, and like all the words which proceeded from his mouth, is full of interest and instruction to those who are divinely prepared to understand and appreciate the doctrine which he taught. The circumstances attending this interview are calculated to impress the mind with a sense of the perfection of the divine arrangement in the counsel of God, and the connection of his providence with the purpose of his grace. In the execution of the great work assigned our Redeemer when here in the flesh, he had occasion to go from place to place, and many circumstances which to the natural mind might seem trifling or accidental, are shown to be of vital importance, and highly essential to the accomplishment of the work which as the Mediator was given him to do. Such was the case in this instance; he had departed from Judea to go into Galilee, and he must needs go through Samaria. We are not informed of any other reason for this necessity or needs-be, but what appears in the circumstance of his meeting the woman at Jacob’s well, the interview and conversation which took place, the effect produced on the woman, and also on the citizens of Samaria, who came out to see him, and who professed faith in him as the true Messiah. As he must needs go through Samaria, this woman must needs come out of the city at that very time to draw water, and every other incident recorded was equally important. And thus we believe in every instance of the calling, quickening and conversion of the children of the kingdom, the special providence of God may be clearly traced. God has appointed the bounds of our habitation, so that we cannot pass them.

“His decree who formed the earth, Fixed our first and second birth;

Parents, native place and time, All appointed were by him.” By a well directed train of providential events, we find the Redeemer in conversation with the woman of Samaria. He asks of her drink from her pitcher; she expresses her surprise that he, being a Jew, should ask drink of a woman of Samaria, as the Jews and Samaritans had no dealings together. “Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knowest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.” The woman, like all the Arminian world, entertained the false impression that God is as dependent on means and instrumentalities for the accomplishment of his purposes, as we are, for she knew not the gift of God, nor the Son of God, whom to know is eternal life, therefore she betrayed her ignorance of both by saying to him, “Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep.” This is a prevalent delusion among all will-worshippers and work-mongrel religionists, that God is dependent on his creatures to furnish him with means and instruments with which to supply the waters of life. Sinners are now represented as sinking by thousands into hell, not because they are sinners, but for the want of means, men, money, tracts, schools, or something to draw with, and it is published far and wide that if men would be more active and liberal in supplying the Lord with something to draw with,

multitudes would be converted, and the earth would soon be all evangelized. Whence, thought this ignorant woman, can he supply the water of life of which he speaks, unless he draw it from the well, and as the well is deep, how can he draw it thence without means? "Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever shall drink of this water shall thirst again." And it is even so with all whom drink, religiously, of the religious systems, doctrines, works and inventions of men, which result from their popular means using machinery, who for the time being feel their natural passions of fear, remorse and terror somewhat allayed, but surely as there is a God in heaven, they shall thirst again. Their hopes which are predicated on their works and instrumentalities will fail them, when God shall execute the words recorded, (Isaiah 28:17-18). Like the waters of earthly fountains, which may satisfy our natural thirst for a time but the draught must be repeated as often as the thirst recurs; so with false religious impressions, they only satisfy a carnal, depraved propensity which will recur from time to time as their fleshly passions are excited, and their natural fears disturbed; but in all such cases a revival, through the agency of a protracted meeting, exciting preaching, or some other instrumentality to draw with, is required at short intervals, to prevent their falling from what they call grace, and losing their religion; for they shall thirst again.

"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." On this part of the subject our views are called for, and while we cheerfully give them, we will remark that our views, or the views of any other person, are of little worth except so far as they are sustained by the Word of the Lord. Whatever views may be entertained on the Scriptures, cannot change the truth which they express. From what we have written, the reader will perceive that we understand our Lord to draw a striking contrast between the earthly fountains, which are relied upon for salvation, and which are only available by the use of humanly devised means and instrumentalities to draw with, and his own method of salvation by grace, which is altogether superior to and independent of the agencies, means and instrumentalities of either good or bad men.

Three propositions are suggested. First, the figurative import of the water, which Jesus gives. Second, his purpose to give it to some, but not to all of the human family. And third, the lasting and blessed effects of the water of life resulting to those unto whom Christ shall give it.

First, the water, and what is figuratively signified by it. It is here called, in distinction from that drawn by instrumentalities from earthly fountains, living water; and it is elsewhere called the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb; and, as defined on the last day of the feast of tabernacles, it signifies that Spirit which they that believe shall receive, (John 8:37-39). Having reference to that Spirit which he promised to send resurrection, "Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you," (John 14:17). Hence, when preaching the doctrine of the new and spiritual birth, he said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," (John 3:5). Our natural birth, by which we are made manifest as the members of the old Adam, is of the flesh, and the life developed in that fleshly birth is not abiding, it is mortal and transitory, like the waters drawn from Jacob's well. But that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and it is life, and unlike our natural life, it is spiritual, immortal and eternal. Those who are born of it, receive it, are sealed by it, as the Holy Spirit of promise, and they are sealed unto the day of redemption, that is the day of the redemption of our body, (Ephesians 1:13-14; Romans 8:23). This Spirit of life and immortality which is called the law

of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, (Romans 8:2) and which is not the spirit of bondage, again to fear, like the spirit of will-worship, instrumentalities, bondage and fear, but it is the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, and which shall in due time also quicken the mortal bodies of all who possess it, by the spirit that dwelleth in them, (Romans 8:11). This Spirit of life and immortality is the Spirit of Christ, and if any man have it not, he is none of his; and it is Christ, as the apostle declares, "They that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness," (Romans 8:8-10). From these, with numerous other Scriptures, it is clearly demonstrated that the living water which Christ gives, is the Spirit of life and immortality, the Spirit of holiness, the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba Father. Water is an appropriate and instructive figure of the Spirit of life, and the fitness of the emblem may be contemplated in the following particulars.

1. Water is an indispensable element; natural life cannot be sustained without it. So in the absence of this spiritual life, we are represented as being in a pit wherein is no water, (Zechariah 9:11). And the fruitless inventions of the carnal Israelites, in working for life and salvation by their own carnal works and instrumentalities, are charged with having committed two horrible things, for says God, "They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water," (Jeremiah 12:1-17; Jeremiah 13:1-27). Likewise the presumptuous wretches who are offering salvation to sinners, pretending to be commissioned to aid in the conversion of sinners, are by the apostle Jude denominated, "Clouds without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots," (Jude 1:12). Being twice dead, they cannot contain any of the water of life which they pretend to offer to their deluded hearers. Peter says of them, "These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved forever," (2 Peter 2:17). When the children of Israel were in the wilderness and without water, they were in a dying condition, until God commanded, and Moses smote the rock which was in Horeb; thence from the rock the water flowed in streams of salvation. In this figure, Paul says, "And that Rock was Christ." God, according to what we have quoted from Jeremiah, is the Fountain of living water, and God was manifest in the flesh of Christ, when he was smitten by the rod of Moses, and the waters of salvation broke forth, to follow all his redeemed family to their journey's end. Isaiah says of Zion, the city of our solemnities, "But there, [in Zion] the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein shall go no galley with oars, [or instruments to draw with] neither shall gallant ship pass thereby," (Isaiah 33:21). This is that river of which David sung, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High, (Psalms 46:4). It was seen by Ezekiel, proceeding from the threshold of the sanctuary of God, of which God said to the prophet, "And it shall come to pass that everything that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come shall live, (Ezekiel 47:1-9). John also had a pleasing view of it; "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb," (Revelation 22:1). Of these waters God has said, "The beasts of the field shall honor me; the dragons and the owls, because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert; to give drink to my people my chosen," (Isaiah 43:20). "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the

valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water," (Isaiah 41:17-18). "And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be," (Zechariah 14:8).

2. We may also speak of the cleansing quality of water as applicable to the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. Although the carnal, depraved nature of man remains in his flesh, and keeps up a perpetual warfare in the children of grace, between the flesh and Spirit, the old man and the new man; yet it is certain that the grace of God, developed in his children, will produce a reformation. They cease to fight against the truth, and they no longer feel opposed to God's people, to his method of grace and salvation, but the things which they once hated they are made to love, and the society in which they had no pleasure or interest, now becomes the society of their choice.

3. The harmonizing, mingling, or unity of waters, is well calculated to set forth the unity of the Spirit as it is manifested in the saints of God. Let two who are born of the water and of the Spirit, come together, the one from Hindostan or Africa, and the other from a more refined part of the world, however hostile to each other in their natural prejudices as soon as they pronounce the Shibboleth, or manifest that they have both drank of that living water which is in them as wells of water, springing up into everlasting life, all their prejudices melt away, and they come together as two drops of water, and are of one heart and mind.

Second, we propose to notice the purposes of God, as implied in our text to give this water to some, but not to all the sons of men. The words, he that drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, fully imply that there are those unto whom he will give it. But we do not depend upon any logical deductions, or mere inferences however clearly deduced, but on the most positive and emphatic declarations of the word of God. First we will present the testimony of the Redeemer himself, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, 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). This passage most positively declares not only a fixed and irrevocable purpose, but also a pledge in which the veracity of Christ is involved, that some who are dead shall hear his voice and live, but whether all the dead or only some of the dead are included, must be ascertained from other portions of the word. To determine this matter, turn to the tenth chapter, twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth verses, and there we are informed who of the dead shall so hear and live. "MY sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." But perhaps a more direct declaration could not be expressed in our language, than that found in the appeal made by our Lord, to the Father, when he "lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent," (John 15:1-3). But to settle the matter forever beyond all cavil, turn to his words in John 6:37, John 6:44-45: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out". "No man can come to me, except the Father which has sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." As the water which Christ shall give, is the water of life, or living water,

we see that those and those only are partakers of it, who are drawn by the Father, taught by God, quickened by the voice of the Son of God, and thus being quickened, are qualified to appreciate the waters of life, because they, and only they, are capable of thirsting for living water. And the thirsty only are called to the waters. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters," cries the inspired Isaiah, (Isaiah 55:1). To which Christ himself responds, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." As none but quickened sinners are thirsty, none but the thirsty are called, and as none but such as are drawn by the Father can come to the place of these "broad rivers and streams," so all who are so drawn shall come, shall live, shall in no wise be cast out, but shall be raised up at the last day. All therefore who know the gift of God, and who the Savior is, will ask of him, for they being taught of God, have learned that God alone is in Christ, and that all the waters of life are in him, therefore it is that they shall come to him, and that they shall ask for him, and he shall give, not offer, to them the waters of life freely, not conditionally, and the water which he shall give them shall be in them. We now come to our last general proposition, which is,

Thirdly, to speak of the lasting and blessed effects of this living water to all those unto whom Christ shall give it. He shall never thirst, but it shall be in him a well of living water springing up unto everlasting life. That he shall never thirst, does not mean that Christians do not thirst after God, holiness, happiness, &c., in the sense in which the psalmist expressed in Psalm 42:12, "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God," also Psalms 143:6, "I stretch forth my hands unto thee; my soul thirsteth after thee as a thirsty land." But the peculiar sense in which the figure is employed in our text, is that they who receive from Christ the water of life which he shall give them, shall never be deprived of it, for it shall be in them a well of water springing up to everlasting life. Christ, who is the fountain, is himself in them and from that living fountain the waters of life shall be ever springing up. Of this life which is called water it is said "God hath given us eternal life and the life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life hath life, and he that hath not the of God has not," (1 John 5:11-12). Hence Paul, in describing the difference between this living water and that which hath to be drawn with human instrumentalities, says, "But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;" (Romans 10:6-8). This well being in them, and the waters of life springing up in their hearts, moves their lips to proclaim his goodness, and to talk of his power. Water may be conducted by pipes to any depth and then elevated to a level with its fountain head; but, without some other power or agency, it can never rise above its own level or fountain. Hence the water, or life, which may be obtained by work-mongers who fancy that they have something to draw with, will never elevate them above themselves, as the fountain from whence they draw the life of their religion, is in the passions, will, resolutions and determinations of their own carnal nature, it will rise no higher than themselves. But the water of life which Jesus gives, is clear as crystal, and proceeds forth from the throne of God and the Lamb, it therefore is springing up into everlasting life. However dark and disconsolate the children of God may feel, all their trials are wisely appointed for the trial of their faith, and in every other respect, for their good and the glory of God, and the more they are exercised by the springing up of these living waters within them, the more they may expect to see and feel, and mourn their own carnal, depraved nature, and the more they may expect to be tempted by the adversary. But rather this proves the existence in them of the well of water, than otherwise. But it is consoling to be assured by our Lord

Jesus that all unto whom this water is given, are secured forever and shall never be deprived of that life he gives to them, and which he is in them. They shall in that sense never thirst, because he has given them eternal life and they shall never perish.

What we have written we cheerfully submit to the criticism of all who wish to criticize, as we have no motive other than the advancement of the truth; if anything shall be found in our views which is not fully sustained by the Scriptures, let it be rejected. Prove all things, and hold fast only to that which is good.

S. The Will of God

The Will of God by Gilbert Beebe When duly impressed with a sense of the superlative perfections of Jehovah, the enlightened christian contemplates the principle on which God governs and controls all things, with inexpressible delight; and in the inspired language of the psalmist will say, "The Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice." The grandest theme that moved the prophetic pen, was that in which the absolute government of God is declared unto Zion. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings of good; that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth." If he were only trying to reign, and unable to overcome the impediments thrown in his way by men and devils, the anxiety of his people would be very great. But the good tidings of good, the publication of peace, the proclamation of salvation, by heaven inspired, is based upon the assurance that the God of Zion reigns. He rules in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of earth. Sparrows are guided and protected by the orders from his throne, and the very hairs of our heads are all numbered, so that not one of them can by any casualty fall to the ground without his decree. The natural heavens declare his glory, the marshalled hosts are governed by his law. The sun, moon and stars obey the sovereign orders of their God. The earth and seas also obey him, and the islands shall wait for his law. The winds and storms are his messengers. He rideth upon the wings thereof, and makes the clouds his chariots. The troubled ocean is a calm when he rebukes the tempest, and the monsters of the deep are swift to obey his mandates. Angels, men, and even devils, are encircled by his power; they can neither think nor act in any sphere beyond that which he has appointed them. In the administration of the divine government, as exemplified in creation, providence and grace, many things are inscrutable to us, for we can only know and comprehend his government so far as he is pleased to enlighten us. The faith which he has given us is brought into active operation, affording us that confidence in God, that we can cheerfully trust in him, where we cannot trace him. When he plants his footsteps in the sea, and when his ways are past finding out, we know that all things do work together for good to them that love him, who are the called according to his purpose. When darkness veils the sky, when thick darkness of the sky is his pavilion, when he keepeth back the face of his throne, and spreads his cloud upon it, even then we learn to "Be still and know that he is God." And the more dark and inscrutable his government is to us, the more clearly is our faith and confidence in him demonstrated. If the sun and the land were always in sight, the mariner would have no use for his compass. Faith is a fruit of the Spirit, in the saints, which God has ordained shall be subjected to fiery trials; but it has power to shine the brightest when most opposed. Nothing would be allowed to come in conflict with it, if it were not necessary for our good, and God's declarative glory. But the principle or standard of the divine government, is what we designed to notice more particularly in this article. Seeing that all things are governed by the power and providence of our God, how consoling it is to know that Zion's God is perfectly competent to administer the government over all his works; for, "He worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Now if we have confidence in his will, if we are reconciled to it, and in the language of the dear Redeemer can say, Not my will, but thy will be done; or in the language of the prayer, Thy will be done in earth as it is done in heaven, then we shall rejoice that the Lord God omnipotent

reigneth. If his government were administered according to any other than God's will, we might fear the result. If he consulted our wills and inclinations, alas, how fickle and trifling are we! Or should the government of earth be left to the popular vote of the race of mankind, how uncertain would be the result. But all is made to depend on his own will, and hence the final result of all things is secure. The supreme will of Jehovah is the standard of all the actions and government of God. He has no other law by which to do his pleasure in the armies of heaven, or among the inhabitants of the earth; and we rejoice that it is so, for his will is perfect, pure, infallible, immutable and holy. No other rule of government therefore could be so honoring to God, or safe for us, as that by which all the orders of his throne are administered. His wisdom, truth, justice, immutability, omniscience, omnipotence and eternity, affords us indemnity that nothing will be administered that can possibly conflict with the eternal perfections of the Deity. Who then would wish to shorten the sceptre of how power, or pluck one gem from his crown? Could we act rationally or consistently in asking or desiring him to change his administrations, however dark or inscrutable they may seem to us, or to adopt as a rule of his government the will of any or all of his creatures? Or who that knoweth the Lord, can desire to limit his control over the events or destiny of all beings and all worlds? Nay, we can but rejoice that he is King of kings, and Lord of lords. We rejoice not only that the saints are governed by his law, but also that wicked men and devils are under his control; were it otherwise all would be confusion. Their limits are fixed, their bounds are irrevocably set; hereunto they shall come, but no farther. The hearts of kings and proud monarchs of the earth he turneth as the rivers of water are turned. Truly the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast their cords away from us." But, "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall be brought down to hell, to the borders of the pit. Pharaoh may determine to detain the Lord's chosen tribes in Egypt, or to pursue and bring them his wonders on Pharaoh and his host, and Israel shall sing the song of deliverance in full sight of their vanquished enemies. All this results from the administration of the divine government according to the will of God. Can any saint be found to say, This is more power or government than what properly belongs to God? Will any say that his power should be restricted to good men, and their good actions, and that he has no right to control evil men, and evil actions of men, according to the counsel of his own will? We hope not. But it is sometimes objected, that if God works all things after the counsel of his own will, and nothing after the counsel of his creatures' will, and if his will is eternally the same, from everlasting to everlasting, so that he has "Declared the end from the beginning," and said, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure," then we are only machines, bound fast in the decrees of fate, and only like clay in the hands of the potter. If this be true, they say, we are not accountable beings, and "Why doth he yet find fault? Who hath resisted his will?" "Nay, who art thou O man 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 honor, and another unto dishonor?" The apostle did not shrink from a defense of the sovereignty of God because men would surely say, "Why doth he yet find fault?" &c., but rebukes the faultfinder with merited severity. The inferences and conclusions of men in regard to the nature and tendency of this doctrine are not reliable. Man is by no means released from his accountability, nor is he propelled like a machine in his action; he acts voluntarily in his course of wickedness, without any fear of God before his eyes, and is therefore guilty in the eyes of the law and justice for his wickedness, and he is held accountable for his conduct, and will be punished for

his sins, according to the testimony of the Scriptures. Many have failed to perceive how God can govern the world, and control all events, without influencing men to sin, or being the author of sin. By the terms "author of sin," we suppose they mean the fountain or source of sin. If this be their meaning, nothing can be more remote from the truth. For God is perfectly holy in his nature, and in all his administrations. Men are never influenced to do wickedly by any impulse directly from him. Their fallen natures incline them to do wickedly, and so far as God will permit them to have their own way, they will drink in iniquity as the ox drinketh water. This we know to be the case by our own experience, as well as by the testimony of the Scriptures. Hence God's perfect knowledge, and even his design in all they do, does not change either their inclination to sin, or their accountability for sinning. Joseph's brethren acted voluntarily in meditating his murder, and in selling him to the Ishmaelites to be carried down to Egypt; and they were held accountable for their wickedness, as much so as though God had had no purpose in the matter; yet the event shows, and the word of God declares, that God had a purpose in it all; and we conclude that God had as much purpose in Joseph's going into Egypt, as though his brethren had had no agency in the matter. How these things can be, may be a mystery to men, but all is plain with God. The Jews and Romans were guilty in putting Christ to death, although they could only do what God's hand and purpose had before determined should be done. It was not a divine influence that filled them with malice and hatred to Christ, nor was it by any gracious impulse of the Spirit of God, they crucified the Lord of glory. The spirit of their carnal minds, and the influence of Satan, urged them on in the bloody work, and they were without excuse. And as it was in the case of Joseph, and in the crucifixion of Christ, so we believe it is in regard to all the wicked acts of men. A brother has used the figure of the good tree and the evil tree, which were created with all their subsequent developments in them, and under the unavoidable necessity of bring forth the fruit which was according to their nature. This is unquestionably true in regard to trees, but trees have no volition; they are passive, and to them attaches neither blame nor approval. Men are accountable beings, and act voluntarily in sinning, and are subjects of condemnation and wrath. The figure of trees is applied to men, we admit, but not in reference to their original creation. Christ says, "First make the tree good, and his fruit shall be good," &c. But his application of the figure contemplates man as a fallen sinner, already condemned; he is like a corrupt tree; in his present state he can bring forth corrupt fruit, but he cannot bring forth good fruit. All men are by nature, that is, in their fallen nature, evil trees, and cleanses the fountain, no pure or holy productions can be developed.

We would not indulge in any vain speculations in regard to God, or in the contemplation of his perfections; the subject is too sacred to be approached but with the most profound reverence, but we do rejoice in believing that the God of Zion presides in power and majesty over all the works of his hands, and accomplishes his own purpose, and worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; causing the wrath of man to praise him, and restraining the remainder of their wrath. And we do rejoice to know that the will of God is the invariable rule of all his work of creation, providence and grace. "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." We entertain no fear of his exceeding his eternal right in executing the counsel of his will; and so far as he instructs us that justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne, we shall be led in Spirit to cry out, "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most Mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty; and in majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things."

Middletown, N. Y., October 15, 1855 Elder Gilbert Beebe

S. The Witch of Endor

The Witch Of Endor by Gilbert Beebe A brother requests an expression of our opinion in regard to the witch of Endor, and of her bringing up Samuel; and what we write on the subject, we wish our readers to understand, so far as it is not sustained by direct Scripture authority, to be given only as our opinion. All human opinion is fallible; but what God has said in the Scriptures endureth forever. From a very early period in the history of the world we read of witchcrafts, sorceries, divinations and enchantments. That such things existed in the world, and that through them the superstitious were often captivated and led into idolatry is certain; because we are so informed in the unerring word of God. But to define the mysteries of iniquity, and explain the nature, power and extent of them, requires more knowledge than we possess. But it is our opinion however, that all the events which transpired in the old world, so far as God has been pleased to give us a record of them, were to some extent figurative of something which was afterward to be developed either in, or in opposition to the kingdom of Immanuel.

Saul was king of Israel, he had been anointed to govern Israel, and administer the laws as given by God himself to that people; and so long as he himself obeyed the instructions given by the Lord, he had the assurance that he and his house should enjoy the protection of the Lord. We are informed that Saul had disobeyed the Lord, and the Lord had withdrawn from him the evidences of his presence and approbation, and further that he had brought him into a very critical collision with the army of the Philistines, and when he surveyed their overwhelming number, he was afraid, and although he had asked counsel of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets, and in his extremity he commanded his servants to seek him a woman that had a familiar spirit, that he might go and inquire of her, and they directed him to the witch of Endor; and when he applied to her, she brought up by her witchcraft what appeared to be the person of Samuel, and the apparition talked with Saul, reproved him for his rebellion against God, and predicted his sudden death, and that David should supersede him as king of Israel. avoid unwarrantable speculation on what is recorded in the Scriptures, but to our mind it appears that so far as the witch was concerned, all was simply witchcraft, and that God overruled the whole matter, as he does all other matters, for the accomplishment of his own purpose, in rebuking the rebellious king, and in alarming the officiating witch. That God should make the apparition of Samuel speak, is no more strange than that he should make the dumb ass speak with a man's voice, when he rebuked the madness of Old Balaam. It is not our opinion, or understanding of the Scriptures, that witches or wizards have any power to disturb the silent slumbers of the dead, or that Samuel was in reality under any influence of the witch, or her enchantments, but that the whole scene was directed in the wisdom of God to answer his own wise and righteous purpose, not only in rebuking Saul, but also in furnishing a type of the witchcrafts, sorceries and delusions which should mark and characterize the man of sin in all his anti-Christian forms and workings. The inspired writers in the New Testament frequently applied the term witchcraft, or terms equivalent, to the delusions and abominations which prevailed in their day, and in Revelation it is used in reference to the anti-Christian beasts, to Mystery Babylon, etc., and the power they should

manifest in the sight of men, to bewitch the people which dwell upon the earth. As the magicians of Egypt mimicked by their enchantments the wonders which the God of the Hebrews wrought by Moses and Aaron, so do the magicians of antichrist mock the children of the free woman. Neither Moses nor Aaron pretended that they had any power to perform those wonders only as God wrought by their hands, but the magicians could do all their lying wonders by their enchantments. It is the same in modern times. None of God's children entertain the idea that they can effect either their own, or the salvation of others, but nothing is regarded easier by the religious magicians of the present time, than to produce by their enchantments, (or instrumentality, as they call it,) the salvation of men.

Some of them have declared it to be as easy performed as for one to turn his hand over. In the sight of men these wonders are performed, and to those who wonder after the beast, their lying wonders seem to be real, and they verily believe their revivalists have power to bring fire down from heaven, or to raise not only dead sinners from the dead, and raise up prophets, but also, by their mummeries, to produce, call up, or procure, the presence of Christ, of the Holy Spirit, and wield the power of God, both in mercy and in wrath. They can, as they pretend, send the gospel forth and convert the heathen unto God, or launch the thunder-bolts of heaven on our congress at home. In the sight of the beast, and in the sight of a majority of men, these delusions pass for realities. By their mystic arts, they can supply any quantity of ministers, and bring them up, as the witch did the apparition of Samuel, and qualify them for any kind of service they can desire to be employed in. With them it is rank antinominanism, to acknowledge that men are subject to the high decrees of Jehovah, and that salvation is only of the Lord, that he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. The witch of Endor was remarkably modest in her pretensions, when compared with her sisterhood of the present day. She was alarmed at the result of her use of means, when she saw, or thought she saw, gods ascending out of the earth, but our modern witches pretend to bring gods out of the earth, and instead of being terrified, they exult in their achievements. What we mean by their bringing gods out of the earth is:

First. In producing by earthly power, that which in reality can only be performed by God himself. Jehovah has said, "I am God, and beside me there is no Savior." But from the flesh, which is of the earth, by the use of their enchantments, (or means as it is now fashionable to call them) they can produce salvation, and each of their earth-born gods in turn can effect the salvation of others, and so become saviors. In this modern witchcraft they see gods ascending out of the earth.

Second. From the bowels of the earth they bring the precious metal of which their mighty dollar is composed, to which they ascribe the power of saving souls. Indeed we know of nothing that is specially and exclusively ascribed by divine revelation, to the living God, that they do not ascribe to these kind of gods which they see coming out of the earth. Doctor A. Judson, in his day, in plain terms ascribed the eternal salvation of souls from the quenchless fires of hell, to the jewels of the American ladies, and the Doctor is regarded as an oracle by the whole fraternity of modern missionism. Did not the Doctor see gods coming out of the earth when he exclaimed,

"How easy to conceive, from many known events, that the single fact of a lady's divesting herself of a necklace for Christ's sake, may involve consequences which shall be felt in the remotest parts of the earth, and in all future generations to the end of time, yea, stretch away in the boundless eternity, and be a subject of praise millions of ages after this world and all its ornaments are burnt

up.” – See Dr. Judson’s letter to American ladies in 1832. But there are other applications of the figure of witchcraft. The influence of Judaizing teaching on the saints in the Galatian churches, was regarded as witchcraft, and the saints which were contaminated by it, were interrogated, “Who hath bewitched you?” etc. The prophet Samuel told Saul, that to obey was better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams, but rebellion was as the sin of witchcraft. We have not the time nor space that might be profitably devoted to the consideration of this subject in all its bearings. We rejoice to know that however the saints may be tried, perplexed, and bewildered by those who seek unto those who have familiar spirits, to witches, and wizards that peep and mutter, old Balaam was compelled to acknowledge that no enchantment can prevail against God’s chosen tribes. While the God-forsaken kings and rulers, and the hardened Egyptians, may seek unto witches, and resort to enchantments and sorcery, instead of looking to God alone for support, it is our duty and our blessed privilege to ask counsel of God, who giveth liberally to all men; and may we remember that it is written and “engraved as in eternal brass,” “They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion that cannot be removed, but abideth forever.”

Middletown, N. Y. June 15, 1855.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

S. The Work of the Gospel Ministry - To Open the Eyes of the Blind

THE WORK OF THE GOSPEL MINISTRY-TO OPEN THE EYES OF THE BLIND From Signs of the Times -April 15, 1858 by Gilbert Beebe In this chapter, the apostle Paul, in making his defense before Agrippa, related his remarkable conversion to the Christian faith, and in the course of that relation, mentions the words which were spoken to him by our Lord Jesus Christ, whose voice, pealing from the high throne of his supreme glory, came with almighty power and irresistible force to his heart, at once removing his violent prejudice against the truth, and making him to feel most sensibly his lost and helpless state and condition as a sinner against, and persecutor of Jesus Christ.

Elder Harding desires our views on a portion of the words which were spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ to Saul on that occasion, and by him narrated in his address before Agrippa, namely "To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." In the context we are told that our Lord designed to make Saul a minister and a witness, both of the things which he had seen and of those things in which he would afterward appear unto him; and that he would send as a minister and a witness unto the Gentiles, open their eyes, &c. Not by any means implying that Paul, even as an inspired Apostle had the power to quicken dead sinners among the Gentiles or the Jews to see the things of the Spirit which are foolishness unto the natural man, and which no unregenerate man can either see or know because they are spiritually discerned, but ministerially and as a witness of Jesus, he was to open their eyes. God has a people among the Gentiles whom he was about to call, quicken and bring to his fold. They were now afar off, and in darkness, error, idolatry, and under the power of Satan, but they were soon to be called by grace, and instructed. To qualify this witness and minister, he must like the husband-man, first be a partaker of the fruits, and as we see in his own experience, when quickened by the life-giving voice of Jesus, he found himself in darkness, in bondage and ignorance, and instead of being led to fancy that he would be able to give eyes to the blind, by any power which he possessed, he found himself unable to open his own eyes, but remained in darkness until one of the Lord's ministers and witnesses was sent to him, as he was now about to be sent to the Gentiles, saying to him, by divine authority, and in the name of Jesus, "Brother Saul, receive thy sight." The work for which Paul was qualified, and to which he was called, was to open the eyes of God's quickened children among the Gentiles, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. Certainly his ministry had this effect. God's people, to whom he was sent, had been brought up in Pagan darkness, and although quickened and prepared by a divine power for the salutary benefits of Paul's labors, had never had their sight directed to the adorable way of salvation by grace. To open their eyes, implies that they had eyes to open; not their natural eyes, for with them no man can see the kingdom of God, as it is written, "Eye hath not seen." "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." But when "God, who commanded the light to shine out of the darkness, has shined in their hearts, to give them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face ministerial labors of the servants of

Christ to remove from them their “grave clothes,” as Christ commanded in the case of a quickened Lazarus’ and to take the napkin from his eyes, as Ananias had done to Saul, and as Paul was to do to the quickened Gentiles’, by preaching to them the glorious gospel of God our Savior, administering to them the ordinances of Christ, “teaching them to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded them,” and warning them to be aware of false teachers and false doctrine. Should Paul, or any other person, open the eyes of a dead man, it would not enable the dead to see, for if dead they can see no more with their eyes than with their hands or feet, but opening the eyes of the living, removes that covering from the eyes, which prevents their seeing. Hence to open the eyes of God’s quickened children ministerially, is to turn them from darkness to light. Living persons, if their eyes be shut, are in darkness, and when in darkness, as Peter said, they are blind, and cannot see afar off, and have forgotten that they have been purged from their old sins. Much may be written on the subject of that darkness to which God’s living children are subject, sometimes by reason of doubts, fears, unbelief, &c., and sometimes by following their own carnal reasoning, instead of living by faith upon the Son of God. But the darkness from which the Gentile converts were to be turned, seems to have been from pagan idolatry and superstition, to the divine radiance of the glorious gospel of the blessed God. The darkness of this world is connected with the power of Satan, who is the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience, and Satan and his emissaries are spoken of as rulers of the darkness of this world. But God has delivered his children from the power of darkness, and translated them into the kingdom of his dear Son- hence they are admonished to walk as children of the light. Perhaps there never was a time when the power of darkness was more strikingly demonstrated than at the present day, in which men put darkness for light, and light for darkness. And the power of their darkness is so great that they who are under it “Wonder and perish, while God is working a work in their day which they shall in no wise believe though a man declare it unto them.” Even God’s people in all these natural powers are inclined to darkness rather than light, and the constant tendencies of their natural mind is to run into it, but God has provided for the effectual turning of them from it, and from its Satanic power, unto God. And the gospel ministry, and especially the apostolic gifts and labors are eminently calculated to secure this object. “That they may receive the forgiveness of sins.” The forgiveness of sins, and the reception of that forgiveness by the sinner are very different things, “Christ is exalted to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and the forgiveness of sins.” There are many witnesses on earth who can testify that Christ has power on earth to forgive sins. But the forgiveness of our sins cannot afford to us consolation until such evidence or assurance of their forgiveness is afforded us to enable us to receive that forgiveness by faith, then we realize a full and free discharge from the guilt and condemnation of them. Isaiah had neither power nor commission to forgive Jerusalem, but God commanded him to speak comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare was ended, and her iniquities were pardoned. They were already pardoned, but they were to be apprised of the fact, that they might receive the forgiveness, and rejoice in it. A quickened sinner, until thus enlightened, will seek for justification by the deeds of the law, and will labor and mourn in darkness where he is annoyed by the tempting power and cruel suggestions of Satan, until he is enabled by grace to see how God can be just and the justifier of a poor, guilt-burdened sinner, but when the assurance is brought home to his understanding that “he has received at the Lord’s hand double for all his sins,” then he receives the forgiveness of his sins. This is to them a great and glorious deliverance, and in it they rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, Now they receive not only

the evidence of the remission of sins, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, but they are placed experimentally among the heirs of God and joint-heirs of Jesus Christ, and as heirs, they receive inheritance among them which are sanctified. Not a purchased possession or a reward for their efforts at reformation, their use of means, or payment for services rendered to the Lord, but an inheritance, the gracious patrimony of their heavenly Father. And this inheritance being a joint inheritance, is among them which are "Sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus and called." "Saved and called with an heavenly 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." The King who sits upon the throne of his glory, who has separated them from the goats, and put them on his right hand, says to them, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." And that faith which is in him, of which he is both the author and finisher, is given them, and by it they receive their forgiveness and inheritance among them which are set apart, separated or sanctified. But let it not be forgotten that a part of the legacy is, that in this world the heirs of glory shall have tribulation. "If any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution." God has chosen his people in a furnace of affliction, and the saints are destined to encounter many trials, temptations, doubts, fears, reproaches and afflictions, but they have the blessed assurance that these comparatively light afflictions, which are but for a moment, do work for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while they look not on the things which 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. Hence, "We know that all things do work together for good to them that love God; to them who are the called according to his purpose."

S. They Will Not Endure Sound Doctrine

They Will Not Endure Sound Doctrine Signs of the Times—October 1, 1856 by Gilbert Beebe

NOTE: Providence Baptist Ministries (PBM) does not agree with all that is herein written by Elder Beebe. PBM is deeply rooted in the Doctrines of Grace, yet, are decidedly in favor of those institutions that, when used properly, educate men for the Gospel ministry. Likewise, we do not think that such institutions are the complete and final answer to the necessity of the on-going illumination of the mind of the saint, but rather is one of the means whereby one may better equip himself.

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.” 2 Timothy 4:3-4 The apostle Paul, and all the apostles, were inspired by the Holy Ghost, and thereby duly qualified to give such instructions to Timothy, and to all other gospel ministers and gospel saints, as they were then, or ever should be in need of. Without the immediate inspiration of God, they could not have predicted the things which should come to pass in subsequent ages, both in reference to the church of God, and the development of the man of sin. In reference to the manifestation of that wicked spirit which was to be developed, Paul had already informed Timothy in the first epistle, (1 Timothy 4:13), that the Spirit had spoken expressly on that subject, saying, “Expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;” and the Spirit had with equal clearness expressly spoken of the lies they should tell, the hypocrisy they should practice, what should be the state of their consciences, what heresies they should utter, and what restrictions they should lay upon the church. Now, in closing this second and last epistle, when he was ready to be offered, and the time of his departure was at hand, in his valedictory charge, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ who shall judge the quick and the dead, repeats to him the admonition to “preach the Word,” and that constantly; and the admonition is enforced by reminding him of what the Spirit had expressly said, “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine.” The time specified, is the time which God had appointed, until which time the man of Sin could not be manifested. “And now ye know what withholdeth that he 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, [at that time] shall that wicked be revealed,” The time is expressly declared by the Spirit, as the last time. All the powers of darkness could not anticipate the time which God had determined on for the fulfillment of these important events, nor could all the efforts, devices, good works or bad works, of saints or sinners, postpone that development one hour or one moment beyond the appointed time.

Some very conscientious and good brethren have seemed afraid to admit that God has set the bounds of wickedness of men and of devils, so that they have no power to change them; but we would ask such brethren whether the Spirit would speak to us of things which it would be wrong for us to believe? Would the Spirit tell us expressly, things which we ought not to know? Has not the

Spirit told us expressly that the wicked shall be revealed in his time, and that God withholdeth it until its time, and has pledged his word that it shall in its time be revealed? Read the Scriptures on this subject, and then ask yourselves, could the beast with seven heads and ten horns, have risen up out of the sea before the great red dragon had been manifested? Or could the second beast have preceded the first? Or could the image of the beast have anticipated any of its predecessors? If they could not, it was because God had ordered things as they came to pass, even so, likewise the apostasy predicted in our text, has its time fixed. "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine." But who are they that will not endure sound doctrine? Some have supposed that this could not mean Christians, and that it must mean the world or antichrist. But when, we ask, has the world or antichrist ever endured sound doctrine? Did the world, the Jews or pagans, endure the sound doctrine set forth by Christ and his apostles, in their days? Did the carnal Israelites endure the sound doctrine that was reported to them by the prophets? Which of them did they not slay? The truth has, in all times since sin entered the world, been opposed by the world, and by all unconverted men. We cannot therefore suppose that the Spirit spake thus expressly of a time when nothing unusual was to be revealed. These non-endurers of sound doctrine are marked as apostates, thus, "Some shall depart from the faith." We do not understand that these apostates are the children of God, born of the Spirit, or that they ever possessed the vital principles of faith in their hearts. But we do contend that they are those who have professed the faith of the gospel, and have been held in the fellowship of the church of God, otherwise they could not depart from what they never professed to hold. Christ has said, "Every plant that my Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." And again, "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away." Thus signifying that all who enter not in by the door into the sheepfold, or church, are thieves and robbers, and all who come in without his grace, shall he cast out without his favor. These things began to develop in the apostolic age, and John speaks of some who went out from us, that it might be made manifest that they were not all of us. So in those events which are traced in the revelations made to John on Patmos, there were times signified in which the world rushed into the church nominally, but they could not endure the sound doctrine of the gospel, for they had neither ears to hear, nor hearts to understand or love it. Whatever direct allusion our text has to the times of the apocalyptic beasts, or false prophet, we feel justified by the words "last times" in the context, in applying the prophecy to the present time, including the last forty or fifty years. We do not feel sufficiently liberal to apply this subject to the various Protestant or Catholic denominations,¹ by which the church of God has been surrounded in ages past, for we do not believe they, or any of them, ever did, or ever could, depart from the faith of the gospel, for they never, any of them, strictly speaking, held it, and they could not depart from what they never professed to hold.

Within the space of the last half century, the prophecy of our text has been manifestly realized in the Baptist Church, which, as a church, is the only organization that has ever stood on the foundation of the apostles. Many in this last time have departed from the faith, and in their apostasy have demonstrated that they could not endure sound doctrine. Those who are now denominated New School, or Missionary Baptists, or at least those churches who took that ground at the time of the division, once professed to hold the faith which we now hold. The same articles substantially, which were held by us before the separation, are held by us now, but these prominent sentiments which have distinguished the church of Christ from the apostles' days, and which they professed to hold once in common with us, they have now departed from, and do now

wantonly repudiate them. They are, therefore, very manifestly embraced in the prediction of the text, as having departed from the faith. We challenge the world to point us to a single church or congregation of them who can at this day endure the sound doctrine which in all former ages characterized the Baptists, from the time of John. Neither Old School-Baptists nor New School Baptists, will deny—either of the following propositions namely: first, that we were once all included in one religious denomination, and all professed the same faith and order. Second, that we are now very widely apart, that we do not all hold the same faith and order, and therefore one party or the other, or both, have departed from the faith which we all once professed to hold.

Now, as it is not very likely that either party will admit that they have so departed, but as each charges the other with having departed from the faith, we have but one alternative for the settlement of our respective claims—to the word and to the testimony. What does the Spirit expressly say, by the mouth of the inspired Paul, shall be the distinguishing marks or characteristics of those who in the last times will not endure sound doctrine? And with which party are these marks and characteristics found? Will any sane man who has any knowledge of the Old School Baptists, say that we have, since the division, after our own lusts, heaped to ourselves teachers? Will the New School Baptists themselves so charge us? So far from it, they have continually thrown it in our teeth, that instead of having heaps of teachers, that we have but very few, and they have been predicting that in a few years we shall have none. Some of them have exultingly said they expected to live to see the last of the Old School preachers buried. If, then, we have no such heaps of teachers, it cannot be that we are the party who are advertised in the holy Scriptures as having heaped to ourselves teachers.

Again, who will charge that the Old School Baptists have itching ears, leading them to lust after heaps of teachers, and evincing such lusts and such itching, by running after all the new doctrines and institutions of the age? Is it not proverbial that the Old School Baptists are behind the age? That they are an anti-effort, unprogressive people, and more than five hundred years behind the improvements of the age in which we live?

Once more! Will any one say that what preachers we have, have been raised up by any effort of ours? That we have number of our minister? Do our teachers or ministers, show so much of the wisdom and polish of this world, as to give any just grounds to suspect that they have been called, qualified or brought into the work the agency of men? No rational man who has any knowledge of us believes any such thing. The marks, therefore, which are to identify and distinguish the class of apostates in our text, cannot apply to the Old School Baptists. Nor can it be said in truth, of Old School Baptists, that they are turned away from the truth, turned unto fables. We have been constantly charged with obstinacy, for so pertinaciously adhering to the Scriptures, as our only standard and rule of faith and practice. Our refusal to depart from the Bible as our standard of morality and religion, and to unite in the various schemes of the age for reforming society, reclaiming drunkards, converting sinners, and evangelizing the world, has brought down on us such epithets as Hardshells, Iron Jackets, and a profusion of titles indicative of anything but a readiness to turn away from what we hold to be the truth, and of being allured by fables. Flatteries and frowns alike have failed to draw the Old School Baptists from the Bible as their standard, We could mention cases where flattering titles of presidents, vice-presidents and directorships in popular, humanly devised religious societies, and lucrative missionary appointments, have been tendered, as a bait to draw some of our number from their steadfastness in the faith, and other

instances could be particularized where proscription, reproach and calumny, have also been employed for the same purpose, but all in vain. How then can any of the marks which divine revelation has fixed on the apostates, described in our text, apply to the Old School Baptists? As these marks cannot be found on the Old School Baptists, they cannot be the people who have departed from the faith, or who cannot endure sound doctrine. We will now proceed to show that the New School or Missionary Baptists have them all as plainly stamped on them as was the mark which was set on Cain, and as indelibly written as were the words, "Mystery, Babylon The Great, The Mother of Harlots," &c., on the forehead of the woman that John saw sitting upon the scarlet-colored beast, (Revelation 17:5.) The Mission Baptists who have gone out from us, have very clearly demonstrated that they cannot endure sound doctrine, not only by going out from us, on account of our holding sound doctrine, but also by heaping to themselves teachers. Their ears have itched for such doctrines as would make them popular in the eyes of the world, and give them a place and respectability with the worldly religionists of the age. This appears from their pleading the necessity of Theological schools, colleges and universities, for training young men for the ministry, because other religious denominations around them have such worldly institutions for that purpose, and lest they should thereby draw all the learned, wealthy, and influential, into their societies. This itching for popularity has shown a lack of confidence in God to raise up suitable teachers for them, or a sufficient supply to compete successfully with other denominations. The instruction of the King of Zion to his disciples, is, to pray the Lord of the harvest to supply laborers for the gospel ministry, but their own lusts have dictated to them to heap teachers to themselves, in defiance of the command of Christ, and in contempt of his authority. They not only prepare for themselves a number corresponding to their congregations, but they heap them, so that they have quantities of them for transportation to foreign lands, and an abundant surplus to be employed as itinerant beggars, colporteurs [A peddler of devotional literature; Ed.], &c., at home. Thus they not only crowd out from their pulpits all such as would offend their delicate itching ears, with sound doctrine, but have troops of them to send forth, like the frogs of Egypt, into all the land, to come up into our houses, our kneading-troughs, and our ovens. Is this picture overdrawn? Are there not hundreds of this heap now, and at all times, lounging about the cities and large towns, waiting for a call, and begging their way along, because they are too lazy to work for an honest living? Will any New School or Missionary Baptist deny that such is the case? Who can deny that the New Order of Baptists raise up, call, educate and qualify their own teachers? For what other purpose do they organize their State Education Societies, build their colleges, and establish their Theological schools? Their white cravated mendicants are constantly abroad in every neighborhood, soliciting funds and their petitions are spread out before every State legislature, asking for State patronage, to aid them in their work.

Another mark of their apostasy is found upon them: They have turned away their ears from the truth, and are turned unto fables. In no part of the religious world can any be found who are more deadly set against the truth, or who manifest a greater hostility to the very doctrine which they themselves once professed to hold, than do the New Order of Baptists, who are commonly call the New School, or Mission Baptists. Their ears are turned away, and instead of listening to sound doctrine, they are turned to fables.

Webster thus defines the term fable: "1. A feigned story or tale, intended to instruct or amuse; a fictitious narration intended to enforce some useful truth or precept. 2. Fiction in general. 3. An idle

story; vicious or vulgar fictions. 4. The plot or connected series of events in an epic or dramatic poem. 5. Falsehood; a softer term for a lie.” Are the New School Baptists turned to fables, as thus defined? Read their publications and the tracts which they have turned to, which they approve, and which they circulate. Read their “Dairyman’s Daughter.” Their “Uncle Tom’s Cabin,” and a thousand more of their fabulous stories which have been manufactured to order, and then decide whether these fictitious stories are the sound doctrine of the Bible, or fables.

But, not only in the tracts which they publish and circulate, but in the general ministry of the teachers which they have heaped to themselves, a system of fiction, instead of reality prevails. The sovereignty of God, and the exclusive work of the Spirit, in the quickening and regeneration of men, is denounced, and the power, ability and will of the creature, is extolled. Salvation is by them ascribed to the will and works of men, and the heaven-taught truth of God, that salvation is alone of God by grace, through faith, and that not of the creature, but the gift of God, is by them rejected, and the fictitious doctrine of men, that salvation is effected by the use of means, instrumentalities, and that the gospel, or something else, is the means, and their heaps of teachers are the instruments of saving souls from hell, and of advancing them to heaven is preached instead thereof. They have turned away from the truth of the gospel, to the fiction and fables of the schools, from the eternal realities which are taught by the word and Spirit of the true and living God, to the vain, delusive, fabulous fictions of their own vain imaginations, and to a teaching for doctrine, the commandments of men. In conclusion of this long article, in which we have, as we believe, fully proved that all the marks of apostasy given in our text, are legibly written on those who have gone out from the Old School Baptists, and that none of them can be found upon the old apostolic order of Baptists which remain on the old Bible grounds, we would urge upon our brethren the solemn truth, that we have nothing wherein to boast over those who are turned unto fables. God has, as we hope, made us to differ, and all that we have, we have received of him. Let us then rejoice, not that others have fallen, but rather that our names are written in heaven. And let him that standeth take heed lest he fall. May we trust alone in him who is able to keep us from falling, and to give us an inheritance among them that are sanctified.

Footnotes:

1 We speak of those denominations; Christ has but one church on the earth. “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism,” (Ephesians 4:4-5). We freely admit and fully believe that as there have been many nominally connected with the church of Christ, who were not children of God, not born of God, not taught by his Spirit, so there have been many of God’s children nominally connected with the various branches of antichrist, but so long as they remain there, they are living in disobedience to their Lord and Master; and, by that order of discipline which he has established in his church, we cannot extend our fellowship to them, as long as they continue to rank and file with the enemies. “What agreement hath the temple of God with idols?” “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,” (2 Corinthians 6:17-18).

S. Total Depravity

Total Depravity by Gilbert Beebe

WE have proposed to give our readers a more enlarged view of our sentiments, which were briefly presented in our prospectus. The next item in order is, “the total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.”

According to our engagement, we call the attention of our readers to the testimony which first from the word of God, and then from such collateral testimony as we can find existing among the human family, we intend on this occasion to present. The work before us is to prove that man in his fallen state, is totally depraved; and secondly, that he is justly condemned by law of God. On this important subject mankind appears to be very generally in the dark; and from an ignorance of this subject many errors and extravagances have gained in the world as we shall notice in the conclusion of this article. We cannot expect that the proud heart of man will fall in love with the doctrine about to be presented, as it strikes a death blow at all personal righteousness or human excellence, as a ground for acceptance before the sovereign Judge of quick and dead. Painful as the awful truth may be, it should not be concealed that “Man in his best estate is altogether vanity.” But as you are at this time called to contemplate man in his lost, depraved and condemned estate, you would have just cause to accuse us of “handling the word of God deceitfully,” and of “giving flattering titles to men,” should we fail to present him as he is presented in the record which the God of all truth has given us. Of the numerous passages of divine truth, which prove that mankind are depraved, we give the following: “God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.”—Ecclesiastes 7:29. “Wherefore as by one man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”—Romans 5:12. “Their throat is an open sepulchre, with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips, whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. Their feet are swift to shed blood, destruction and misery are in their ways, and the way of peace have they not known; their is no fear of God before their eyes. Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped and the whole world may become guilty before God. For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.”—Romans 3:13-20 and Romans 3:23. “The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint, from the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores,” &c.—Isaiah 1:5-6. “What is man, that he should be clean? And he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?”—Job 15:14. “Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one.”—Job 14:4. “Behold I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.”—Psalms 51:5. “Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity; there is none that doeth good. God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God. Every one of them is gone back; they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.”—Psalms 53:1-3. What then? Are we any better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin. As it is written “There is none righteous, no, not one. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after.

“The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies. Their poison is like the poison of a serpent, they are like the deaf adder, that stoppeth her ear; which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely.”—Psalms 53:3-5. The above are a few of the many passages of holy writ, which prove the total depravity of all mankind in their fallen condition. Here in this volume, according to which God will judge the world, the whole mass of mankind are presented on one general level; all have sinned; death has passed upon all; hence there is no class of our race exempt from this state of wretchedness and depravity, conceived in sin, estranged from the womb, going astray, and speaking lies, as soon as they are born. But as we conceive the doctrine of total depravity involves as a consequence, total inability, i. e. not as natural creatures, to perform natural things, but as depraved beings to perform anything which is good and acceptable in the sight of God. Of man in his alienation from God, it is written, “The thoughts of his heart are evil, and that continually.” “He cannot see the kingdom of God.”—John 3:3. “He cannot discern the things of the Spirit.” 1 Corinthians 2:14. “He cannot receive the spirit of truth.”—John 14:17. “He cannot do good.”—Jeremiah 8:23. “He cannot cease from sin.”—2 Peter 2:14. “He cannot repent.”—Acts 5:31. “Cannot believe (savingly) in Christ.”—John 6:29;—Acts 13:41.

Man is not only a depraved and helpless creature, as a fallen sinner, but he is also a condemned criminal, having sinned and come short of the glory of God, as we have shown. And the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness. He is not, as many suppose, (a probationer) in a state of trial, to see whether he will, or will not deserve eventually to be condemned; for the law has already uttered its thundering sentence: “The soul that sinneth it shall die.” Nor again, as others have contended, that the sinner as a free moral agent, is endowed with natural ability to repent, believe the gospel, and be saved; and, in the words of A. Fuller, “Commanded to believe, on Pain of damnation.”

“For they are condemned already.” Math. 3:18. Hence, “It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.”—Romans 9:16, Romans 9:18. That the condemnation of fallen sinners is grounded on strict justice, but few will have the hardihood, in so many words, to deny. If it be admitted that the law of God is “Holy, just and good,” and that a just and holy law has said, “The soul that sinneth it shall die;” and that the sovereign Judge has declared that there is none that doeth good, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; the point is established forever.

It does not belong to the discussion of this subject to present a remedy, a way of salvation, or to pursue the popular course even of those of our day who contend for the scriptural doctrine of Total Depravity as strenuously as we do, and after establishing the point by the word and testimony of God, still conclude their subject by exhorting those whom they have proven to be dead in trespasses and in sin, to be up and working for life. No, this does not belong to our statement at all; we have not so been taught. We find the fallen sinner condemned already, and under the wrath of God. The sentence is passed, irrevocably passed; God who cannot lie has said, that all have sinned, and that he will turn the wicked into hell with all the nations that forget him.

Thus the polluted sinner goes, Laden with guilt and heavy woes, Down to the regions of the dead, With endless curses on his head.

Dead in sin, enmity against God, in love with sin, drinking down iniquity, as the ox drinketh water, raging and blaspheming, condemned and under the curse of a righteous, just and inflexible law, we find the human race. Dreadful as their situation is, here we must leave them. In a subsequent number we shall treat upon the only possible way of salvation for any of the miserable sons of men which is brought to light through the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is, as we shall prove by the scriptures, special and particular.

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S. Union, Fellowship, and Harmony

Union, Fellowship, and Harmony by Gilbert Beebe

THERE is probably no subject of more vital importance to the children of the kingdom of Christ, than that to which we wish in these lines to call their attention. Much has been said upon the subject, by various characters, with as great a variety of designs. Knowing how much the saints desire a perfect union and fellowship among themselves, the enemy has sometimes effected to be very zealous for the promotion of the same object; and to deplore what he or they have denominated a schismatic spirit. Under this imposing pretext, the New School Baptists have generally denounced those who have, in obedience to the command of Zion's glorious King, conscientiously withdrawn their christian fellowship from disorderly walkers. Some honest hearted christians have become bewildered by the hypocritical whinings of ungodly persons, from failing to discern the true design of those who have exhorted them to a general union. There is at this present time, an uncommon zeal manifested by some in whom we have had, and some in whom we still have confidence as Old School Baptists, for union. Several articles have recently appeared in the Primitive Baptist, the Correspondent, and the Advocate, as also a letter recently prepared as a circular, for the W—Association, (which was not adopted) upon this subject; and among them, some very well written essays. But we have been led to examine this subject, with reference to the general want of sufficient discrimination manifested by some, and the evident bearing of other some to work a dissention and schism in the ranks of the Old School Baptists, under the imposing plea of union. We will not charge any with such intention; but when we see a series of numbers on the subject of union, prefaced by what we consider an unprovoked attack on this paper; and when we had sought for an explanation, and received none, we have found it rather difficult to suppress our misgivings as to the sort of union contended for. It is true, the attack appears to carry on its face, that which might make any farther explanation unnecessary. Inasmuch as the fact that we had dissented from some views of an esteemed writer in the Primitive, wherein we felt confident the brother had erred; and had opened our columns to the injured brethren of the Old School, in the Mississippi, Valley, to defend themselves against the slanderous charge of being Sabellians, heretics, apostates, &c.; that we had thus offended, was used as a signal for rallying the forces of Israel against us; and while the denouncing of more than one half of all the Old School Baptists in the United States, as base heretics, was winked at, our course is, with the same pen, and by the same conciliatory spirit, swelled into schism, sedition, &c.

Having just glanced at the views of some modern writers, on the subject of union, we will briefly state our opinion on the subject also.

They that gladly received the word, at the day of pentecost, and were baptized upon the reception thereof, continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer, &c. Here lies the foundation of all christian union. Where the word of the Lord is rejected, or is not gladly received, there is no scriptural ground for christian fellowship;* but where the word of life has been gladly received, as on that memorable day, and sinners, quickened by its

almighty power, have bowed their necks to wear the yoke of Jesus, and in the holy ordinance of baptism have put it on, and do, like those primitive Baptists, continue in the apostles' doctrine, true gospel fellowship must, and will invariably follow. They not only continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, but equally steadfast in the apostles' fellowship; and consequently in sweet union and fellowship among themselves. And while abiding in the doctrine and fellowship of the apostles of the Lamb, the saints are prepared to travel harmoniously in the breaking of bread, and in social worship. But under no circumstance are the saints at liberty to extend their fellowship where there is not a hearty reception of the word, in faith and practice, and a steadfast continuance in the apostles' doctrine. The moment our fellowship exceeds these New Testament limits, it ceases to be christian union, or gospel fellowship, and becomes a wicked perversion of the word—a mere giving of flattering titles one to another.* Called with a heavenly vocation, by one spirit, and in one hope of their calling, having one Lord, one faith, and one baptism, one God and Father of all, &c., the saints are not only prepared to adhere strictly to the doctrine and practice of the gospel, as ordained by Christ and taught by his inspired apostles, but also to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; to bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.. Under such circumstances, it is not only lawful, but expedient, that christians should exhort one another to cherish an unfeigned love and christian regard for the happiness and spiritual growth of the King's royal family. As we said in the commencement of this article, no subject is of more vital importance to the church of God; so we see the necessity of guarding against the influence of any thing in doctrine or practice, that is calculated to sever these blessed bonds; but we should never be unmindful that it is Satan's masterpiece to lead us, if possible, to incorporate within the embrace of our fellowship and union, something that is not found within the limits of the apostles' doctrine; and thereby to pervert our union, and subvert our hearts. Beware of him!

Let us now enquire, whether controversy, discussion, and explain dealings among professors of the gospel faith, is in reality prejudicial to a true christian union, or not. A late writer defines controversy, as meaning dispute, debate, quarrel, &c. The correctness of his definition we shall not dispute; but we know God had a controversy with Israel; although we do not understand that he quarreled with them, in conducting it. That he disputed the premises they assumed, and that his manner of displaying his disapprobation was by himself denominated a controversy, is certain. The apostles were so far from considering a controversy detrimental to christian union, that they exhorted the saints to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; and this was found indispensable to the maintenance of a scriptural fellowship. Thus our Lord disputed with the doctors in the temple; and Paul disputed daily in the school of one Tyrannus; and yet the purity of the christian faith, and the spirit of the gospel, suffered nothing by this controversy. But it may be objected, that the controversy for which we find precept and example in the scriptures, was a contention for the faith, against those who were enemies to the truth. All this we admit; but among those, opposers were found some at least in a nominal connection with the church of Christ. Christians, while continuing steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, will find nothing to controvert in the faith or practice of each other; but 'when any one or more of the disciples depart from the RULE of faith and order, then such as are spiritual, are commanded to restore such a one, in the spirit of meekness. The idea that we, as Old School Baptists, are to contend against the errors of the New School, and at the same time wink at the errors of all who may please to call themselves Old School, will not answer. One wolf in the fold, will do more mischief to the flock, than a thousand in the forest.

We perfectly accord with brethren Bennett, Jewitt, Burritt, Battle, and many others, that a gentle, meek, patient, forbearing, humble demeanor, forms the christian character; and that without such a spirit as will lead us to love the truth, the order, the ordinances, and laws of Christ's kingdom, as well as all such as give evidence that they are born of God, by walking conformably to his precepts, all our pretensions are vain.

None can more sincerely deplore an alienation or coldness among the children of God, than we do; but we would not supply the want of christian union, by crying, Peace, where God has not spoken peace; nor by healing the hurt of the daughter of the Lord's people slightly. We cannot compromise the truth.

Editorials of Gilbert Beebe Volume 1 - pgs 631-635 * - (Emphasis added - ta)

S. Vessels Unto Honor

Vessels Unto Honor From Signs of the Times—July 15, 1869 by Gilbert Beebe

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." &c. 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." 2 Timothy 2:20-21

Brother Beebe, when it is so that you can, I wish you to give your views on 2 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 with 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, &c. “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 work-mongrel 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 a 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.

S. Vital Godliness

Vital Godliness Signs of the Times—May 15, 1854 by Gilbert Beebe That there is much speculative religion in the world there can be no doubt, and that there may be some that is not genuine among those who stand connected with the church of Christ is greatly to be feared. Every true and legitimate son and daughter of Zion, while in this earthly house of their pilgrimage, experience seasons when it is with them a matter of the greatest importance to know whether they are not of that character. It is not probable that hypocrites and mere nominal professors of Christianity are troubled on the same ground, for he who designs to deceive cannot feel that suspense and conflict which doubting Christians always feel when the light and comfort of the divine presence are withdrawn from their view. Much is said about vital godliness, and in order that we may know whether we are in possession of it, it is important that we understand what is meant by the terms. Vitality is life, and the word godliness in the scriptures signifies that action which spiritual life in the children of God is calculated to produce. Hence the terms are only properly applicable to those who are born of God, and led by the Spirit to walk in the way of holiness, in whom is developed the fruits of the spirit, which are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance; and all these being fruits of the Spirit are only found where spiritual life has been given. And as they are produced by the Spirit, they invariably give evidence of vital union to Christ, who is the life of His people. As the branch of a vine cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, so neither can the people of God bring forth fruits which are unto holiness, the end of which is eternal life, except they abide in Christ, who is the true Vine, and of which the Father is the Husbandman. For without Him, we can do nothing. The Apostle suggests to us that persons may have a form of Godliness while they deny the power thereof,—but we conclude that where the power of Godliness is possessed, there will certainly be at least some of the form of Godliness manifested.

If what we have found to be the fruits of the spirit developed constitutes the form or any part of that form, does it not appear that men may possess a kind of love, joy, peace, and even faith that does not proceed from the spirit as the result of spiritual life implanted? Much that will pass currently for Christian love in the religious world is denounced by the Apostles as being spurious. He admonished his brethren that such loved not the Lord Jesus, but were enemies of the cross of Christ. They may affect a deceptive counterfeit, and may use soft words and fair speeches while they only flatter to beguile and allure to entrap. In evidence of their love they may show astonishing zeal and what the world calls benevolence; they may give their goods to feed the poor, their money to support missionaries, and their bodies to be burnt, and still be destitute of anything but the mere form of love. They may also cry, “Peace,” when God has not spoken peace, and they may possess that complacency which the strange woman boasted of when she had paid her vows, (see Proverbs 7:1-27), and yet only a form. Their joy and faith and all the imitations of Godliness that can possibly grow out of an unregenerated heart are lifeless and formal and, as far as we can trace such characters by the light of revelation, they invariably deny the power of vital godliness, and this they do in a variety of ways. The principle way, however, is by denying that the

love, joy, peace, long-sufferings, goodness, gentleness, faith, etc., are truly the fruits of the Spirit, the gift of God, but claiming that they are produced by human power by the will and works of men. Their position is like this, "If the branch will bear fruit of itself as a condition, it may then be admitted into the Vine." But all who know experimentally the power of Godliness will acknowledge that the excellency of its power is of God, and not of the creature. The power is in the vine and not in the branch, only as the branch abides in and receives vigor and faithfulness from the living Vine. But there are times in which the branches which really abide in the vine seem to be barren, the branches are not always clothed with verdure, and abounding with clusters, but branches vitally abiding in the true and living Vine shall assuredly bring forth fruit in its appropriate season. The tree of life which John saw yielding its fruit every month, and all they who receive life and vigor from Christ will, in due time, present the Fruits of the Spirit.

Godliness, in the life and conversation of the children of the Kingdom, derives all its vitality from Him who is the Head of life and spirituality to His body, the church. All is dry, formal and vain in our deportment that springs not from this union to Him. He only hath immortality dwelling in the light, and therefore, from Him alone can we receive it only as we abide in Him as the fruitful branch abideth in the true vine, for the saints are members of Him, as the branches are members of the vine. And from Him the Head, all the members of the body, the church, have nourishment ministered and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. The Apostle assures us that all are called in one hope of our calling-one Lord, one faith, and one baptism, one God and Father of all who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But our design, was not only to define the terms, but to offer some remarks upon the subject of its development in the faith and general deportment of those who know and acknowledge its power. The grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. A life of godliness is necessarily a life of self-denial. No man can live godly in Christ Jesus without suffering persecution, nor can we deport ourselves as becomes godliness without denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, for these are the opposites of all that adorn the Christian character. But whatever of opposition, persecution, or self-denial may oppose the life and course of godliness, there is a power and virtue in it that will out-live all opposition, and bear its humble possessors above the din of warring elements and safely lodge them ultimately in that happy state where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary shall enjoy uninterrupted rest. If we, through grace abounding, possess the vital principle, and possess those things which pertain to life and godliness, we shall know experimentally that godliness with contentment is great gain, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. Then may our enemies exhaust all their stores of wrath upon us.

"We shall perceive their noise no more, Than we can hear a shaking leaf, When rattling thunders round us roar." May the God of all comfort, who has called us by His grace and given us everlasting consolation through grace, enable us to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, and at last take us up out of all our afflictions and tribulations and cause us to bask in the fullness of the eternal fountain of life and godliness in the world that is without end.

"O glorious hour! O bless'd abode!

There to be near, and like my God, And flesh and sin no more control, The rising pleasures of my soul.”

S. What is Faith?

What is Faith? by Gilbert Beebe

Webster defines the word as signifying "Belief; assent of the mind to the truth of what is declared by another, resting on his authority and veracity, without other evidence." And what he denominates Evangelical faith, justifying and saving faith, he says is the "assent of the mind to the truth of divine revelation, on the authority of God's testimony, accompanied with a cordial assent of the will, or approbation of the heart." And this definition is established by the colleges and universities of our country generally, and indorsed by all Arminians and legalists everywhere. But the definition of the term as used in the Scriptures, as defined by the inspired apostles, differs very widely from the popularly received definitions of men. The apostle John speaks of it as a child from heaven, born of God, and inspired with heavenly life, and triumphing over the world. "For whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world: even our faith." That faith which is the creature of the carnal mind of man, the mere assent of the judgment of our fleshly mind, although cordially received and confidently relied upon, is but, at best, a creature of our own, born of the flesh, and can no more overcome the world, than can the flesh itself; because no stream can rise above its fountain. Differing then, in parentage and birth as widely as the distance between earth and heaven, these two kinds of faith have no vital relationship with each other. The faith produced by the convictions of our natural judgment, however cordially assented to or indorsed by the will of man, is nevertheless a child of earth, which, could it overcome the world, would overcome itself, as it is an element of the world. But that faith which is of God, and in God, is the faith of the Son of God, and the Lord Jesus Christ is himself the author and the finisher of it. This is the faith of God's elect. By it, all the saints are distinguished from the world, as none can possess it unless they be born of God, and as without it no man can please God. We do not understand that the birth of faith is distinct from the birth of the saints; but an element of the new, heavenly and spiritual birth, which is not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God; that birth which is of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever; and, therefore, unlike the flesh, which is grass, and the goodliness thereof, which is the flower of grass, for they must wither and fall away; but the word of the Lord, the source, fountain and origin of true faith, liveth and abideth forever. This true and living faith is, then, an element of the heaven-born child of God, and only by it can we overcome the world, the flesh and the devil; only by it can we approach the throne of grace, draw nigh unto God, or cry Abba, Father. For he that cometh unto God must believe that he is, and the belief in God's being and perfections is the act of vital faith. This heaven-begotten and heaven-born faith, is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen. It is more than a shadow, for a shadow is not the substance of anything, though shadows do prove the existence of substances which cast them, and to some extent may portray the outline or shape of the substance of which they are the shadows, yet they have no substance in themselves. Thus in the ceremonial law, the meats, drinks, sabbath days and new moons were the shadow of good things to come; but the body, or substance, is Christ. And as the faith of the gospel is the faith of Jesus

Christ, and as the righteousness which alone can justify us before God is by the faith of the Son of God, who hath loved us and given himself for us, so it must be a substance, in distinction from all shadows, passions or exercises of the natural mind, or energies of unrenewed men. The christian's faith and hope are inseparably associated, and must operate together in the spiritual exercises of the saints while in their pilgrimage state. Faith is not the substance of hope, but it is the substance of the things hoped for, by the christian. The things hoped for by the new man are spiritual, heavenly and eternal, for it enters within the veil, and is fixed on things which are not seen by the natural perceptions of men. Nothing short of the faith of the Son of God can make real, or give substance to, the things thus hoped for. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; but he hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; and all the revelations of the Spirit to us are made to our faith. Hypocrites may hope, but their hope shall perish; for it is ideal, having no substance. But the hope of the christian is a reality, and faith points to Christ as the Hope of Israel, and the Savior thereof, and gives reality to the things hoped for; and until hope shall yield to fruition, it is the substance of the things hoped for, as well as the evidence of things not seen; of eternal things, which are imperceptible to the eye or intelligence of unregenerated men. "While," says Paul, "we look not on 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." We could not hope, in a gospel sense, for spiritual and eternal things which are not seen, if faith did not present them; hence faith is the substance on which hope is sustained, and just in proportion to the development of faith in us, will be the steadfastness of our hope, so far as christian experience is concerned. When our faith is not in manifest exercise in our hearts, our hope flags, and we approach the borders of despair, and in great anxiety cry out, My hope is perished from the Lord! But the renewed manifestation of our faith, obtaining a victory over the world, says, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." The faith that is born of God will lay hold of and indorse no other doctrine than that of God our Savior; it will point out no other path for the saints to walk in but that which Christ has marked out by his precepts and examples, and it will admit as genuine, no other experience than that which is led by the Spirit of God. And while all other kinds of faith may be attainable by the powers of the flesh, and when attained, can join affinity with other kinds of the faith, that of which we speak can only come from God, and never can be known or felt by any while in an unquickened state, and when implanted in the heart, will not amalgamate with the faith of men nor of devils.

Another peculiarity of this faith is that it will endure trials of the greatest severity, and God has ordained that it shall be tried. All the sore afflictions, tribulations, persecutions and temptations to which the saints of God are subject, are designed for the trial of their faith, and when it shall be sufficiently tried, they who possess it shall come forth as gold, purified and refined. The power of faith shall be known by all the saints, in its victories over the world, the flesh and the devil. It shall triumph over death, and vanquish the gloom and terror of the grave. As in times past it has quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness made strong, caused the saints to wax valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens, women receiving their dead raised to life again, and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might receive a better resurrection, others had trials of cruel mockings and scourgings; yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonments, they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain

with the sword, they wandered about in sheepskins, and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; of whom the world was not worthy. And what shall we more say? for time would fail to tell of Gideon, of Barak, and of Sampson, and of Jephthae, of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets. This invincible, almighty faith by which all these victories were gained is directly ascribed, in this very connection, to our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the author and the finisher of it. Into the unity of this faith all the saints of God thus far developed have come; and into it all the redeemed of the Lord shall ultimately be brought; for, There is one faith, even as there is one Lord, one baptism, one God and Father of all, one body, one Spirit and one hope of our calling.

Having briefly treated on the nature, the origin, the peculiarities, the power and vitality of this faith, and labored to discriminate between it and all other kinds of faith, we will close by inquiring whether we, dear brethren, are in possession of it, and by pointing out some of the reliable evidences of its existence in our hearts. The apostle has said, "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith." How important is this investigation; in nothing can we be more deeply interested. Without this faith, we may please men, we may gain the applause of the world, we may gratify the lusts of our carnal nature; but without it we cannot please God. In its absence we cannot know God nor approach him. Only by it can we rest upon the provisions and gracious promises of the gospel, find access to the throne of grace, understand the truth, endure the trials of the way, quench the fiery darts of Satan, overcome the world, have communion with God, fellowship with his saints, or finally pass the chilling terrors of death and the grave without fear or dread. What are the evidences of its existence in our hearts? Of the many which God has graciously given, we can at this time only mention a few:

First. The faith of the Son of God in our hearts is always associated with hope and charity. Now abideth faith, hope and charity these three. If, then, we have the faith, just as its power is manifested in us, to the same extent will our hope be established in God, and our charity, or love, flow to God and to all who bear his image. The love of God shed abroad in our hearts will centre in God as its author and source, in his people, his truth, his government, his laws, his ordinances, and all the privileges of his church.

Second. Having this faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, or, in other words, are reconciled to God, rejoice that he is God, that he has all power in heaven and in earth; that he reigns supreme over all beings, all worlds, and all events, that he has numbered the hairs of our head, and will not suffer one of them to fall unbidden of him to the ground.

Third. If we have this faith, we shall learn by experience that we cannot control it, exercise or enlarge it; but on the contrary, it will assuredly control, exercise and govern us.

Fourth. Having this faith, we shall assuredly also have doubts, fears, trials, temptations and great conflicts with the world, the flesh and Satan, for our faith must be tried, that its power may be understood and appreciated.

Fifth. If our faith be of the operation of God, it will give us such views of the perfections, power and majesty of God, that we shall abhor ourselves, in dust and ashes, while we admire, gaze and wonder at the amazing power and grace displayed in our salvation.

Sixth. This faith will lead us to trust alone in God for our eternal salvation, and for the salvation of all his redeemed family, while it will effectually destroy in us all confidence in the flesh. The more

we know of God, by faith, the greater will be our confidence to resign our present interest and our eternal destiny to his hands, and beg that we may not be left to be filled like Ephraim, with our own ways. In proportion as we feel the reigning power of this faith in our hearts, we shall be ready, willing and anxious to honor, praise, revere, obey and glorify God. It will lead us to love the assembling of the saints, to frequent the house of prayer, to pray for the prosperity of Zion, and to follow after those things which make for peace, and things whereby one may edify another. And under its power each of its recipients will be led to esteem others better than himself. And although we may feel poor, and weak, and altogether unworthy of a place or name among the children of God, we shall feel an irresistible drawing of heart and soul to be in their company and fellowship.

Elder Gilbert Beebe Middletown, N. Y., June 15, 1860.

S. What is Prayer?

What is Prayer? by Gilbert Beebe In the preceding number of the SIGNS, sister Gentry asked for our opinion and for the views, of others, on the subject of prayer. The subject of prayer has occasioned us much reflection at times, for the last forty-five years, and yet we have been so dull a scholar in the school of Christ, if indeed we are a pupil of his school, that after almost half a century's tuition on the subject, we have now to confess the humiliating truth, that we often ask and receive not, because we ask amiss; and to this day we know not how to pray as we ought. In the year 1811, when but young in our profession, we resolved to be much engaged in prayer, and, as we had read somewhere that, "Satan trembles when he sees The weakest saint upon his knees,"

We were fully resolved to make him tremble continually. We supposed then that prayer consisted in periodical forms, in which we were required to humble ourselves before God, and ask of him whatever we were in need of. To our inexperienced mind there was much virtue in prayer, that is, in the form and language of prayer, and it was our impression that the poet was right when he said, "Restraining prayer we cease to fight;

Prayer makes the christian's armor bright," And we verily thought, by our constant praying, we should avoid temptation, and live above doubts and fears. We should keep the old tempter so terrified with our devotions, that he would not dare assail us with any wicked suggestions. But we soon learned that our prayers were not the right kind to keep Satan at bay, for it was not long before it really appeared to us that we were much more annoyed with his company when performing our solemn devotions, than at any other time. Often, when the hour of prayer, which we had set, came, we were either inflated with pride that we were so devout, or crushed down with such a sense of our sinfulness that it seemed wicked and presumptuous to call upon the name of the Lord. Sometimes, when about to rush into the presence of the Lord like the unthinking horse into battle, we found our thoughts, like the fool's eyes, were wandering to the ends of the earth, and we have been unable sometimes to utter one word of supplication. Self-abased before the Lord, we have risen up from our knees, and left the place, concluding that we could not pray, and perhaps in reality praying, or breathing forth the heart-felt and heaven-inspired desire of our inmost soul, that God would manifest himself as our God and portion and give us grace whereby we might serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

These earnest desires breathed forth to God, we hardly dared to call them prayer, for we had imbibed the idea that prayer must have more formality about it, that we must go into some closet, or secret place, literally, and fall on our knees, or prostrate our body before the Lord, and then and there utter our prayers in an appropriate utterance of words. Often like sister Gentry, we have been in great heaviness, because we could not pray, or rather because we were unable to satisfy ourself that we had prayed. But we are now led to believe that the most fervent prayers we have ever offered to God, were indicted by groanings which we could not utter. There have been times when it has really seemed to us that the Spirit truly helped our infirmities, and made intercession

for us in that way, and we were made more sensible of our entire dependence on God, than we could have been if we had believed that we had ability to pray when and as we pleased.

Volumes might be written in reply to the inquiry of our sister, "What is prayer?" without exhausting the subject. But in this short article, we can only touch briefly upon the subject. Secret prayer, or that prayer of the saint which is poured forth as a communion between God and the individual worshiper, we believe is often made when we may be in the open field, on the public highway, or when lying upon our bed, but it is always when none but God, who seeth in secret, knows the emotions of the suppliant's heart. And this is what we understand to be entering into our closet and shutting the door; here it becomes a matter between the God of heaven and that saint on whom God has graciously poured the spirit of prayer and of supplication.

Social prayer is that in which a number of christians are led by the same spirit to call upon the name of the Lord, and in which one is mouth for them all; such praying must necessarily be audibly uttered, so that all who are present may understandingly unite in the prayer. This public or social devotion is as important in its place as the secret aspirations of the praying saint in the closet. But all vain show and ostentatious parade should be avoided. We are to remember that God is in heaven, and we are on his footstool, and it is becoming that our words should be few, for his people are not heard for their much speaking, nor for their words of prayer are uttered. In the public assemblies of the saints, we do not find that every praying soul has been distinguished with the gift to be mouth for the church, but all the saints are blessed with the gift of prayer, whereby they may unite in the petitions offered, so far as they are indicted by the Spirit of God. In regard to the answers of prayer, we are not to expect that there is either power, merit or efficacy in our prayers, in themselves considered, to entitle us to the things which we pray for. God, who has all things needful for us, either for time or eternity, in store, gives the spirit of prayer to his children, and that spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God; it knoweth what is the will of God, and it indicts within us the desire for what God designs to bestow in answer to prayer. So, instead of our bringing the Lord under obligation to bestow blessings on us for our prayers, here is an additional dependence on God, not only for the things that we need, but also for the spirit to ask him for them. And when we speak of our children and neighbors being quickened and born of God, in answer to our prayers, we mean to be understood that God has not only made bare his holy arm, and revealed his salvation in the conversion of sinners, and in reviving his church, but that he has made his children desire, and by the spirit of supplication, has led them to pray for the accomplishment of all these things. There are many things connected with this subject, on which, at this time, we cannot dwell. Among others, faith is indispensable. Not a faith of human origin, that we can create or exercise, but that faith which is the fruit of the Spirit and the gift of God; that faith of which Christ is the author and the finisher, and which is called the faith of Jesus Christ, by which we live spiritually, and that faith which is of the operation of God. He that cometh unto God must believe that he is. How can we devoutly pray to a God, the existence of whom we doubt or disbelieve? And if we believe there is a God, how can we ask of him for blessings, unless we have faith to assure us that God has them in store for us, and that he will freely bestow them upon us through Jesus Christ our Lord? Without faith it is impossible to please God. Faith lays hold on his promises, and gives us confidence that they shall all be fulfilled. Faith looks to Jesus as the only medium through whom we may approach the Father; for he says, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." He is also the only medium through which spiritual blessings are sent down

from heaven upon the saints. God has blessed his children with all spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world; so we have no reason to expect any spiritual blessing out of Christ, or in any other way than according as he hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world.

Middletown, N.Y., April 1, 1856 Elder Gilbert Beebe

S. What is the Gospel and To Whom it is Addressed

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL AND TO WHOM IT IS ADDRESSED From Signs of the Times -February 15, 1869. by Gilbert Beebe

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, broken-hearted, 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 discernor 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, (Matthew 22:15). As whatsoever God speaks is certain to secure the object for which it is spoken, (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 16:1-31 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," (1 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.

S. 1Sa 8:10

1 Samuel 8:10 by Gilbert Beebe

Sister Blake, of South Carolina, desires our views on the passage referred to, which reads thus: "And it came to pass on the morrow, that the evil spirit from God came upon Saul, and he prophesied in the midst of the house," &c.

It seems to be a hard matter with many to comprehend how God can govern, restrain and direct the evil spirits which are abroad in the earth, without being in some way, or to some extent, associated in his nature with them. How an evil spirit from God could operate on a wicked king, unless that wicked spirit had first existed in the being of God, and had emanated from him.

Whatever difficulty we may have in comprehending the Scriptures of truth, two things are certain. First, that no portion of the divine record is the less true because of our want of capacity to understand it; and second, that God is a Spirit of infinite and eternal purity, that nothing impure or unholy ever did belong to his nature. Yet, with these two points fully conceded, no one can reasonably doubt that the sovereign government of God extends to all beings, all worlds and all events. We are compelled to believe that God's providential government extends to the controlling of all things, or otherwise that his government is far more contracted than any of us are ready to admit. We ask, Upon what principle could he declare the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things which are not yet developed, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure, if he did not hold in his hand the controlling power to govern and direct all things? We must confess that, to us, there is great consolation in the contemplation of the universal providential dominion of the Lord God Almighty. Were we compelled to believe that wicked men, evil spirits or devils, could possibly thwart his purpose, or devise or execute any purpose or plan without his knowledge, permission or decree, we should be unable to defend the doctrine of his omniscience. If it be admitted that God has a perfect knowledge of all that transpires in heaven, earth and hell, it must also be admitted that he always had that knowledge, as well before he created the world as at the present moment, or otherwise we must deny his immutability. If he is in possession of knowledge now that he did not always possess, that would involve a change; it therefore cannot be. Knowing all things then, by his omniscience, from everlasting, can any doubt that he had power to determine whether they should or should not transpire? To deny that he had that power, is to deny his omnipotence, it is to deny that he is truly the Almighty God. Can we, without impeaching his eternal wisdom, believe there is a single wheel in all the vast and complicated machinery of this world, or any other world, that he did not supply, or that fails to operate as he designed that it should? If so, may we not fear that all his purposes in Christ Jesus, of grace and salvation, may also fail? We may look at any piece of machinery that we do not understand, and mark the numerous wheels revolving, to our limited judgment in direct opposition to each other, it may look to the novice as though it must be destroyed as soon as it is set in motion. This only proves that we not understand the machine. Let us see it operate, and to our astonishment the design of the machinist is carried out perfectly, and we are instructed those parts

of the whole, which look to us as though they could not work in harmony with the other parts are so essential to the whole, that the machine would be useless without them. What then? We marvel at the wisdom of the machinist. Even so we wonder, gaze and admire the supreme wisdom of God, who has displayed his handiwork in the creation of the world. But let us for a moment look at the complicated parts of this great and wonderful machinery of nature. Can any man comprehend it? Certainly not. What an endless variety of living creatures, from soaring angels near his throne, to groveling reptiles, crawling on the ground, and myriads of insects too minute in size for our perception. Which of them all could be withdrawn from the whole, without impairing the machine? The novice can perceive no use for all the little wheels and screws connected with the machine prepared by man, but let him remove any of them, and the whole is out of order. Which, then, permit us to inquire, of all the minute parts of the wonderful creation of God, ahs he supplied in vain? Two sparrows are sold for a farthing; can half a farthing's worth of God's creation be removed or withdrawn without impairing the whole? A lifetime of any one of us would scarcely afford opportunity to count the hairs upon our head; but can one of them fall to the ground or change from the precise position which infinite wisdom has assigned them? This question is already settled by him who made the world, and by whom all things were made that was made. When we contemplate the wonderful works of God in the creation of the world, when we consider the heavens, the workmanship of his hands, are we not constrained to exclaim with the enraptured psalmist, "Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him?"

Having briefly glanced at the wonderful works of God in creation, let us now inquire, Is it rational for us to conclude that do is less wise or provident in governing than he was in creating? He has told us that for his pleasure all things were and are created. Is his pleasure then of so little consequence to him that he would allow causes uncontrolled by him to effect he end and design he had in its creation? Will any dare to say that men or devils have power to prevent ends which God designed, or cause that his pleasure shall not be done in heaven above and among the inhabitants of the earth? Shall we not rather say with the sublime poet, "Chained to his throne a volume lies, With all the fates of men; With every angel's form and size, Drawn by the eternal pen. His providence unfolds the book, And makes his counsel shine;

Each opening leaf and every stroke, Fulfills some deep design." To return to the inquiry of sister Blake: Saul was a king, and God claims the power and the right to turn the hearts of kings as the rivers of water are turned, and thus he dealt with Saul, with Pharaoh, with Cyrus and Nebuchadnezzar, and thus he deals with all kings and with all the other powers of the earth. In the case of Saul, none can dispute that God's design was to supersede him in the government of Israel, and to raise up David to the throne in is stead; and as in all his providential dealings with the children of men, so in this case, his footsteps are in the great deep, and his ways are past finding out. He controlled the peace or the agitation of the mind of Saul, giving him at times peace and tranquillity, and then anon he sends an evil spirit to trouble him. God could not be baffled in any of his designs or acts; all that he designed, and all that he did, had its effect just as he designed, and eventually the grand design was accomplished, and David was exalted, and Saul abased.

Whether by the evil spirit, we are to understand, a devil, or a spirit of depression, trouble, confusion or madness, we will not attempt to define; but to our mind it is clear that all spirits, good and bad, are under the control of God. He sends them where he pleases, and never fails to accomplish the very purpose for which he sends them. He commissioned a lying spirit to go and

be a lying spirit in the mouths of all of Ahab's prophets. He sends strong delusions to them which perish, that they may believe a lie, that they all may be damned who receive not the love of the truth that they may be saved. His complete control over evil spirits was very clearly exemplified by our Lord when he commanded them to come out of the man that raved among the tombs, and sent them, at their request, into an herd of swine; and in many other instances which are recorded in the New Testament. But that they are subject to his government, and go where he sends them, no more proves that they had their original existence in the purity of his divine nature, than the fiery serpents which he sent into the camp of Israel were partakers of the divine nature. David speaks of his enemies, as the Lord's hand, and his sword, and he makes use of them to chastise the wicked. So he made use of them to bring about his purpose in the case of Joseph, and so also in the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ. They came together for to do whatsoever his hand and his counsel before determined to be done. And him being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, they crucified with wicked hands. In conclusion, permit us to say, these views of the universal government of God, over all beings and all events, afford the greatest assurance of safety to the saints who put their trust alone in God. It is their unspeakable privilege to know that he has all power, that all principalities and powers, thrones and dominions, things visible and invisible, things present or to come, all are subject to his decrees, and are all bound by an irrevocable decree to work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. Let us then rejoice while we sing, "Life, death and hell, and worlds unknown Hang on his firm decree;

He sits on no precarious throne, Nor borrows leave to be."

If any child of God feels alarmed at the doctrine of God's unlimited government and universal providence, let such ask themselves how much less power they would wish for him to possess, than we have attempted to ascribe to him. Would he appear any more glorious to any heaven-born child, were he less omniscient, omnipotent, or immutable? Would it contribute to their sense of his greatness, goodness or majesty, if it could be proved that devils and wicked men were beyond his controlling power, and able to thwart his purposes, or act independent of him? However this subject may appear to others, we confess that to us there is something inexpressibly consoling the faith and assurance that "Death and hell can do no more, Than what our Father please."

Middletown, N.Y., October 15, 1856 Elder Gilbert Beebe

S. Act_5:38-39

Acts 5:38-39

“Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to naught: but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.”

(Acts 5:38-39) by Gilbert Beebe

Such was the counsel of Gamaliel to those who were madly engaged in the suppression of the truth, and persecution of the apostles and primitive saints. All their efforts thus far had failed to prevent the faithful testimony of the servants of our Lord Jesus Christ, or to intimidate them. The Redeemer has said, “Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it,” and his words were no less omnipotent in the utterance of these words than when he called the world into existence, or when the tempests or the seas obeyed him. Indeed his very word is sufficient indemnity for the faith of all his children under all their trials and persecutions. He speaketh the word and it stands fast; he commands and it is done. The counsel of Gamaliel was rational and consistent, whatever were the motives which led him to offer it to the Jewish Sanhedrin, and they are equally as true and appropriate now as when the apostles of the Lamb stood accused before that council.

Refrain from these men.

What men? The context shows the men alluded to were the apostles and witnesses of our Lord, who had been arrested and imprisoned for the testimony of their divine Lord and Master, and liberated by the angel of the Lord, and then re-arrested and again brought before the council. These men were the constituents of the gospel church in its primitive organization, and represent the church of Christ throughout all subsequent ages; for quickened sinners after having gladly received their word, were baptized and added to them, that is, to these men. And they continued steadfastly in the apostle’s doctrine and fellowship, in breaking of bread and in prayer, and the Lord added unto them daily such as should be saved. The whole church is evidently included, and these men are still to be found on the earth, and still identified by the same discriminating characteristics: steadfast in the apostle’s doctrine. Whatever new fashions, fancies or theories the religious world in its progression may adopt.

There was at that time, there has been ever since, and there still is a strange inclination manifested by the religious world, or the worldly religious, to oppose, annoy, perplex and persecute these men in a variety of ways; nor is the opposition which they encounter alone from the world. The apostle Paul in admonishing the elders of Ephesus, predicted that, “Even of your own selves shall men rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.”

Elsewhere he warned the church of God that “perilous times should come; that many should depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils.” All the violent

persecution the church has endured from anti-Christ, the cruel and murderous edicts, restricted liberties as citizens of the world, the torturing racks and ingenious machines for inflicting dreadful physical sufferings, the executioner's block and axe, or the stake and fagot, have never proved so hurtful to the church of God, as internal disruptions, dissensions and disorders produced among her members; the sowing seeds of discord, scattering firebrands arrows and death, by false brethren; by men of corrupt minds, who have loved preeminence, and to acquire it have assailed the doctrine, character and reputation of the men of God. History informs us of no age in which the church has not been more or less infested with this description of opposition, except it has been when the fires of persecution from without have burned so violently as to render the religion of the Bible too unpopular and expensive to suit the carnal, selfish notions of nominal professors and graceless hypocrites. The openly avowed enemies of the church with all their instruments of brutal cruelty, has proved a purgative, and the flames of persecution have had a purifying effect, while the treachery of ungodly men within her inclosure has had a corrupting tendency. But neither the one nor the other of these, however much they may harrass or perplex the saints, can ever overthrow the work of God. If the world or Satan had power to overthrow the work and counsel of God, the church would have fallen long ago. But God's counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure, and it is his good pleasure that his little flock shall inherit the kingdom; it was prepared for them from the foundation of the world, and in his own appointed time the God of heaven had set it up, and decreed that it shall stand for ever; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of her cords be broken.

"From age to age she has withstood The utmost rage of earth and hell." But still, unshaken as is the throne of God, and unshaken as is his oath and promise, she remains perfectly secure, for God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved, God will help her, and that right early. She has encountered the storms of persecution, and the floods and rains have assailed her ancient battlements with violence, but she fell not, because she is founded upon the Rock of Ages.

How very different are the counsels and works of men, when applied to matters of religion. Every scheme and device, however cunningly or wisely devised, and every human effort and application unauthorized by the precept of the King, shall certainly come to naught.

How many thousands of religious inventions, societies and institutions for evangelizing the world, arise with great pomp and promise, reach their climax and dwindle back to their original nothingness. Others again in turn are constantly springing up, but all embodying the certain seeds of their own inevitable decay.

All that kind of religion which is or can be produced by the will or works of men, must come to naught. The fruits of modern revivals, which have been effected by excitement and fanaticism, have been like crackling thorns in a momentary blaze, giving a glaring but transient light, only to make the gross darkness which succeeds, the more frightful and doleful. And every failure has proved the soundness of Gamaliel's counsel, as all time shall show the immutability of the decree of him who said, "Every plant that my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." From what is thus clearly demonstrated, let hell despair, but all who trust in God shall rejoice, for they shall be as Mount Zion which cannot be moved; which abideth forever.

What have the children of God to fear? The enemy may come in like a flood, but the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against the enemy. The heathen may rage, and men of earth imagine

vain things, they may resolve to disband the saints, and cast their cords from them, but he that sitteth in the heavens shall hold them in derision, for it is written, "The enemies of the Lord shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them." Nor do these fearful threatenings hang impending alone over the devoted heads of those enemies which are outside the organized boundaries of the church of Christ, for "If any man defile the temple of the Lord, him will God destroy." Then let the sinners in Zion tremble, and let fearfulness surprise the hypocrites. God will protect his little ones from all the rage of their adversaries, and avenge his own elect who cry unto him day and night. They who touch them, touch the apple of his eye, and it were better for them that a mill-stone were hanged about their necks, and that they were cast into the depths of the sea, than that they should offend any of our Lord's little ones. By Gilbert Beebe Middletown, New York.

March 1st, 1859.

S. Eph_2:8

Ephesians 2:8 From Signs of the Times—October 15, 1867.

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. by Gilbert Beebe

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 rein-trying God. And consequently, all who are so chosen and ordained of God are saved by grace, and not by anything 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 Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel," (2 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 anything 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 1 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," (1 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.

S. Heb_10:26-29

Hebrews 10:26-29 From Signs of the Times May 1, 1869. by Gilbert Beebe “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,” (Hebrews 9:15). 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," (Hebrews 10:16-18). 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," (Hebrews 10:20). 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," (Hebrews 10:22-25).

"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, that “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,” &c. 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,” (Hebrews 12:26). In what other way is it possible for the subjects of his government to tread him under foot, than by despising, underrating, 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,” (Heb. 12:30). 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,” (Hebrews 10:31). 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,” (2 Timothy 2:19).

“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," (Hebrews 10:16-17).

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."

S. Rom_7:25

Romans 7:25 by Gilbert Beebe

“So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.” – Romans 7:25.

If Paul had in him these two opposite principles, and both so identified with his person that with the one he himself served the law of God, and with the other at the same time he himself served the law of sin, was he like all other christians in these respects? Have all christians in them a mind with which they themselves serve the law of God, or can any man be a christian who has not such a mind? And have all christians, like Paul, a principle or law in their members which is at war with this law of sin? Or is the flesh of some christians so purified by regeneration that they are unlike Paul, and have no wicked propensities in their flesh whereby they serve the law of sin?

If all christians are like Paul in these particulars, and like serve the law of their God with the mind, and with the flesh serve the law of sin, are both of these opposites born of God; Or is that flesh in them which wars against the Spirit, only born of the flesh: or has it been born over again and made holy by a spiritual birth? And if it has, why does the apostle admonish christians to crucify it with its affections and lusts, and how can the christian with it himself still serve the law of sin? If in our flesh there dwells no good thing, and in that which is born of the Spirit there dwells no evil thing, if that which is born of God cannot commit sin, because his seed abideth in him, and he or it cannot sin because he is born of God, is it heretical or wicked for a christian to believe that all the corruptions within him are born of the flesh, and none of them are born of God, and that all that is pure and holy within him, is born of God, and no part of it is born of the flesh? Of this mind with which the christian himself serves the law of God, the apostle says, “We have the mind of Christ,” and another mind, or law, which he saw in his flesh he calls a carnal mind, which signifies a fleshly mind. With the mind of Christ he serves the law of God; but the carnal (or fleshly) mind is enmity against God, it is not subject to the law of God, and with the other we serve the law of God. Are both of these minds born of God, or is that mind which cannot be subject to the law of God, born of the flesh? The carnal mind is enmity against God, while the law requires love to God, and love to our neighbor, and on these hang all the law and the prophets. Is that fleshly mind which cannot obey the law of love, born of God? Or is that mind which can and does love God, with all the heart, might and strength, born of that flesh in which there is no good thing?

We think all christians will unite in the conclusion that all within them that is carnal, earthly, depraved and vile, is born of the flesh, and will continue to annoy them until they shall be by death delivered from these bonds of corruption, until this earthly house or mortal tabernacle shall be taken down, dissolved and fall, and that our mortal bodies will not be animated with immortal life until God shall change them and fashion them like the glorious body of their risen Redeemer, and that change will not come until the resurrection, when if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in us, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken their mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwells in them. Then, and not until then, shall they be satisfied: when they awake

in his likeness.

Strip the subject of all vain speculations, and all futile attempts to analyze the natural soul, body, or spirit of man, in trying to make out what we possess that is born of earth, or born from above, and it will be easy for every heaven-born child to perceive that all that we possess as identified with our persons in our present state that is born of God, bears the image of the heavenly, and all within us that does not bear the heavenly image is born of the flesh, and not of the Spirit. With a clear understanding of their complex character, as now in an earthly body which clings to the earth, and lusts after the things of the earth, and wars against the spirit of their mind, and makes them groan, being burdened, and also clearly understanding that they also are the happy recipients through grace, of eternal, or immortal life, that Christ is formed in them the hope of glory, that God has revealed his Son in them, that God has shined in their hearts to give them the light of the glory of God, shining in the face of Jesus Christ, they will be prepared to appreciate what the inspired apostles have said of the old man, and the new man, the outer man, and the inner man, together with the admonition to put off the old man with his deeds, and to put on the new man, which after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness. A clear scriptural understanding of this subject will serve also to obviate the difficulties which may harass their minds in regard to the nature of the christian warfare. The saints are often tempted to doubt the reality of their own experience because they find in them so much of what is earthly, sensual and devilish, so much unreconciliation to God, so much murmuring, such vile affection, and strong propensities to depart from the living God, and to run into forbidden paths. If, say they, we were born of God, would it be thus with us? Can a nature which is born of God, grovel in the dust, and be so opposite to the spirit and purity of God? Certainly that which is born of God cannot commit sin, cannot disbelieve or doubt what God has said, etc. But when they hear an inspired apostle declare that it is no more I that doeth it, but sin that dwelleth in me, that the new man in them only, is born of God, loves God, loves holiness, loves the brethren, and serves the law of God, and that with his flesh, or earthly nature, he serves the law of sin, and does the things which he would not, and leaves undone the things which he would do, it gives them sweet relief. "From whence come wars and fightings among you?" Thus the apostle James interrogates the saints. Do they arise from that new man which is after God created in righteousness and true holiness? Certainly not. They cannot proceed from that in us which is born of God, for that cannot commit sin, for the seed abideth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. Whence are they then? "Come they not of your own lusts?" Our flesh lusts against the Spirit, and that which is born of the flesh. Here is the source of wars among christians. But as that which is assailed by the flesh is Spirit, and is born of the Spirit, it wars against the corruptions of the flesh. The life, or animation in the christian which is of the flesh, as the body is death, and it is dead because of sin, ye shall die. There is nothing else in the flesh; but if ye through the Spirit (which is born of God) do mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live; for the Spirit is life, because of righteousness. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." Let us remember that if we walk after the Spirit, we shall not fulfill the desires or lusts of the flesh. If the saints could at all times walk after the Spirit, there would be no wars and fighting among them; that is, no biting and devouring of one another; they would lay aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speaking, and as new-born, heaven-born, spirit-born babes, we would desire the sincere milk of the word that we may grow thereby. This spiritual food is adapted to the child of the new birth; it will not nourish the child of the flesh. Our fleshly natures are of the earth, all their

sustenance must come from the earth, and be obtained from thence by the sweat of the face. But that birth which is of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever, must be sustained by the milk of that living and abiding word.

Gilbert Beebe

S. Rom_9:11-13

Romans 9:11-13 From Signs of the Times—July 15, 1869. by Gilbert Beebe

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, Tenn., 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?” (Romans 9:19). Such out-breaking 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. If 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. In this part of our text, marked by parenthesis, as 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, was, and is a 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," (Romans 8:29-30). All is of him that calleth, their predestination to be conformed to 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," (2 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," (Malachi 1:4). Here the discriminating love of God to his children or Israel is strikingly contrasted with his hatred to the persistent work-mongrel 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," (Revelation 15:3).

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