

A COMPILATION
OF
SAMUEL TROTT'S
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EMBRACING A PERIOD OF
THIRTY YEARS.

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Relation of my Experience

No.1

Brother Beebe: - I have for some years thought of giving a relation of my experience through the *Signs*, as a testimony to the condescension of our God and Saviour, who as our Great High Priest, *can and does have compassion on the ignorant and on them that are out of the way*; but have been hitherto deterred by various considerations. But having been called on to do it, both by sister Izor and brother Conklin, I will now undertake it, if brother Beebe will grant me room in the *Signs* for it; though it is with fears that I commence it, that it may not be kindly received by many; and may not be useful perhaps to but few. I admit with brother Barton that all who we believe are christians, cannot give a circumstantial detail of all the way in which the Lord has led them to the hope of the gospel; but where they can give such detail, I like to hear it, and therefore wish now to give it. I think for myself that our brother Hall's relation, would have been still more interesting had he related those *some things before and after he obtained mercy* which he speaks of. There is nothing in God's teaching nor in His revelation, that is not worthy of our special notice. I have thought, that those which some would call *little circumstances*, in which God's hand is manifested, appear more lovely than the more important exercises, as illustrative of the great condescension, compassion and faithfulness of Him with whom we have to do. As I am giving my thoughts, I will further say, that *I think* our object in writing our experience ought not to be simply to declare ourselves to be believers, but to show in our individual experience, God's sovereignly various ways of leading His children to the knowledge of the same truths. As an introduction to my religious experience, I wish to give a sketch of my early life, both as in some measure accounting for the extreme ignorance and stupidity concerning everything spiritual which my experience will show me to have possessed, and also as showing God's special providential watch over me in my vile untoward course in nature. Hence I shall probably be as much tedious as brother Hall was too brief.

I was born in Walpole, New Hampshire, was one of three children my mother had. My sister died before my mother and my brother was burned up with the house in which he lived a year or two after, and my mother died when I was eight years old. My father who had been for several years riding as sheriff,

and had thereby become involved, was about this time broken up as to property, and shortly after broke up housekeeping. From that early period in life, though my father lived several years after, I never knew the comforts of a parent's home, nor the solace of a brother or a sisters society. I had no near relatives on my father's side, and none that I knew; on my mother's side I had several, but circumstances around the above time caused me to become estranged from them. My father procured a kind and comfortable home for me, where I enjoyed all the advantages of a common school education, usual for boys in New England to have. I continued in this family until I was nearly fifteen, when I went as an apprentice to a trade, to an unmarried gentleman, and who therefore boarded out his hands; and who had two shops, one in my native village, and the other sixty miles from there in Vermont; at each of which I was occasionally. Thus excepting in shop hours I was thrown loose to my passions in villages, where gambling, drunkenness, and every species of fashionable vice was prevalent. When about twelve, a gentleman of the family in which I lived, who owned a right in a public library in the village, granted me the use of his right to draw and read what books I pleased. My attention in this way was soon turned to novels and romances, pretty much to the exclusion of other reading, when a circumstance occurred which so disgusted me with novel reading, that from that time I declared off from them. Thus instead of acquiring useful knowledge during my youth, I was filling my mind with romance. In addition to this, when I was a child, Winchester the Universalist, came into that region, and discipled to his faith the settled minister of the town. Hence I was brought up under that kind of preaching, and early inbided the idea of universal salvation, and of the propriety of professors of religion participating in the amusements of the world, such as dancing, card playing, &c., from being accustomed to seeing those things among them. Before going to a trade I had occasionally on Sundays to read a chapter or two in the Bible to please the old lady with whom I lived; but from that time I know not that I read a single chapter, until I became religiously exercised. When I was nearly twenty my boss changed his business, and gave me my time. I was now in more unpleasant circumstances than before, having no relatives to visit, no home to retreat to for rest, when out of employment, I had no alternative, when one job was done, but to travel in pursuit of another. In this way the first year I was free, I traveled through most of the New England States and a part of New York; sometimes by stage, or by water, but more

generally on foot, according as my funds were. The second year I engaged for a year in Massachusetts to take charge of a shop. During the first year one circumstance occurred which I wish particularly to notice, and I wish to record my testimony to the kindness of a restraining providence; for I was truly a child of Providence; in that whilst others of my early associates who had parents to watch over them, fell over the gambling table, or the cup, or other vices, I, though possessing as strong passions and appetites as either of them, was restrained from dipping deeply into any of those vices, and was permitted throughout to enjoy a respectable standing in society. The particular circumstance referred to, was this: In common with perhaps most Universalists, I was inclined to deistical notions, but feeling an inward consciousness that there was a hereafter, I at times felt some anxiety to know whether there was a reality in religion or not. In the summer of 1805, being in Providence, R.I., I was one day in the front shop at work by myself, I got to reflecting on this subject, and my mind being wrought up to considerable anxiety about it. I exclaimed to myself; if there is a reality in religion, O, that God would give me some test by which I might know it. I said this, I think, more in a spirit of complaining, than of supplication, with all the distinctness and force, as if someone had spoken to me from above, these words fell upon my mind: "Read the Bible." Though I was at the time, as I still am confident that this was supernatural, for I cannot account for the impression on any natural principles, being so different from the bent or any reflections of my mind, yet I felt no disposition to obey; my mind seemed to revolt at the idea of such a gloomy task, as that of pondering over the Bible. Still however it had an effect, it silenced my infidelity, and led me to feel more of a respect for religion than I had been accustomed to. During the next year I was one day when by myself led to reflect on the difference between the Universalists and other religionists, and came to the conclusion, that it was of no use to believe in universalism, for if the Universalists were correct, those who believed in a special salvation of individuals, were equally as safe as they were, else the salvation would not be universal. On the other hand if salvation was special and particular, and I was trusting in a general universal salvation, I should find myself deceived, I therefore gave it up. Still I had no idea of becoming religious. At the end of this second year, finding myself a little beforehand as to funds, I determined to commence the pursuit of what I had long wished for, an education. As the minister of the adjoining town kept a boarding school for young men, in

the fall of 1806 I entered his school. I had not been there over six weeks, had barely revised my early studies, of arithmetic, grammar, &c., before through the recommendation of this gentleman, I was offered the public school in the village for the winter, which I accepted. As I concluded the only way for me, situated as I was, to get along with my studies, would be to teach school and study in my spare hours, and as they did not in that county employ male teachers in the summer months, I determined when my school was out in the spring, to go into the State of New York and obtain a school. I accordingly started early in May; went to Albany, thence westwardly, but soon found I was too late in the season, in starting, that the schools were taken up for the season. I however proceeded onward, until I got about thirty miles west of Utica. There through my inconsiderateness and the rascality of others, I got into a difficulty which was like to involve me in a serious loss, considering my situation. Being detained for a day or two, and being among strangers, I felt sensibly the need of Divine interposition. In my straits I retired to the woods and implored God's aid, and like other natural persons, I supposed I must promise something in return; I promised that in case He would deliver me, I would never again indulge in profane swearing. I had at one time been much addicted to it, but for two years before, I had in some measure left it off, not on account of its sinfulness, but on account of its being disrespectful in good society. Still when much excited I was liable to give way to it. But now I renounced it as a sinful act. And God to my full belief did interpose. Friends appeared on my behalf, and as warm friends as I could have had, if I could have given the masonic sign or that of any secret society, and I was delivered. My purse which was getting rather low, being somewhat replenished by the transaction, I turned my course backward to Albany, thence to my native place, and after spending some days there and in other places, I went again into Massachusetts, and engaged in Northampton for a time, at my trade. From the above transaction I became more impressed with the sense of an overruling Providence, and the expression of Pope, "Whatsoever is, is right," became a favorite one with me. Also from that event, I have been led to the conclusion, that although in reference to salvation, there is no approaching God, with acceptance but through faith in Christ, yet that in reference to providential dealing, unregenerate persons, being brought to feel their dependence on God for aid, may in their straits supplicate His throne and be heard. While at Northampton, and at work one day in August, 1807, in the shop by myself, I was reflecting on the providential dealings of

God with me from a child up, having been a child of disappointments and sorrow, the enquiry arose in my mind, which I perhaps expressed: Why is it that God has thus pursued me from my childhood with crosses and troubles? Immediately again, as at Providence two years before, as if spoken from above, these words struck my mind with force, "It is to teach you the vanity of earthly hopes and things, and to lead you to seek your happiness in God." My whole heart seemed now at once to acquiesce in it; and I cheerfully promised, that from that time, I would seek the knowledge of God, and His ways, and seek my happiness in Him. As David says, Ps.27:8, "When thou saidst unto me, Seek ye my face, my heart said unto thee, Thy face Lord will I seek," so verily I think at that time it was my case.

From the different effect produced by the two addresses to me; this at Northampton, and that two years before in Providence, both having alike the same appearance of being supernaturally spoken to me, and both so viewed by me at the times, I am constrained to believe that even when God speaks, there will not be heart obedience, unless the heart is first opened to receive the word, and unless regeneration has taken place, and spiritual life is imparted. As this life is love to God, then there will be obedience to His Word and not before. Hence from the lasting effect produced at that time upon me, leading me immediately to procure a Bible and to commence the study of it, as also to engage in religious exercises, and producing a desire after God which I trust still continues with me, I am led, from that time to date my regeneration, {if indeed I am regenerated}. As a further confirmation of this, as I was walking the street one evening by myself, a few weeks after, meditating on this subject, and enquiring with some anxiety whether I should be able to hold out in my resolution, this word was applied with force to me, "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." I know not that I had ever read that text, though probably I had in my boyhood, but I received it as the word of God, and was comforted and strengthened by it. And I therefore concluded that God had then begun a work in me.

No.2

Brother Beebe: - At the close of the first Number, I stated what I consider my first exercise after regeneration. Shortly after that exercise occurred, I went to Wilbraham where I had spent the preceding winter, but had not long been there before

by a special providential interposition as I consider it, an application was made to me to go into Otsego Co., New York and take charge of a school, from the fact that a friend rode upwards of forty miles to give me notice of the application, I unhesitatingly went on immediately, and engaged in the school for one quarter. This school being located in a new and rough settlement, I did not like the situation, but whilst there I was informed that Mr. Neal, the Presbyterian minister in Cooperstown in that county, {Since known as Dr. Neal of Philadelphia} who had charge of the Academy in that place, wished to employ a teacher in the English department. I called on him; he after examination engaged me to come on when my quarter in the other situation ended; and also engaged to give me instruction in the languages. There was but one circumstance in my experience during that quarter worth relating, and that perhaps, only as showing how I was led on not by man, but by an invisible Teacher, step by step, to renounce my early prejudices concerning religion. I had not as yet seen the error of my early impressions, that dancing was quite consistent with religion; and being one night in a company where dancing was introduced, I without hesitancy engaged in it. But one dance was enough for me. A sense of guilt and condemnation so seized my mind as to stop my sport, and I could not tell why. I then saw no evil in dancing. I soon left the company, but the distress of mind followed me without being able to comprehend why. I awoke the next morning with my mind in the same situation. Before entering my school, I retired to enquire why it was so. My mind was soon opened to see that dancing was inconsistent with my promise to seek my happiness in God; for I was thereby seeking it in worldly amusements, besides the very idea of these amusements was to pass-time lightly away, whereas I was under obligation and engagement, to spend my time to the glory of God. I from that time cheerfully renounced worldly amusement.

From my first religious exercise, I thought it important, I should, on the first opportunity join some church, as a part of my religious service to God, and as calculated more to establish me in my resolution to seek God. When I became located in Cooperstown I thought this opportunity was afforded me. There was however one difficulty in the way: the Presbyterians I had understood professed to believe in the doctrine of election, that I could not profess, my heart was bitter against it, so much so that as I was one night in my room reading the 8th and 9th chapter of Romans, I was so incensed against those chapters because of their containing so

fully the doctrine of election and predestination, that I actually thought of cutting them out of my Bible and casting them into the fire. Nothing but a sense of its being God's Word prevented me. This difficulty however was soon removed, for shortly after, some persons were received into the church, and I had an opportunity of hearing the church covenant to which they were to assent, read, and found to my joy that election and predestination were not named therein. The next month I applied to the session, and was received into the church.

In the spring a young Presbyterian came to study with Mr. Neal with a view to the ministry, who was better indoctrinated in the Presbyterian faith than I was. As he boarded and roomed with me he soon found out my opposition to election, and set about reforming me from my error. By his reasoning from the Scriptures, and by reading certain writers on the subject to which he referred me, I was convinced that election was a Scriptural doctrine, and became a strenuous advocate for it, that is as held generally by the Presbyterians in connection, with general atonement, general offers, invitations &c. Having joined the Presbyterian church in March, I think, 1808, I was strict in observing the sabbath, as I considered it, in reading a certain portion of Scripture daily, in prayer and in morality, was during that year a pretty strict formalist, and got along comfortably. Not that I thought I had attained a safe state, this was what I was labouring for, and I hoped that God had begun the work in me, and therefore that I should be able to persevere and attain to a safe state before I died. This as high as I can recollect was about my views. In the early part of 1809 I got hold of Doddridge's, "Rise and Progress of Religion in the soul." I undertook to carry out his directions for progressing religion in my soul. I added more praying as well as occasional fasting to my tasks, and devoted Saturday nights to prayer and self-examination, preparatory to the "Duties of the sanctuary," as they were called. The test whether a work of grace was begun in me, was whether I loved God. I from this time became about as laborious a legalist as was to be found among the Presbyterians; so much so, that my religious duties very much retarded my studies, although for a time I confined myself to six hours sleep, out of twenty four; until my constitution not being strong enough to bear that deprivation, was completely overcome by the want of sleep. As a part of the Doddridge discipline I kept a diary of my experience. In looking over it through this year, I find that I made frequent complaints of my want of zeal and devotion in my religious exercises, but very little of my corruptions, or the plague of my heart.

Mr. Neal about the time I joined the church persuaded me that it was my duty to turn my attention to the ministry. Although I had not before thought of that, yet on reflection I assented to it, and ultimately I became so devoted to that idea, that nothing else seemed worth living for. This was frequently brought to the test in 1809 and 10, by the various difficulties, which interposed to my obtaining a suitable preparatory education. Amid these difficulties I could not think of turning my attention to anything else; and I really felt that life was of no value to me if I could not spend it in the ministry. I mention not this as an evidence of my call to the ministry, for whatever purpose God may have had in it, in reference to my after being called to the ministry. I consider it not in that light, but as showing the great zeal the natural mind may be wrought up to in religion, and in reference to the ministry. Mr. Neal, in view of the difficulties in the way of my obtaining a collegiate education, advised me not to aim at it, as the Western Presbytery of New York, at that time, would admit persons into the ministry without their having graduated. Following his advise, I soon turned from the Latin, to the study of the Greek and other studies which he thought more useful. Though I thus conformed to Mr. Neal's direction, and notwithstanding my zeal for the ministry, I had no notion of entering it, without such qualifications as would give me a pretty fair standing in it. Mr. Neal having received a call to the Presbyterian Church in Albany, left Cooperstown in Sept. of 1809. I therefore concluded as soon as the school closed in which I was then engaged, to leave that region also. Just before this the Theological School at Andover, Mass., had been established, I thought if I was in that region I might gain through college, and that the course of studies there would make up for any deficiency in my scientific studies. I accordingly left Cooperstown early in Oct., went into Mass., and succeeded in getting the school in the village of Watertown, seven miles from Boston. Here I found myself in the midst of Unitarianism; the minister and people in Watertown were of the looser class. I therefore had no religious society here. But there being an orthodox minister, so called, who preached in Newtown, four or five miles distant, I principally attended meeting there. In the latter part of the winter, a young lady of Boston, a member of the First Baptist Church there, came out on a visit to the family where I boarded and spent several weeks. As we pretty much agreed on doctrinal points I had a good deal of satisfaction in her society, and became quite attached to her. I mention this, because I shall have occasion to refer to her again. I, a short

time before my engagement in the school was out, called on Dr. Griffin, one of the principal professors in Andover School, who then resided in Boston, to enquire as to the terms of admittance into the School. He informed me that their rules were to admit none but graduates into the school, and that they could not depart from them. This was a sore disappointment to my hopes of attaining to the ministry. But he kindly informed me that the Presbytery in New Jersey, from whence he was, had funds for assisting poor young men to obtain an education for the ministry, and he thought if I was there I might obtain assistance. My attention was next turned to New Jersey.

I will here relate a rather singular exercise I had a little before this. It was Sunday, March 11th, I had attended meeting at Newtown, but had felt very cold and dull, on returning to my boarding house, I concluded to retire to my room and spend a season in prayer. I had not been long thus engaged, before there appeared before me two lights, and the suggestion was made to my mind, that these were the Father and Son, and that they had manifested themselves thus to me, as a token of God's love to me, and that He was going to make me happy. Immediately my passions were raised to an ecstasy of joy and love to God indescribable; I even imagined that my soul was leaving the body and was going to heaven. I thought I felt it rising up in me, and as being just ready to depart, and the delight I felt at the idea, and the praises I poured forth on account of it I cannot describe. After awhile, I thought I felt my soul sinking down into my body, but I would have given the world for it not to return back and having to go again into the world. From this the ecstasy subsided, and when I attempted to rise off my knees, I found myself so exhausted by the excitement that I could not do it, I had just to prostrate myself on the floor and lie for some time before I recovered strength to get up. On reflecting on this, the idea arose that it might have been a delusion of Satan; immediately the suggestion was made "Satan cannot love," and that as I felt such love to God, it must have been from God. It was thus kindly overruled to be quite a support to me under the disappointments I shortly after had to meet. But I have long since known it to have been a delusion of Satan practiced upon me; for there was in it no view of the mediation and atonement of Christ, the only medium of a sinner's acceptance with God. Of this I was at that time ignorant. The love was nothing but a natural love arising from the imagination that God was going to make me happy. The lights arose from some natural cause, I have frequently seen them since, probably in

consequence of the position my eyes were in toward the window. From having experienced this exercise and known its delusion, I have no confidence in those relations we frequently hear of great lights, and great excitements of love to God where there is no view of Christ as the medium of acceptance.

After closing my engagements at Watertown, I went to Newport, R.I., thence by water to New York, and from thence into New Jersey. At Morristown I engaged for a few weeks as an assistant in one of the academies there, when I obtained a school in Hanover, and had the opportunity of boarding with the Presbyterian minister of the place and of receiving some instruction from him in my studies.

On my way to Morristown I called upon the Presbyterian minister in Newark, New Jersey, to make some enquiries about schools. Whilst there two or three other ministers called, and mention was made of a new work on infant baptism by Dr. Porter. All united in speaking of it as a masterpiece on the subject. Immediately the idea suggested itself to me that I would purchase one and send on to my Baptist friend in Boston, hoping it might convince her of her error on that subject. Not in reference to the mode of baptism, for I had been convinced from my study of Greek, and of Ecclesiastical History, that immersion was the original and proper mode, and had felt sorry that it had been changed. But in reference to the subjects; for I was a strenuous advocate for the seal of the covenant, as baptism was considered, being put on infants. Whilst at Morristown, I procured one of those books, but concluded before sending it on, I would read it myself. I did so. I found Dr. Porter's position to be, that the Abrahamic covenant was still in force under the gospel, that the children of believers under it, now stood in the same relation to their parents, as formerly the Israelitish children did to their parents; that only the seals of the covenant were changed, that baptism had been substituted in the place of circumcision, and the Lord's Supper in the place of the Passover. On reading this, the idea struck me, that if this position was correct, that, as formerly every circumcised child had a right to eat of the Passover, so now every baptized child must have a right to eat of the Lord's Supper. I could see no consistent way to avoid this conclusion. But the conclusion I was not willing to admit; for I believed there was an experimental change necessary to a person's being a proper subject for partaking of the Lord's Supper. I thought rather than submit to such an inconsistency, I would examine the Baptist ground. But again it occurred to me, that if I should become a Baptist, all my hopes of obtaining assistance to prosecute my studies would be

frustrated. In this dilemma, I soothed my conscience by solemnly promising the Lord, that if my hopes of obtaining assistance to pursue my studies were cut off I would then examine the ground for believer's baptism. The book I laid aside, without sending it as before designed.

In Hanover, I found myself in the enjoyment of what I esteemed religious privileges, such as I had not before enjoyed. There had been a revival there a year or two before, and a number of young persons had joined the church. Their zeal had not yet died away, so that they kept up frequent prayer meetings. I was soon introduced among them, and put forward to take a leading part in these meetings. But whilst this was the case on the one hand, I on the other was made to feel the corruptions of my nature, far more than I ever had before, causing me much to doubt whether there was any reality in my religion. In looking at some of the entries in my diary during this Summer, I should think that they had been penned by a tempted, doubting believer, were it not for the legality so apparent in them. I speak in them about my inability to do anything, that God must do all for me by His grace, and of my entire dependence on Christ for acceptance, &c., and yet there is a rotten legal self-doing spirit running through the whole. My reading was of the more evangelical class of authors, as they are called, such as John Newton, and even Dr. Hawker's "Zion's Pilgrim" was a favorite book with me. I no doubt imbibed their mode of expression. I mention these things, to show how the natural mind may be molded into a gospel mode of thinking and expression, whilst we are ignorant of our helplessness, though I was being taught to feel the power of my corruptions, though ignorant of Christ. In reference to my corruptions, in order to get relief, I occasionally, on Saturdays when I had no school, retired to the woods and spent the day in fasting and prayer that God would relieve me from them. I would write solemn covenants that I would not indulge in any evil thought or propensity, nor indulge in any trifling conversation, &c., and sign my name to them. I find two or three such in my diary. I think I once or twice, in order to make it more solemn, drew blood from my finger and wrote on loose paper covenants of this kind. But all would not do; my corruptions still appeared to triumph. One night returning from school, borne down with a sense of my corruptions, I went into my room and threw myself upon my bed, and whilst there, drew the conclusion, that all I had experienced was from Satan, that he had been working upon me to make a polished hypocrite of me. Immediately therefore the charge was made against me: Now you have committed

the sin against the Holy Ghost; for the Spirit of God has been at work with you, and you have now ascribed His work to Satan. I immediately sprang upon my feet and walked my room for some time, in as complete despair, as I believe a living man is capable of. At length I was relieved by the thought, that if the work was Satan's, I had committed no sin in charging it to him, if it was the work of the Holy Ghost, I could not commit the unpardonable sin, for he would *carry it on until the day of Jesus Christ*. I went on in this way attending zealously to the forms of religion both public and private, but thus harassed with corruptions, temptations of various kinds, and doubts, until in September I got hold of a work of Dr. Bellamy's entitled, "True Religion delineated." I determined at once to read it, and test myself carefully by it. This book commences with a representation of God and of His attributes, and of the fitness that he should be loved and obeyed; and goes on to describe the requisitions of the law, that we should love God with all our heart, &c. I was one day sitting in my room reading this part, when I felt the enmity of my heart so rise against the requisition, that I went on in the flowing out of this enmity, to say to myself: *It is unjust in God to require that we should thus love Him, that there is no fitness in it; that I can see nothing in the works of creation that shows Him worthy to be loved, yea, said I, I cannot see any evidence that there is a God*. As I uttered this last expression, I involuntarily raised my eyes toward the window, and a handsome red apple hanging on a tree nearby, met them, and I so saw the wisdom and goodness of God manifested, in causing that apple to grow there, that at once all my atheism was knocked in the head, and with it, all my religion that I had been nourishing and building up for three years, was prostrated in the dust. I had, I saw, all that time been worshipping an unknown God; had mocked God with a form of godliness, whilst my heart retained such enmity to Him as to deny His right to require me to love Him, and even as to deny His existence. My past religious performances now appeared as in the sight of God, the most odious of all the sins I had ever committed.

No.3

Brother Beebe: - I closed my last No. with an account of the blasting of all my former hopes, by a discovery of the awful enmity of my heart to God. But distressed as I was, I did not at that time, sink into despair. A glimmering hope arose in my

mind, that as the Lord had been pleased to show me my true situation, He perhaps intended to appear for my deliverance. I felt to praise Him that He had not suffered me to continue longer in my ignorance, and that He had suffered me still to have a being on the earth. He left me to go on bowed down as a very wretch upon earth, for upwards of two weeks, when on Saturday night, Oct.13th, 1810, I concluded, I would once more retire to my room, and examine myself to see if there was any evidence of God's having begun a good work in me, any evidence of my having any love to God. As I entered my room, I knelt down and tried to pray. I could not, my mind seemed entirely shut up. I arose, took my Bible and turned to certain passages and tried to read and reflect on them. I could not, I was unable to trace any reflection, to connect two ideas, my mind seemed a perfect blank. I again kneeled down and tried to pray with no better success, again arose and opened my Bible, it was the same, almost frantic with distress, I again kneeled, and finding myself no more able to pray than before, the suggestion was made to me, "You now see that there is no hope for you; God has evidently given you up to hardness of heart, and blindness of mind, I felt it was true, all hope vanished, I sprang to my feet and walked the room. I judged for fifteen or twenty minutes in absolute despair, when at length without thinking what I was doing, I turned to the table, took up my Bible, and as I took it up, it opened in my hands to the 99th Psalm and the 5th verse met my eyes, "Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at His footstool, for He is holy." With this a sense of the sovereign majesty and holiness of God filled my mind, I felt to praise and exalt Him; felt a deep reverence for His majesty and greatness; felt the witness that myself and all creatures should be at His disposal, that we were as nothing before Him; that it was His sovereign right, to save whom He pleased, and leave to perish whom He pleased. There was no excitement of feelings, no thoughts about my individual salvation; but there was a sense of my nothingness before Him, and a submitting of myself into His hands to do with me as He pleased. My mind was principally occupied with a view of the exalted character, and of the universal and rightful sovereignty of God over all things. I slept but little that night, it was the happiest night I ever have experienced, and probably the happiest season I shall experience in time. Hence I have sometimes taken occasion to say, that the happiest moments of a christian's life are those in which God is the most exalted in his view, and he most humbled in the dust before Him.

The next morning I concluded that the experience of the

past night was an evidence of God's love to me, and that He would save me, I was therefore quite comfortable in mind, and remained so until the Wednesday following. I concluded in the evening after school to go to Morristown. I had before, through a friend, applied to the Presbyterian minister of Morristown, to lay my case before the Presbytery then about to set, and to see what encouragement they could give me of assistance in prosecuting my studies, and expected, by going that evening, to receive an answer. On arriving at my friend's, I learned that there was no encouragement for me, that the Presbytery had then under their charge more young men than they had funds to support, and that there was other applications before mine. Although this was a death blow to my hopes in reference to the ministry, yet being in company with Presbyterian friends with whom I had formed an intimacy, the evening passed pleasantly off, until retiring to bed, when I got into my room, my disappointment rushed upon my mind with such force, that *the heavens over my head appeared as brass, and the earth under my feet as iron*. I said to myself - I can see nothing to hope for either in heaven, or on earth. I stood in this forlorn state of mind but a minute or two, when these feelings subsided; I went to bed, and slept. The next morning I arose and started early, in order to get back to my school in season. On my way back, I got to reflecting on my sad disappointment, when this question was pressed upon my mind: What will you do now with the promise you made the Lord last Spring to examine the Baptist ground in case certain circumstances occurred? I immediately saw that the very circumstances on which I had predicated my promise, had now occurred, that all hopes were now gone of obtaining an education for the ministry, I concluded at once to fulfill my promise. I went on to my school, and in the short recess for play in the forenoon, the examination I was about to undertake being on my mind, I concluded I would muster up my principal arguments for infant baptism, preparatory to the examination so that if I was convinced against infant baptism, it should be fairly done. I thought over one which had been a favorite argument with me: namely; that the Jews as a people were remarkably tenacious of the religious privileges they enjoyed under the provisions of the Abrahamic Covenant; that among these privileges was that of bringing their children under the blessings of that covenant by circumcision. Hence that if this privilege had been abrogated under the gospel, we should have heard of their finding fault therewith. My thoughts had no sooner passed over this argument, that the troubles which had been occasioned in the churches of Galatia by Judaizing

teachers relative to circumcision, and Paul's argument on that subject, as also what had occurred in the church at Antioch, and the decision of the Apostles and elders at Jerusalem on the same subject, all rushed at once upon my mind. And I saw that all this arose from Jews partiality to the provisions of the Abrahamic covenant, and hence their contending for circumcision; and also that if baptism had come in the room of circumcision, as a seal of that covenant, how easy it would have been for the apostle to have satisfied the minds of the Jews by stating that fact, thus showing that the baptized Gentile stood exactly on the same ground as though he had been circumcised; the form of the seal only having been changed from circumcision to baptism, a milder form, but of the same effect. But neither Paul nor the Apostles at Jerusalem, I saw, had hinted at any such idea. Indeed upon the ground of baptism having come in the room of circumcision, there could have been no possible excuse for the Jewish disciples still to contend for circumcision, seeing He whom they received as the Messiah had instituted the change. Of course, not only was my argument prostrated, but the whole foundation on which infant baptism in my estimation stood, and on which it alone can be made to stand, was demolished at once, and my mind was prepared to go and receive what the New Testament said on the subject of baptism as a gospel institution, disentangled from the Abrahamic covenant. I accordingly as soon as I was out of school commenced in good earnest reading the various passages in the New Testament in which reference was made to baptism, they were all new to me. Texts which I had formerly thought favored infant baptism, now appeared decidedly against it. Many texts now appeared so clearly to point out believers as the only proper subjects of baptism, that I wondered whether the Baptists had ever seen those texts as I then viewed them, for I thought if they had, they would have been able to have convinced the whole world on that subject. For the sake of satisfying my curiosity, I went into New York and procured a work on baptism, but found the Baptists had the same views of those texts I then had, and had contended for those views. Not only this, but I wrote off my views and exercises on this subject, and showed them to some of my Presbyterian friends, but instead of convincing them on the subject, I found it was casting pearls before swine; they had no heart to receive those views; but turned to rend me, by representing that I was turning Baptist, in order the more easily to get into the ministry; whereas my anxiety to get into the ministry was what had kept me for the last five months

from examining this subject. I here learned an important lesson, that the prejudices of education may so blind our minds, against the light even on so plain an external ordinance as is baptism, that we cannot see the truth, only as the Lord is pleased to open our eyes to see. Having my mind somewhat exercised with the subject of baptism; I went on tolerably comfortable in mind until near the last of the month, when one night being in company with several Presbyterian friends, the subject of christian experience was introduced, and one gentleman took occasion to remark, that true christian experience must embrace in it, faith in Christ, and therefore a revelation of Christ crucified as the way of acceptance with God. I at once fully consented to the truth of this remark, but I was as fully satisfied that it was something I had never experienced; hence all my hope of being a christian was again taken from me. For two days I stood in my own view as a condemned and hopeless wretch. On the 31st of Oct., at night I concluded that I would go up into my room and once more try to pray. As I was going up the stairs, this question arose in my mind, what are you going to pray for; there is no possible hope of your ever being saved? I stopped for a moment, or two, when this thought arose in my mind, I can pray that, if God is pleased to send me to hell, instead of blaspheming His name, I may be permitted to praise His justice in sending me there. I then went on with the intention of putting up this petition. As I went into my room and knelt down, at first there came over me a drawing back of feeling, a want of an entire cordial acknowledgment of the justice of God in sending me to hell, but this soon gave way and I felt cordially to acknowledge His justice in my final condemnation, and to put up the petition, that I might through eternity praise His justice in sending me to hell. Immediately upon this, as I was there on my knees, the account of Abraham's offering his son Isaac as in Gen.22 was brought to my view. Isaac as bound and laid upon the altar, appeared as representing the case of the heirs of promise, and as fully representing my then case, as bound by the law and doomed by its condemnatory sentence to death; as Abraham knew nothing but to inflict the death blow, so the law knew nothing but to inflict the curse upon the sinner. My attention was then turned to Abraham's arm, being arrested by the angel's call to him, and the ram caught in the thicket by his horns being taken by him and sacrificed in the place of Isaac. This ram appeared to represent Christ as involved in the demands of the law, in the power of His Godhead, by virtue of His headship and union with His people, and therefore as made to suffer the penalty of the law in their

stead. My views then were not as distinct on all these points as I have here {in *The Signs*} given them; but the substitution of Christ in the place of the condemned sinner was fully presented to view. And the atonement of Christ appeared so full and so exactly adapted to my helpless, guilty and condemned case, that surely, I said to myself, as I viewed it, God must have had me in view when He made this rich provision in His Son. I was therefore enabled confidently to rely on His atonement for pardon, and to plead it for my acceptance with God, and the sense of condemnation was gone. I was of course filled with gratitude and praise for this wonderful display of God's love and grace to a wretch like me, but still the happiness was not like that I experienced on the night of the 13th, that was something peculiar; self was in a great measure lost sight of, and God in His glorious character and sovereignty occupied my view. Now I felt a deep sense of my own vileness. I do not know whether it is common or not, few at any rate speak of this exercise relating their deliverance, but for myself, I had never before felt such meltings of heart on account of sin, nor saw sin to be so vile as now; - not as contrasted with the demands of the law, but as contrasted with the goodness and mercy of God. I plead that the Lord would henceforth rule over me and in me, and that He would take me out of the world, rather than leave me ever again to sin against such goodness. It is true I had been accustomed from all I had read and also heard to consider Isaac as a type of Christ, but the view given at this time was so clear, and came with such power that I unhesitatingly received it as the truth of God. And I afterwards found that the Scriptures represent Isaac as the figure of those *born after the Spirit*, and of the *children of promise*. Gal.4:28 & 29.

Strange as it may appear, I did not once think of this being the *new birth*, or a being born into gospel liberty through faith now given me in Christ. I had no idea of what christian experience, or the new birth, was, other than that God must implant His love in the heart, and that be carried out in our experience and obedience. I had never heard experience preached. I had read of some persons having extraordinary exercises, but I had been led, particularly by the ministry, to think that if any had these exercises, it was not prudent to speak of them; as it would tend to discourage others who had not had such exercises. I viewed each of the exercises above related, as they severally occurred, as manifestations of God's special favor to me, but I did not feel free to speak of them, not only on account of its being as above remarked, not prudent, but I also felt it would be presuming in me to tell of

having such exercises. Yet from the facts that from the time I had the discovery of the enmity of my heart on, I had felt myself helpless and laying at the mercy of God; and that but two days before this last exercise, I had been led to consider a revelation of Christ and faith in His atonement an essential part of Christian experience; and further that from this time I could never bring back that legal bondage and those terrors I had felt before, though I often tried hard for it. I cannot satisfactorily account for my great stupidity in having no adequate idea of the import and place of these exercises in christian experience, only that my eyes were holden, as were the eyes of the two disciples who journeyed to Emmaus.

Having a comfortable hope now of acceptance with God, I felt desirous of being baptized. I knew there was an old Baptist meetinghouse in Morristown; and had been told there were a people who occasionally met there for worship. After some enquiry I found where two of the members lived, a man and his wife; I went one evening to see them, and informed them of my situation and wish to be baptized. They informed me that they had no preacher at that time, but that Elder Parkinson of New York had promised to visit them, and that if word could be got to him, he no doubt would come out and baptize me. I offered with their approbation to go and invite him out. Knowing that my Boston friend was at that time in New York on a visit, I in a few days after, went and through her got an introduction to Elder P., who after questioning me somewhat on my exercises, gave me an appointment for Morristown. On my return I gave those members information of the appointment; a church meeting was called for that time, I went before the church and was examined, for I did not relate any of the particular points of my experience excepting that on baptism, so ignorant was I of their special importance to evidence my being born of God, but still after Elder Parkinson had questioned me pretty closely as to my reliance on Christ &c. I was received and baptized at Morristown, the same day, Saturday December 22nd, 1810. But instead of going on my way rejoicing, while at the water a heavy dark cloud came over my mind, which with the exception, of occasionally some little break and manifestation of Divine favor, lasted me about fourteen months.

No.4

Brother Beebe: - It is not that I take any pleasure in aggravating the feelings of those brethren, who are so tired of

seeing my name in the *Signs*, and of my *long pieces* as they call them, that I thus protract this relation of my experience, but it is, that I think the relation would be deficient without extending it to my deliverance from under that cloud I spoke of in my last. Perhaps however some may think I am under it yet.

I will go back and relate one exercise, which I passed over previous to my being baptized. After the arrangement had been made for a church meeting and for my coming before the church, as I was sitting in my room one night reflecting on the subject, all at once the view rushed upon my mind, of the host of learned and I thought, pious men, and of Doctors of Divinity which was on the side of the Paedo Baptists, together with the Reformers; and the thought that I, an ignorant youth, should turn from them, and in effect pronounce them all in error, was overwhelming; and I was nearly ready to form the conclusion to draw back from what I had undertaken, when this expression of Paul's came with power to my relief, "immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood," Gal.1:16. My mind was again calmed. - Paul, when *God was pleased to reveal His Son in him* and to call him to preach Him, had to leave all whom he had esteemed as the learned Doctors of the law and the most religious of the Jews; *Immediately he conferred not with flesh and blood*, but alone obeyed God, so I felt in this case, it was my duty to do. I learned a lesson then which I have not yet forgotten, namely: that whenever the Scriptures have been opened up to my view, so that my mind has been convinced of the truth of any subject as taught in the Scriptures, I have felt constrained to advance and advocate it, without *conferring with flesh and blood*, whoever might oppose. In no instance have I, in reference to the great leading points, I have discussed through the *Signs*, been led to bring forward, a sentiment that is a *newer thing*, than was believers baptism to me; and in no instance have I in advocating any of those sentiments, had to depart from a greater host of esteemed standard writers, than in leaving the ranks of infant baptism. I might go further on this point in reference to Scriptural authority, but I will forbear.

To pursue my experience, under that dark cloud, it was soon accompanied with an awful war of the elements within me. I recollect having said in writing to a friend shortly after my baptism, that I had thought the summer before, I had a full view of my corruptions, but that I then only saw the surface of them; but now, like the billows of the ocean, they came foaming up from an unfathomable depth. Soon therefore

did I most seriously regret that I had ever been baptized; for I was most sure that my corruptions would overcome me, and I should bring reproach upon the Baptist church and cause, which I now believed was the cause of Christ. My first plan to avoid this insufferable evil, was to put an end to my existence. But I reflected that if it should be discovered that I had killed myself, the reproach would be equally as bad upon the cause, as in the other case. I therefore set my mind to work to devise a plan how I could do it, and not have it discovered. When however I had the plan arranged so that I thought it would answer, I was suddenly reminded of the rightful sovereignty of God over His creatures, as I had seen it in October before, and felt that if it was His pleasure to make use of me as a rod to chastise and humble His people, by leaving me to fall under my corruptions, I ought to submit to His sovereignty in this, as well as in other things. This drove the thoughts of suicide from my mind for a time. Still my corruptions raged and the thoughts of falling and bringing reproach upon the cause I dreaded. My next resort to save the cause, was to have my name crossed off from the church book. Accordingly one night after school, though there was a deep snow on the ground, I walked eight miles to the brother's on whom I had first called, to get them to have my name taken off the book. In the course of the evening after I got there, having occasion to turn to a Concordance I opened it, and this part of the text, I Kings 8:33 met my eye, "Which shall know every man the plague of his own heart." Surely thought I, this is my case, for I do know the plague of my own heart. And if such characters, I thought, were included in Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the Temple, then they must be included in Christ's intercession. I was relieved for the time, and went back to my school the next morning, concluding to let my name remain on the church book.

As the Presbyterians had charged me with joining the Baptists in order more easily to get into the ministry, I had concluded that I would not think of engaging in the ministry, for a year or two at least. But it was now suggested to me, that it was wrong to take that resolution from fear of the reproaches of the Presbyterians, and that God was leaving me to suffer these trials in consequence of it. I now concluded that I would go to the church and mention the case to them, and if they saw fit to give me an opportunity to exercise my gift, I would do it. They very readily consented, having indeed anticipated it, a special meeting of the church was appointed to give me a hearing. No sooner was this done than it was worse with me than before. It was bad enough I thought to

impose myself upon the church as a member and I was going to impose myself upon them with all my corruptions, as a preacher. I went back again in a few days to see some of the members, and get the appointment recalled, but was persuaded out of it. On March 17, 1811 I went before the church and tried to speak from a text; was almost entirely shut up, said but very little, and when I retired for the brethren to consult, I concluded the matter was now decided, that they would not encourage me any further; but they otherwise decided, and made another appointment for me; and I consented to it. I was again distressed because I had done so; but having more liberty the next time, I consented to another appointment. I thus went on having appointments made for me, in the meantime harassed so with my corruptions and doubts whether it was possible I could be a subject of grace, and repeatedly concluding when the pending appointment was filled I would consent to no more, until June 17th the church licensed me as a preacher. Why the church was satisfied to license me, I can account for only on the ground of their being so accustomed to hearing Presbyterian preaching, for mine was of that same formal kind. My being licensed made my case no better, it was no relief from the strong workings of my corruptions, and therefore not from my darkness, nor from my doubts, both as to the propriety of my attempting to preach, and of my being a child of God. It is true I had a hope which I could not renounce, that I was a subject of grace; but instead of being unwilling to part with it for the world; as many say, I often felt, that if it was anything tangible, I would tear it from my breast, and cast it from me with a determination no more to indulge in it, until I experienced a new work. I however went on trying to preach from time to time; could not muster resolution to give it up, though often determined to do it.

In the fall some of the brethren made arrangements with Elder Parkinson, for me to go and spend three or four months with him; that I might have access to his library. And in view of his instructing me in Hebrew, of which I wished to obtain a knowledge, I consented to the arrangement. But again this was a fresh source of distress to me, so much so, that I one day retired to the woods, to spend the day in seeking direction of God, both as to the ministry, and as to going into New York. Whilst thus waiting upon God I had a text given me which gave me considerable encouragement in reference to the ministry; and in reference to going to Elder Parkinson's this text was given me and applied with some power, "Arise and go into the city, and it shall be told thee

what thou must do." Acts 9:6. I accordingly went, but I carried the cloud and my depravity with me. I had not been there long before, if I had had the means at command, I would have taken the stage and gone where I would not be known or heard of by any who had known me as a professor of religion, and where I could therefore pass as a non-professor. But adequate means were wanting, and I had to remain. I thought at times, it was impossible such a wretch as I, could be a subject of grace, and concluded the longer I lived I was but aggravating my final condemnation the more by my pretensions to preaching and to religion, and repeatedly prayed God to cut me off at once, let what would be my final portion, rather than leave me longer to deceive His people, and expose His cause to reproach, by that probability of my being overcome by my corruptions. Elder P. occasionally required me to preach for him on Sunday mornings, as I was also frequently called on to go to other places and preach. But being under the cloud as well as far from being satisfied that I was called to preach, my preaching was of course dull and formal. I thought that my preaching in Elder P's church was not very acceptable, as taking his place. I inferred from it that the brethren did not think me called to preach. His custom was when he wished me to preach on Sunday's, to give me notice on Saturday morning that I might study a discourse. Such was his practice, and I had borrowed the same from him. This practice I continued to some extent for several years after; that is when I had opportunity, and could find texts beforehand. I finally was led to drop the practice for these reasons. 1st: I frequently could not obtain a text from which to preach in time for study, often not till I got to the place of preaching. 2nd: I found by experience that the Lord could give me at the time, as clear views of a text, as He could beforehand. And 3rdly: I found that when it was His pleasure to give at the time, clear views of the subject, I enjoyed the preaching more myself, and therefore felt more animation in speaking, than when I had studied the subject beforehand.

I once at the commencement of my speaking in public, tried carrying notes with me into the pulpit, but I found myself so embarrassed with them that I never tried it afterwards. In consequence of the opinion I had formed as above mentioned of the reception of my preaching, I began to desire that Elder P. would not ask me any more to preach for him. On Saturday morning, my mind being much oppressed with doubts, I hesitated somewhat about going into the study, lest he should tell me I must preach the next morning; and when I went in, I thought I earnestly desired he would not. On going in, he

related to me that as he had been absent considerably of late {which had been the case} he would preach all day on the morrow, to prevent the complaints of brethren. Although this was just what I had wished, the moment he said it, the suggestion arose in my mind: Now Elder P. as well as the brethren, believes I am not called to preach and that I am a base hypocrite. This created a storm in my breast indescribable; I could hardly contain myself. But I sat down to my table and tried to compose my mind, to study; it was of no use! I shoved my books from me, and at once concluded I would go over onto Long Island, where I knew, there then were retired places, within convenient distance, and spend the day in supplicating God in mercy to direct me to what was my duty. As I took my hat to go, I had the precaution to take my knife out of my pocket, and leave it on the table, lest if I did not obtain relief, I might be tempted to commit suicide. As I went out of the study door, the thought occurred to me that I would go into my lodging room, and pray to the Lord to go with me and direct me. Whilst there thus engaged, my mind became somewhat composed, and the idea was suggested to me, that I had better go back into the study, and read a certain pamphlet which had been laid on Elder P's table a few days before. I went back and took up the book; which was the experience of a person in England written by himself in a letter to William Huntington, and was by him thus published. As I read it, I saw the path in which the Lord had led me delineated step by step. Like myself this man had been a professor for some years previous to his being brought into gospel liberty, had been a zealous legalist; had had his foundation suddenly all knocked from under him, as mine was, and afterwards, Christ had been revealed to him as the substitute of the sinner, and the end of the law for righteousness. As he described these exercises as a being killed by the law, and a being born again, born into gospel liberty, I was led to understand such to have been the nature of the exercises I passed through during the months of Sept. & Oct. 1810, as before described, that then it was, I was slain by the law, and then that I became a believer in Christ, and was born of God. The cloud that I had been so long under now in some measure broke; and I enjoyed a comfortable hope of being a *new creature*. From this I was led on to see what a galling yoke of bondage, the law and legal religion was; and how lovely and glorious was gospel liberty and gospel grace as contrasted with legal service. Still the cloud was not altogether dissipated, the doubts as to my call to the ministry were as great as ever. At length in hopes that the Lord would decide the point for me, I

plead with Him, that if He had not designed me for the ministry, I might not be called on to preach for four weeks, and I solemnly promised that if this should be the case, I would not again attempt it. I passed over that week, the next Sunday and most of the week after, without being called on to preach, excepting at one night meeting where the preacher expected, disappointed, and that I set down for nothing. I began therefore to conclude that the Lord was about now to decide the case for me, I felt somewhat composed waiting the result, and satisfied to abide by whatever the Lord should decide in the case, whether to preach, or to give it up. On the Friday night of this second week, at the hour of retiring, Elder P. started to go to bed, and I immediately followed. I had to pass his room door in going to my room. He opened his door and went partly into his room, and as I was passing his door, he turned back, and said to me in a very decided tone: "Brother Trott, you must preach on Sunday morning, and you may prepare yourself for it as soon as you please." I have never been able to devise any reason he could have had for giving me that early notice, and for speaking in that abrupt manner. But if a clap of thunder had burst over my head, it would not have astonished me more. As soon as I could think, I turned to beg of him to recall it, and let me pass without preaching, and lo, he had retired into his room, and shut his door upon me. I then immediately went into my room and threw myself upon my knees or perhaps prostrate on the floor, to intreat of the Lord to interpose and decide the case for me. Whilst there, my mind received the impression that it was my duty to go forward and preach; a text was impressed on my mind from which to preach on Sunday morning, and so clearly opened up to my view, that there was no need of further study to prepare me for preaching from it. This was on the 8th of Feb. 1812.

No.5

Brother Beebe: - Here I come with another *yarn*, though I think I will *wind* up with this. On Sunday morning I preached from the text given me as mentioned at the conclusion of my last. My preaching to me was entirely different from any of my former preaching. Before my preaching was a formal thing, now I preached in faith, felt that I *spake that I did know, and testified that I had seen*. From that period, {if sent at all} I date my being sent of God to preach. Whatever purpose God

may have had in my former exercises, on the subject, relative to my being sent into the ministry, all my former preaching I consider, as a running before I was sent. The cloud seemed now to depart, and thus I conceive was fulfilled the declaration made to me the fall before, "Go into the city and it shall be told thee what thou must do." But it was not long before I was as much troubled with the calm, as I had been before with the tempest.

I do not wish to be understood by what I have said above about preaching in faith, that I am always enabled to preach in faith, any more than I can always pray in faith. But I wish to say that with the gospel preacher, as with the gospel hearer, there is a preaching in faith, as there is a hearing in faith; and there is by the same preacher, a preaching at times, when only the powers of his own mind, enlightened to be sure, as they have been in the knowledge of spiritual things, are engaged in bearing testimony to the truth, as there are times in which the believer only hears with his natural understanding, in this case he judges of the truth, but he does not *feel* it or *feed* on it. If the experience of others agree with me on this point, they must also agree that faith is distinct from the exercises of any of the faculties of the human soul, that *it is a fruit of the spirit*. Further in reference to my preaching, there have been times when I felt comfortable on going into the pulpit, and all at once a dark cloud has come over my mind, or the subject, which seemed to cast a mist all around me, so as to effect my powers of vision in looking at the congregation. Again; there have been seasons, when for months, I have enjoyed none of the comforts of religion, only when I was preaching, and then I was almost uniformly enabled to preach in faith, point out the experience and trials peculiar to the christian, and in faith hold forth the fulness of Christ, and the consolations suiting the case of such; and when I have closed, and thought of what I had been preaching, I could no more apply it to myself, than I could clear away the clouds from the natural sky. At times I have viewed this as according to Scripture, that the *witnesses* instead of retaining the *golden oil*, were to *empty it out of themselves through the golden pipes* of ministerial gifts. See Zech.4 and Rev.11:4. The business of a *servant* also corresponds with the above; though he may at times eat of what is left. But it is good for him at times to be taught his business, namely; to set forth the provisions to the family and guests instead of eating them himself. At other times this experience in reference to preaching has been a source of much doubting and distress.

Soon after my mind received satisfaction in reference to

the ministry. I returned to the vicinity of Morristown, with the expectation of preaching for that church. But I went not with my mind impressed with a desire to convert souls. I went deeply impressed with the evil of that *legal bondage* which I knew by past experience was so prevalent in that region among the Presbyterians and others. I went therefore with the design of bearing my testimony against it, and to hold forth salvation as being of rich, free and sovereign grace reigning through the righteousness of Christ. I soon by that kind of preaching aroused a pretty severe opposition against me, both in and out of the church; I was charged freely with being an *Antinomian*, with bringing forward *new things*, and with *creating divisions*, &c. This drove me to search the Scriptures and to enquire more earnestly at the *mouth of the Lord*, and resulted in my becoming stronger in my views and in the defense of them. From that day to this, the most aid I have received from man in forming my religious views, has been through their opposition; thereby driving me from men to look to God and the Scriptures for my guidance. I have learned in my early experience, many ideas from men, but have had again in many instances to unlearn them. I know that it has been my desire to learn of God and not of man, and He I think taught me that desire, in my early experience. Whether I have learned of Him, or deceived myself with my own fancies, it is not necessary for me to say. I am in God's hands, He knows me, and knows what to do with me. And brethren will, as is their right, judge for themselves whether to fellowship what I have related as my experience, as the teachings of God, or to reject it as a delusion. I will add that these charges which commenced at Morristown, have been continued unto this day. They were made against me in Kentucky, and when I came into Virginia, I found Luther Rice had brought from Kentucky and other places, and circulated here the charge of my being a *pestilent fellow* and a mover of divisions in churches. Hence those of the Old School who are keeping up the cry against me of bringing in *new things* and causing divisions, &c., may see that they are but walking, in this thing, in the steps of the missionists. Whether this is evidence against me of being a disciple of Christ, I will not say. I know that neither Christ, nor His apostles in their day had the reputation of being very subservient or accommodating to the opinions and dogmas of the great and learned Doctors of Divinity, or of the law, of that and the preceding ages.

I have had an impression on my mind, since 1816 that I should live to see this land *plucked up*, that is to see our liberties overturned, and the church brought into captivity or

under oppression. As it is somewhat connected with my experience, in reference to what I have above been noticing, I will state the ground of it. Where I lived at that time in the State of Ohio, bordering on Indiana, the country I considered considerably destitute of preaching, and being confined to a school for support, I of course could not travel and preach as I wished. As I had not then seen the inconsistency of the mission plan of sending out preachers, with the New Testament order, I was thinking of writing on to New York to obtain an appointment to travel and preach in that region as a missionary, when this text was so applied as to make an impression on my mind. "The Lord saith thus, Behold that which I have built will I break down; and that which I have planted will I pluck up, even this whole land. And seekest thou great things for thyself; seek them not; for behold I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the Lord; but thy life will I give thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest." Jer.45:4 & 5. I have, it is true, never felt very confident of living to see this government broken down, and our liberties plucked up. But so far as to seeking great things for myself it has been prophetically true. In reference to engaging in business for the purpose of acquiring property, I have been invariably held back from it. And I have never been able to engage in those measures or advocate any system that was popular with the multitude; but have been constrained by a regard to what I believed to be truth, in my preaching and in my intercourse with brethren, to advocate that doctrine and cause which has left me in the back ground among the few. I have been glad to retire to the *cave Adullam*, with that *distressed, indebted, and discontented* little company. I Sam.22:1 & 2. It was so when we were altogether as Baptists, and it seems it must be so among the Old School Baptists. My life also so far has been given me *for a prey*, both temporally and in reference to enjoying the fellowship of those whom I have esteemed as knowing the truth. I feel confident that our government will be broken down, and the church in her present privileges be plucked up whether I live to see it or not. Though if brother Calvert is correct, and the church has passed her last fiery ordeal, and got into the Philadelphian state, the state of *brotherly love*, as Philadelphia signifies, and has an *open door* which no man can shut, Rev.3:7 & 8, then it will not be so. In reference to seeking to be distinguished as the leader of a party, I confidently say I never have had any ambition for it. Never have taken any steps calculated to accomplish it. Whenever the Lord has been pleased to give me to see the error of any views, which I in common with others have held,

and also to understand the Scriptures as clearly revealing other views of the subject, instead of seeking to form a party by trying to disciple the members of churches to which I preached to my new views, I have in the first instance thrown them out broadcast, in preaching at associations, or published them through the *Signs*, where they were sure to be canvassed before they were received. Or if in any instance I have first spoken of them in private, it has been in a company of ministers. I make this statement, believing that some who have made the above charge against me, ought to know from circumstances, that the statement cannot be contradicted. I now make it, not so much to vindicate myself from the charge, for it cannot be long that the reproach will effect me, as to guard the minds of brethren from the prejudice attempted to be raised against the views I have advanced, by representing me as influenced by such motives in advancing them; views which I have thus advanced because I believed them, and still believe them, to be according to God's revealed Word.

Notwithstanding the opposition raised against my preaching at Morristown, the church in the course of the summer called me to ordination. And I was ordained August 30, 1812, not as the pastor of that church, for that I declined, finding no Scriptural authority for it, but to the gospel ministry.

I wish to offer one remark before closing. I think it will be admitted *by many*, that some of the exercises which I have related have been deep, and strongly marked. I call attention to this, because so many brethren and sisters complain that theirs were not so and think that if their exercises had been thus strongly marked, they should not doubt so much. Yet there are perhaps more of those who have been more severely handled with doubts than I have; thus showing that it is not any past testimony we have received of acceptance, that can produce present faith, or relieve from present doubts, unless the Lord is pleased to give us a fresh realizing of those doubts. Whenever the Lord enables us to *walk by faith*, we enjoy a comfortable hope. But when He leaves us to encounter the assaults of the adversary, and the corruptions of our own hearts, and with nothing but our reasoning powers to combat them, however much our reason or souls have been enlightened in the knowledge of spiritual things, we have but a sorry, gloomy, doubting time of it; and we are made to know that it is not by any power that we have that faith can be brought to our rescue. Surely those who think that *faith is merely the result of testimony*, and that their souls have been renovated, and changed from natural to spiritual and heavenly souls, can never have been under that *fourteen months* cloud

which I had to pass through, in which time I could so calmly and deliberately reason on putting an end to my existence; nor under many trials and dark seasons, such as I have had since to pass. I can as soon believe that darkness is light, as I can believe that my soul with any powers it now has, though I hope I am born of God in a new and distinct life, can of itself exercise a comfortable trust in Christ and reliance on God. If they have experienced a different change from me, I of course can know nothing of that. But I am transgressing those rules which Brother Beebe has found it necessary to adopt in order to sustain the publication of the *Signs*. This shows the propriety of what I am now in closing about to do; for I do not believe it is in me to write one of those kind of neutral communications which shall interfere with no one's expressed opinions.

In winding up then, after acknowledging I think with gratitude, the many and great indulgences brother Beebe has extended to me, in publishing my communications, I now take farewell of the *Signs*, not as a supporter and promoter of them and their circulation; and not, as not publishing through them such notices as I may have occasion to publish, but as a correspondent of the *Signs*. I do not this from opposition to the course adopted by brother Beebe in reference to the present volume, but as acquiescing in it. I know the turn which has been given to my mind in writing, and I know not that I can change it. And it appears quite manifest that we cannot have discussion through the *Signs*, without controversy; and if controversy is further admitted, it seems, or has been thought the *Signs* could not be supported in the publication of them. This, by and by, does not look as though the church is now in the *state of brotherly love*. I wish I could see it in that state. As I wish the publication to continue ever under the present arrangements, for two reasons, I draw back. 1st. I wish them continued, because they are so welcome a messenger and so comforting to many of the brethren and sisters who are so scattered as not to enjoy the privilege of hearing much gospel preaching, or of much personal intercourse with brethren. 2nd. Brother Beebe commenced the publication of the *Signs*, as a pioneer in the Old School Cause and under many difficult and discouraging circumstances; and has valiantly, laboriously, and successfully battled the whole New School phalanx. Now after enduring the burden and heat of the day, it would be truly a matter of grief to see him suffering defeat and loss through the Old School.

But in acquiescing in the neutrality of the *Signs*, that is in reference to the differences of sentiment among Old School

Baptists, I must be allowed to say, that for myself I can consent to no neutrality, or armistice in reference to what has been so much the subject of controversy in the *Signs*, namely; what is called *soul regeneration*. For myself, I would as soon ground arms in reference to Fullerism as to that. The more I look at it the more I am convinced that it strikes as directly, at the ground work of salvation as does Fullerism, though more covertly.

My reasons for occupying this decided stand against this sentiment, I probably shall, if providence permits, hereafter publish in pamphlet or circular form, and distribute as I have opportunity.

Fairfax County, Virginia,
March 20, 1851.
S.Trott

P.S. Brother Beebe, on reading over the third number of my experience in the *Signs*, I feel a desire to make a few additional remarks on one point. I mentioned that when faith was given me in Christ, it produced in me a deeper sense of my own vileness, and of the vileness of sin than I ever had felt before, &c. From my experience I have been led to think that the repentance which Christ is exalted as a Prince and a Saviour to give consists in that sorrow for sin in itself considered, and contrasted with God's love, which flows from faith in Christ, in distinction from that sense of just condemnation arising from the application of the law. I used to insist in preaching that genuine faith in Christ would be accompanied with this loathing of self and of sin, in distinction from that Camp-meeting kind of faith, in which the mind of the individual seems altogether engrossed with joy, and shouting. But finding so few mentioning this as connected with faith, I have thought it might be making my own experience too much of a test. Still finding that those who give their experience through the *Signs* mention nothing of this increased sorrow for sin flowing from their faith, the query has arisen in my mind, whether it is because they did not think it important to notice it, or whether their experience was not so; and that it was and still is, in every fresh manifestation, thus connected in my experience in consequence of my peculiar vileness; for I know that I am and have been the vilest of the vile. There are some ancient worthies with whose experience mine seems to have accorded, Job in particular. See Job 42:5 & 6. Isaiah and Daniel. Isa.6:5; Dan.10:8. On other hand, I know the declaration is, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting

life." The question therefore again arises: Whether this believing on the Son does, or does not, uniformly produce this self abasement and sorrow for sin? I would be pleased to hear, through the *Signs*, the minds of brethren on this point. Not to participate with them in any discussion on it. *From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.19 {1851}*

Union of Christ with the Church.

Brother Beebe: - Our brother Raymond was not mistaken in supposing that his ideas would not all be received, by the readers of the *Signs*. I think he labours under a mistake relative to that union which constitutes the oneness of Christ and His people, and probably relative to the idea intended to be conveyed when we speak of the substitution of Christ. I will propose for his consideration what appears to me to be the Scriptural doctrine of the union of Christ and His church.

Instead of that nominal union which many talk of, which is produced by the creature's believing - the Scriptures speak of a real *oneness*. "Both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are *all of one*," is the Scripture testimony {Heb.2:11} and so I believe. I cannot conceive how the spotless Lamb of God could be made to bleed, or bleeding, how His blood could, sanctify or cleanse from their sins any of the family of Adam unless such a union previously existed between Him and them as made their sins, of right, chargeable to Him; and His suffering of death and enduring of the curse, accounted as done by them. Instead of this union being founded in Christ's assumption of human nature; the Scriptures speak of His taking flesh and blood as a consequence of His relation to children who were partakers thereof. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; &c." What children? Those of whom Christ says, "Behold I and the children which God hath given me." See Heb.2:14,13.

Instead of this oneness being a union of feeling or views, the Scriptures speak of it as a *oneness of life*. Hear the Apostles; "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God, when Christ, who is your life shall appear &c." Col.3:3,4. This life which is one in the *Head* and in the *body*, was in the only begotten of the Father, from the beginning; for in *Him* was that *life* which is the *light of men*. John 1:4, compared with vs.14. Hence as it was said of Adam - Gen.5:1,2 - "In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made He him. Male and female created He them; and blessed them, and

called their name Adam, in the day when they were created;" so it must have been with Christ, when He was *set up from everlasting, from the beginning, and brought forth when there were no depths* {Prov.8:23,24}; He must have been brought forth a perfect Christ, head and body, He and His bride in Him. Hence His people were *chosen in Him*, {not into Him} *before the foundation of the world*; and they were *created in Christ Jesus unto good works* and as Christ - not as the essential Word, He is the *Beginning of the creation of God* {Eph.1:4; 2:10 & Rev.3:14}. Christ was thus another or second Adam, not of the *earth, earthy*, but the *Lord from heaven*; not a *living soul* merely, *but a quickening spirit*. I Cor.15:45,48. Again as Eve when produced from the original creation in Adam, was *bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh*; so the church in her quickened members, being born again, born of the Spirit, they are manifested as members of Christ's body; and are *of His flesh and of His bones*, spiritually. See Gen.2:23 & Eph.5:30. Thus Adam both as a *husband* and a *head was a figure of Him that was to come*.

As is the distinction between the two *Heads* - the *first man* and the *second man*, so is the distinction between the two lives brought forth severally in the distinct heads; consequently, so is the distinction between the bonds of union by which each Head is united with its body and members. The one bond is earthly, the other is spiritual; the one commenced in time and is dissolved in time, the other commenced in eternity, and therefore unchanged by time, will be eternal.

The one head, Adam, being created under the law, and his posterity in him, they as *servants* are driven by the terrors of the Law. The other Head, Christ, as the Son of the Father, was set up and His posterity in Him, under the everlasting covenant, that is ordered in all things and sure, they are therefore as sons loved with an *everlasting love*, and with *loving kindness are they drawn*. Again, as the members of Adam's family, or of the creation in him, are made manifest as such by being born after the flesh; so the members of Christ's body can be manifested only by *being born again* of the Spirit. They are by this brought into personal existence as new creations and are now personified by their new life. Hence says Christ speaking of His disciples, "They are not of the world even as I am not of the world." John 17:16; and says Paul, "Now if I do that, I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." Rom.7:20. See also I John 3:9 & 5:18.

As the posterity of Adam came into existence under the curse of the law as having been in him when he fell; so the posterity of Christ in their new birth, are born into the

blessings of the new Covenant, as well as those exceeding great and precious promises given them in Christ as that full provision for their deliverance from under the law; therefore they *receive not the spirit of bondage again to fear, but they receive the spirit of adoption whereby they cry, Abba, Father.* Thus much in relation to the union of Christ's people with Him.

I will now briefly notice this union with Adam, &c. Whilst they were thus set up in Christ, and as such loved with an everlasting love, it was the pleasure of the Father that they should be partakers of *flesh and blood*, and therefore as rational creatures they were created in a natural head, Adam, and under the law; were in common with all his posterity, left to fall in him, and became subject to the curse of the law. While they were thus a part of the same fallen family of Adam involved in the same condemnation, they by the eternal purpose of God were distinguished from the rest of the human family - and were *from the beginning chosen unto salvation; and predestinated unto the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ*, and were given to Christ as His portion, as it is written: *the Lord's portion is His people, Jacob is the lot of His inheritance.* It was also necessary in order to their being brought into liberty as sons and receive the spirit of adoption, that they should be redeemed from under the law and also to be slain by it, that their union to it might be dissolved. For all this provision was made in the everlasting Covenant and the accomplishment thereof assigned to the Son and to the Holy Spirit in their respective offices. Their redemption could alone be accomplished by one who could fulfill the demands of the law and make it honorable in their behalf, and consequently alone by one who could be acknowledged by Divine Justice as standing in their law place. Christ being their Brother, their Head, their Husband in the everlasting Covenant, and in relation to the life therein set up, the right of redemption belonged to Him, and being not Himself under the law, He could take their law place and obey in their behalf, and be so accepted by Divine justice.

One leading idea more, relative to this subject I wish distinctly noticed, namely: that it was not as the children of Christ, but as the children of Adam that the elect were subject to the law, had sinned against it, &c. It was then as the children of Adam alone, that they needed deliverance from the curse of the law, justification from its demands and a dissolution of their relation to it.

If our Brother Raymond would duly reflect on the different relations the elect sustain to the distinct Heads, he would I think abandon the stand he took in his letter published

in the 9th number of the *Signs*. He speaks of substitution as involving a separation between Christ and His people. Do not the Scriptures teach a manifest separation in this respect? Was Christ created with His people in Adam? If so He is but a creature and a branch of a fallen stock. Or was He as the Head of His people set up under the law? If so the inheritance coming through Him is but earthly and must fail. On the other hand, Christ being the elder Brother of His people in the everlasting Covenant, it was His province to interpose Himself as their Redeemer that the law might not remain a barrier to their being put in possession of the inheritance bequeathed in the better Testament. Hence it is said, *He was made sin*, or rather, *a sin offering, for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him - and being made a curse for us*. II Cor.5:21 & Gal.3:13. If I know anything of the use of words the doctrine of these texts is the doctrine of substitution; and the word *for* is used, in them, in the sense of *instead of*. *He being made a curse for us*; for what purpose? *To deliver us from the curse of the law*. Did He not then endure that curse which He would deliver His people from? And would they not have suffered the curse, if He had not borne it? What is this, but His bearing it in their *stead*? And what can that be, but substitution? Again, we are told that Christ *laid down His life for the sheep*. Now if He did not lay down His life in the place of the sheep, how will we find an atonement in the death of Christ? And how will we find a ransom in it? If He laid down His life for us in any other sense than as suffering that punishment which was due to our transgressions then there was no ransom price in the death of Christ; for a ransom is an equivalent rendered for the demand against those to be ransomed, and consequently involves substitution.

Brother Raymond challenges proof from the Scriptures, that God's children were ever *appointed unto wrath*. That God's children were as the children of Adam, under the curse of the law, and *children of wrath, even as others*, we are prepared to prove from the Scriptures of Truth. But there was no need of God's appointing any man, save the man Christ Jesus, unto wrath; for left to themselves the wrath of God would assuredly *abide upon them*. See John 3:36.

Brother R. seems throughout his letter, if I understand him, to suppose that the children of God were never viewed in any other relation, than in their relation to Christ. If this were true I would venture to say that God never viewed them as sinners; for they never sinned in Christ, nor with that life which they derived from Christ as a Head.

Once more; He remarks that it is a day full of

substitutions, I grant it. But to me there is a very important difference between men's presuming to substitute human systems instead of God's revealed truth, human ceremonies, instead of God's ordinances, and human schemes instead of that order and plan which God has established in His word; I say there is a great difference between this substitution of men, and God's substituting His Son as a ransom for those who had been given Him. And those who are the fondest of these human substitutions, are the ones who by their substituted systems, do away the substitution of Christ in the law place of His people. Most of these new substitutions are the offspring of *Fullerism* and its twin sister *Hopkinsianism*, and both of these systems virtually, if not formally, deny the proper substitution of Christ.

Brother Raymond will of course act his own pleasure in writing again on this subject. But I hope if he does, he will be led to take a stand in support of the doctrine which is according to godliness. And I hesitate not to say that if he is what I hope he is, one taught of the Lord, he would never have found peace for his *burdened soul* had he not by faith discovered the Lord Jesus as having been as completely substituted in his law place as was the *ram caught in the thicket*, in the place of Issac. He will then write in union with the doctrine which the *Signs* are pledged to support.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, May 13, 1833.

S. Trott.

From: *SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.1 {1833}*

Origin of Satan.

Brother Littell: - In giving my views on the subjects of these queries which you propose, I will commence with the one relating to the origin of Satan the *prince of the power of the air*.

Much of our conclusions on this subject I admit must be inferential, the Scriptures giving us no detailed accounts thereof; they however contain certain premises in the case, and if our conclusions be such as naturally arise from these, they will I presume be the best we can arrive at, in our present state of *knowing but in part*.

In reference then to the subject before us: First. I conclude that Satan is not a *self-existent* being; for if he were the name Jehovah, which signifies *self-existence* would as

much belong to him as to God. But the Psalmist speaking of God, says, "that men may know that thou whose name alone is *Jehovah*, art the *Most High*, over all the earth." Psalms 83:18. By reading this Psalm through you will see that the Psalmist calls upon God to consume those who had combined together to destroy the people and worship of God, that men might know, that He is the *Most High*, &c. But if Satan be self-existent, he would be as high as God; for he who can exist of himself, can exist as he pleases, and therefore be all powerful. If then Satan be not self-existent, he is a creature; and being a creature, then as such, he is the production of the Word, who is God, for "all things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made." John 1:3.

Secondly. I conclude that he was not in his original creation, made a Devil. 1. Because a pure fountain cannot send forth a corrupt stream, however much the stream may afterwards become corrupted; and God is *purity* itself. God can command light to shine out of darkness, because He can speak light into existence where it before was not; but I cannot conceive of darkness proceeding from light or being produced by it, and "God is light and in Him is no darkness at all." John 1:5.

Again, if I understand the character of Satan as given in the Scriptures, he is a wicked and perverse spirit; is *reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day*, and is ultimately to be *cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and false Prophet are* &c. {Jude 6 & Rev.20:10,} from which I understand that he is a subject of condemnation and punishment. But I cannot conceive of God's punishing a creature for having never swerved from the law of His creation; and if God created the Devil a devil, that is communicated to him the disposition as well as the faculties of a devil, devilishness must be the *law of His creation*. And surely none can accuse him of being unfaithful in acting the part of a devil. I must therefore believe that he came originally from the hand of His Creator, a pure and upright spirit, bearing the impress of workmanship of a pure and Holy God, and that he was severed from that state in which he was created, and is now in disposition and practice a transgressor of the law of his creation. But I have no idea that God ever did or could create a being that would independently retain his own standing of uprightness and purity. And as we know that God saw fit to leave man in his *own creature weakness* to come into contact with temptation, and thus to fall from his original state of uprightness, to give a complete demonstration of the fact that man must of necessity be entirely dependent on God for

everything in him that is good, &c.; may we not by analogy conclude that God saw it equally fit to leave some of those pure spirits which He had created, to try their strength in acting independently of Him, and of consequence to act sin, and as a just reward for their temerity in thus departing from God to *reserve them in everlasting darkness*, &c., that those angels who are kept in their original standing, may be kept humble and sensible of their entire dependence on God for all that they are, by having thus before them the consequence of aiming at independency of God in case of perhaps, some of the higher order of created intelligencies. Yea is this all conjecture? Do not the Scriptures give us some intimation of this as a fact? In I Tim.5:21, we read of the *elect angels*. Election you know necessarily implies that there were those of the same general class who were not elected, but left. Again in Jude 6, we read of *angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation*, and the connection I think warrants us in the belief that they have not changed for the better. The marginal reading of the text is, *which kept not their principality*. Some I believe have supposed that the angels in these two passages meant pastors of churches. It is true that this term is used for Pastors in some passages of Scripture; but it is equally true, that the ordinary acceptation of the term as used in the Bible, is that of certain created spiritual existences, to us invisible, and I for one think it safest to allow to the words of Scripture their ordinary acceptation as used in the sacred volume, unless there is something in the connection that requires or justifies our giving them a different rendering; and the connection of both of these passages seem to me, rather to fix the meaning of these terms to their general application than otherwise, there being in both cases a climax in the writers appeals, that would be marred in their beautiful and regular gradation, were the term under consideration to receive a different application. These are my views of this subject; others may look at it with other and it may be better eyes than mine, but I feel confident that they can bring no clearer passages of Scripture to support their different views, touching this subject.

Once more; do you ask what was the occasion on which the Devil's first departed from an upright course of obedience to their Creator? I answer, I have noticed two circumstances recorded in the Scriptures, either of which might be a fit occasion to fire the pride of those exalted spirits if left to creature weakness. The one is mentioned in Heb.1:6 - "When He bringeth in the first begotten into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him." The other is in the 14th verse of the same chapter - "Are they not all ministering spirits

sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." The former of these, I think more probably the particular occasion on which these angels rebelled. That is, that when the purpose of God was first declared to the *Morning Stars* and *Sons of God* which are spoken of, Job 38:7, for the Son to be *made flesh* &c., for He was *a lamb slain from the foundation of the world*, that then those angels who were left to themselves revolted, and that Satan immediately conceived of the plan of corrupting the woman from her uprightness, thereby thinking so to corrupt the fountain of human nature as to frustrate the purpose of God, to manifest His Son in flesh, and by this very means Satan's enmity was overruled so as to be instrumental in bringing in the occasion of Christ's being manifest in the flesh. And thus it was, that from the very *beginning* of the development of God's purpose concerning salvation, the *Devil was a murderer*.

My views concerning the *two seeds* I reserve for another letter and for the present. I subscribe myself yours to serve in the Gospel.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, June 7th, 1833.

S. Trott.

From: *SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol. 1 {1833}*

Views on the Seed of the Serpent.

Brother Littell: - I will now in answer to your other inquiry, attempt to give my views relative to the seed of the Serpent. I shall simply state my views and my reasons for them. I understand then the seed of the Serpent not to have reference to men as men, nor as sinners simply considered, but altogether to men as religionists.

My reasons for this view of the subject are as follows: 1. I understand Christ, in saying to some "Ye are of your Father the Devil," as speaking in reference to their great pretensions to religion, and as a contrast to their claiming to be of God. And in the same connection He gives us a sketch by which to draw the line of distinction between the seed of Christ and the seed of the Serpent. Satan is represented as a *murderer or liar*, and the *father of lies*, John 8:44. Christ is the *truth* and the *life*, John 14:6. As is Satan so are His seed, bearing his image; Christ's seed are manifested through *the belief of the truth*, II Thes.2:13. Satan's by being given up to *believe a lie*, same chap., verse 11. Christ's seed are known by being gentle

and inoffensive like sheep. Satan's by possessing a persecuting spirit like wolves, however much they may wrap themselves in *sheeps clothing*.

2. He whom Paul calls a *child of the Devil*, Acts 13:10, was manifested as such, not by not attending to the *right ways of the Lord*, but by *perverting* them. So at this day the children of the Devil are known by perverting the truth and order of the Gospel.

Thus Satan's ministers are manifested in the transforming themselves into the *Apostles of Christ*, as though they had authority to set things in order in the churches. II Cor.11:13. An account of one of Satan's ministers and of his doctrine we have in the case of the damsel who annoyed Paul & Silas, at Philippi, Acts 16:16-18. It is true this was a female, but Satan sometimes employs such even at this day. The doctrine is worthy of particular notice: "These men are the servants of the Most High God, which *shew unto us the way of salvation*." Strange how many disciples this *witch* has, at this day, even among the Baptists; who like their leader are preaching that the ministers are the *mighty ones* who can *shew unto the people the way of salvation*. Whoever may preach this doctrine, we can have no hesitancy, with this *waymark* before us, in pronouncing it to be from the spirit of witchcraft. Paul preached Christ unto the people, but he never pretended to show *them the way*, that is, make them see the way of salvation, that he knew none less than the Holy Ghost could do. He was therefore grieved that any should say it of him.

3. Another reason for my views relative to the seed of the Serpent, is drawn from the parable of the wheat and the tares, as explained by the Master Himself in Mt.13:24-30 & 36-43. In this parable we have the seed of the Serpent as the *children of the wicked one contrasted with the seed of Christ as the children of the Kingdom*. Two things relative to this parable are worthy of notice. First, it is not the creation of the world, that is likened to the incidents of the parable, but the *kingdom of Heaven*, therefore it has reference to events connected with the Gospel dispensation. Hence this parable affords no support to our Brother Parker's *two-seed system*. Second, the *field is the world* - not the church. The doctrine therefore, "Let them both grow together" has no reference to the exercise of church discipline, but has reference to the Spirit of the Gospel as not countenancing persecution.

In this parable as in the other instances I have noticed, the seed of the Serpent is contrasted with the good seed of the Son of man. It is an illustration of the fact that wherever Christ

sows His seed, that is; sends His gospel, plants His churches, and calls out His people, there Satan will have his mock-gospels, mock-churches, and mock-professors.

4. Another reason for my views, as laid down at the commencement of this Letter, I find in what is said concerning the two seeds, Gen.3:15, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed." I understand from this declaration that there would be a continued, fixed enmity between these two interests in the world. But there certainly has never been any such enmity manifested between the *elect* and *non-elect* as such; nor between the gospel and the church of Christ, and sinners as such. Hence this does not support the *two seed* system of the West. I know well that there is a law enmity against the sinner, that is, the law condemns him, and that the *carnal mind*, both in the elect and non-elect is *enmity against God, not subject to the Law*, &c. But the text under consideration has reference to Christ; not to the law. The song of the angels, "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will toward men," I consider as expressive in the clearest and fullest sense of the design of the coming of Christ into the world and of the tendency of the Gospel. And the Gospel tends not to communicate to its true ministers nor to any who receive it, anything like enmity towards sinners or carnal men as such, but on the contrary, it produces more tenderness, towards them, and a greater desire for their real happiness. Neither do carnal persons while inattentive to religion, manifest any enmity to the Gospel or to christians. They have no relish for the Gospel. Like Gallio, they care for none of those things, therefore like him they will have no hand in persecuting the followers of Jesus for their religion.

But let one of these Gallios' become converted into any of the systems of men and he is at once enlisted into the ranks of Satan, and will soon begin to manifest his enmity against that Gospel which proclaims *Glory to God in the highest*, and against those who preach it. We have an illustration of my views upon this subject, in the case of Cain and Abel. These brothers lived peaceably together, so far as we know, till Cain became a religionist of his own contriving, then because Abel brought an offering, not of human contrivance, but *in faith*, and was therefore accepted, the enmity of Cain's heart burst forth against him and against God. Indeed, we see numerous illustrations around us, in the cases of the modern converts of the *mourners bench* and of the *Altars* &c. It is by means of conversions to the various religious schemes which Satan has set afloat through the instrumentality of his ministers, that he

has from age to age kept up his army for waging war against the church of Christ. And he is now mustering all the forces, that the *election of grace* will allow of his collecting, for the purpose of making one more desperate attempt to bury the walls and city of Zion by assault. He will succeed in killing the *watchmen on the walls*, the true *witnesses*. But Zion's foundation is sufficiently strong to withstand the assault, and the result will be, that his army will be overwhelmed and become the subjects of their own destruction.

On the other hand, although there is no malice on the side of the Gospel, yet it inculcates upon its followers a firm and manly stand in opposition to the assaults and intrigues of the enemy and his forces. Christ says concerning the *tares*, *He shall send forth His angels and shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity and shall cast them into a furnace of fire*, &c. We hear the Angel proclaiming that "If any man worship the Beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God which is poured out without mixture, &c." Rev.14:9,11. Paul says, "though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Gal.1:8. John also says, "If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed." II John, verse 10 & 11. Again, the Apostle to the Gentiles exhorts his Ephesian brethren in these words, "Finally my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil &c." Eph.6:11-17.

Indeed, I cannot conceive how a person can be brought experimentally to know and love the truth as it is in Jesus, and not so feel his heart bound to that truth, that the setting up of anything in opposition to that truth would be like rending his own soul. There is in this truth as it is known and felt by the believers everything to enlist all the better feelings of the soul. The glory of the three-one God is involved in it. The sovereignty, glory, wisdom, love and mercy of the Father; the love, faithfulness and power of the Son, and the efficacy and completion of His work, and sovereignty, faithfulness and divine energies of the Holy Ghost are all so contained therein, and connected with the truth of the gospel, that there has never been a system of doctrine contrived by men, but what has struck directly at one or more of these divine attributes. Again, the believer knows that the whole Godhead as is known as Father, Word and Holy Ghost, is necessary to secure the salvation of a sinner; hence as any of the divine attributes are

left out or thrown into the background, by any system introduced, he must feel that the foundation of his hope and comfort is struck at; and at the same time he knows that as such system is received into a confidence in that which will leave them to perish at last; and knowing all this; can the christian refrain from manifesting his abhorrence of such a system, and his opposition to it? That christian must be under the influence of a most dastardly spirit, who can turn from such divine glory and excellency as is in the *truth as it is in Jesus*, or who can approbate or even wink at any attempts to deface it, and that from the mean desire of thereby securing a little worldly ease, and worldly applause. Yet there are those, known to some of us, especially in some of our larger cities, who are very Davids in the pulpit, wielding the *sword of the Spirit* manfully, in cutting down error and in defending the truth of the Gospel that *salvation is of the Lord*, but who, when out of the pulpit, are lending their names and influence to sanction and help on this, and the other scheme of human contrivance, for saving those, whom, as they represent it, the Lord would otherwise leave to perish.

Thus we see, there is a constituted separation between truth and error in religion, and between the lovers of truth and lovers of error. On the above and like reasons, I rest my views relative to the *Seed of the Serpent*.

Now, my brethren, you who have received the love of the truth, let me address a few remarks to you upon this subject. God we see has put enmity between the *woman's seed and the seed of the Serpent*. Where God has put enmity have we any right to make peace? And when God has called us to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ; and to take the whole armour of God, that we may be able to withstand in the evil day; and having done all to stand, what right have we to sneak cowardly away, and leave the enemy to pursue unmolested their devastations of the divine system of truth and to plant their systems in its place? There are many excuses made for such a course; but will they stand? Look at Israel. God put enmity between them and the nations around them, but they were repeatedly making peace, forming alliances and intermixing with those nations. The consequence of every such departure from the direction of God, was, the introduction of idolatrous principles and worship into the Land. So spiritual Israel has ever been found to form alliances with the seed of the Serpent; and thereby worldly professors, worldly principles and practices have been introduced into the church of Christ. It has now got to that pitch of intermixture of the *two seeds*, that we need an Ezra and a Nehemiah again to

arise and make a separation. See Ezra chapters 9 & 10; Neh.13:1-9 & 23-30. Brethren, let us take the New Testament for our Ezra, and by its directions, arise and make the required division, separating ourselves from every system, scheme and dvice of Ashdod and Moab. Let us erect the standard of truth over our camp, that we may be distinctly known, even the word of truth as we have been experimentally taught it. I know that great exertions are being put forth to drown all confessions of faith, by those who are afraid to have their principles see the *light*.

I am surprised that any *Lover of the word* should join them in the attempt. Let them succeed; and we shall see Unitarians, and Trinitarians, Universalists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, &c. &c., all united in one mingled mass in *battle array* against the truth. Let us separate ourselves from the whole *mixed multitude*. Declarations of faith, I know have been abused, such abuses we would do well to put down. For instances, the *name*, "Philadelphia Confession of Faith," the principles being overlooked has been used as a *password*, or rather as a *flag of truce* under which the seed of the Serpent have been coming into the very camp of Zion, till in many instances they have the entire command of the *gateways*, admitting and excluding whom they please, and even of the *batteries*, so as to point the artillery against Zion herself. This *name* therefore I would willingly drop; but let us make an unequivocal declaration of what we believe to be the faith and practice taught in the word of God, as we have learned it in the school of Christ - the *Old Baptist School*, and instead of dropping this *declaration*, let us nail it, as the Sailors say, *nail it to the mast*, and rally round it in one solid body.

Brethren, let me entreat you to reflect on these things, and earnestly to enquire at the word of the Lord, after the course which belongs to you, as the Israel of God, to pursue. But amidst all our reflections, let us ever remember that the *weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty*, - not through human might, human wisdom, human stratagem, nor anything human - but *through God* to the pulling down of strongholds &c. And let us ever keep in mind what is written, *Vengeance is mine; I will repay saith the Lord*, and therefore not give way to any emotions of revenge. I subscribe myself yours, &c.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, June 25th, 1833.

S. Trott.

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The Absolute Predestination of all Things.

PART 1.

This sentiment as expressed in the Prospectus of the *Signs of the Times*, has called forth so much invective from some, and so much ridicule from others of the popular Baptists of this region that one would conclude some strange and absurd idea had been advanced; some whim daringly promulgated as a part of the *secret things* of God.

It therefore, may not be amiss, to re-examine the subject, and enquire whether it be a *revealed truth* of God, or a visionary notion of man, which is calling forth such malicious sneers from those who profess to be the servants of God.

Predestination is the same in meaning, with fore-ordination or fore-appointment; and is with God, one with pre-determination; for as God *declares*, so He determines, *the end from the beginning; saying my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure*. Thus the pre-determination of God, to admit sin into the world embraced in it the decreeing of the time, manner, result &c. of that event. And His pre-determination to bruise His Son in the place of sinners included in it the instruments, time, place and manner of His death. Compare Acts 2:23 and 4th, 25-28, and John 13:1, and Heb.13:11,12. The doctrine of predestination, then, is this, that God has so pre-determined every event, as to fix with such precision its limits and bounds, its causes and effects, that with Him it is divested of all contingency. This Brother Beebe, is the *monstrous doctrine*, which you engage to maintain, in your Paper, and which we Old Fashioned Baptists, some of us, profess to believe, and which is drawing down upon you and us the reproaches and contempt of all the *learned gentry* among the Baptists.

The term *absolute*, has been prefixed by yourself and others to the word predestination, to distinguish the doctrine you hold from the idea of a *conditional predestination*. Strictly speaking, however, this is an unnecessary appendage. A *conditional* predestination, is no predestination; for the predestination of an event conditionally, is but a pre-determination to leave the event *undetermined*, and therefore excludes predestination altogether.

Having thus briefly explained what we mean by predestination, I will proceed to show that it is a doctrine taught in the Scriptures. In relation to the salvation of the

Elect we have the doctrine of predestination expressed in direct terms, as in Rom.8:29,30 - "For whom He did foreknow, He also did *predestinate* to be conformed to the image of His Son &c. - Moreover whom He did *predestinate*, them He also called &c." And Eph.1:5 - "Having *predestinated* us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ &c." and verse 11 - "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." In these passages, we have not only the word predestination used in the translation, but in the original the Greek word employed is of a corresponding signification; being *Proorizo*, formed of *Pro* = *before*, and *Orizo* = *to bound, or limit, to determine, to define* &c., and is derived from the theme: *oros* = *a bound or limit, or the end of a thing*. Hence the literal signification of the word, used is: *a fixing before, the bound or limit, of a thing or event*.

If we look at the connection, we shall find the idea conveyed by the word, fully sustained by its use in these cases. In Rom.8:29 & 30 the whole of the Apostles argument in these and the following verses of this chapter are in support of the declaration he makes. Verse 28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." To this the inquiry might be made, How, Paul, can we know this? "For," or because, is the answer, "whom He did foreknow" that is as the objects of His *purpose* and *call*, "He did *predestinate* to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first born among many brethren." This did decree that they should be like Christ, should partake of His *image*; should as His brethren participate in that life that is in Him, in a justification from the demands of the law, in the Father's peculiar love and care, in the resurrection, and in that glory which the Father gave Him, &c. And this was no inefficient purpose, "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." Paul now retorts some inquiries to those who might doubt the assertion made in verse 28. He asks in verse 31, "What shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" Or more emphatically, "*who against us,*" that is, who is it that is against us? He goes on to confirm his position by a series of inquires in which he shows that the predestination of God is firm against all the assaults of tribulation or distress, &c., and against death and life, and angels and principalities, and powers, and things present, and things to come, and height and depth, &c. Thus we see that the predestination of God in this case not only secures the

leading purpose that the elect shall be conformed to the glorious image of His Son, but also fixes the limits, and determines the end of all things which transpire in relation to them.

Again, if we refer to the use of the word in Ephesians we shall find that the *predestination* and the *determination* or *purpose* of God go together. Thus Chapter 1, verses 4-6, "According as He hath chosen us in Him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: Having predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, to Himself according to the good pleasure of His will. To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved." Predestination is here represented to be according to the *good pleasure of His will*, and is a decreeing of the objects of His choice unto the adoption of children by Christ Jesus, before the foundation of the world; but determines at that early period their *being accepted in the Beloved*; and of course decides with certainty their repenting, believing, and being sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise; things necessarily embraced in their experimental acceptance in Christ. Again, in verse 11 the Apostle speaks of having obtained an inheritance as the result of that predestination of God which is according to the purpose of Him *who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will*. Here then we have in these and the connecting verses every part of salvation brought to view as the predestination of God. For He *worketh all things*, not according to the caprice of fallen men, nor according to any fortuitous circumstances which may transpire, but *according to the counsel of His own will*. If then it is a fact, as the Apostle declares, that God worketh all things after the counsel of His own will; then does the counsel of God's own will not only determine with certainty all the parts of salvation and fix the whole chosen race, *blameless before Him in love* in the possession of their inheritance, as *heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ*, but also decrees the result of all events according to His good pleasure.

If all persons with whom we have to do were disposed, cheerfully, to submit to the decision of Divine Revelation, there would be but one question more to decide in order to determine whether all *things*, absolutely, or things in a limited sense, are predestinated, or worked according to the decision of the counsel of God's own will, and that question is: How far does the government of God extend? If His government extends universally over matter and mind, then there is no movement either of matter or mind but what God *works after the counsel of His own will*, or determines the result thereof

according to the *good pleasure of His will*. King Nebuchadnezzar evidently thought that God's Dominion was universal over Heaven and earth for he said of Him, "He doeth according to His will in the army of Heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, what doest thou?" Dan.4:35. And the king was certainly correct in this, for Christ assured His Disciples in Matthew 28:18, that *all power was given to Him in Heaven and in earth*; that is, as Mediator. If so, God had it in His own hands to give. Again, Christ says in John 17:2 - "As thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as thou has given Him." Hence, His power is over the wicked as well as over those to whom He *gives eternal life*; and it being *all power*, it must extend to both matter and mind, as there can be no disposing influence, or power, besides, and therefore, the devices both of men and devils, as well as their actions, must be under His control.

Still, however many persons are unwilling to believe that the predestination of God has anything to do with the wicked actions of men or devils. They, in order to be consistent with themselves, ought to believe that wickedness is under the control of an opposite power, and that God exercises no control over wicked actions or thoughts, to limit their extent, or to overrule their results in accordance with His purposes; lest thereby He should be charged with being the author of sin.

I think, however, I shall be able to bring from the Scriptures of truth several facts which go to prove that the predestination of God determines the results, fixes the limits and so controls the actions and devices of wicked men and devils, so as to cause them to terminate in the furtherance of His own glorious purposes.

But as I wish not to be tedious, I will leave the further consideration of this subject for another number.

PART 2.

Brother Beebe: I proposed at the conclusion of the preceding number to show from the Scriptures of truth that the predestination of God extends to the wicked actions of men, that is, that God decreed or predestinated every wicked act, which He permits man to perform, so that man does not act out any part of the enmity or corruption of his heart further than God has predestinated to permit Him, and so that every act, however vile, has its allotted place in the government of God, and accomplishes the very purpose for which it was

designed in the eternal council. The first proof I shall bring in support of this position is the declaration of the Apostle, relative to the crucifixion of Christ as recorded in Acts 2:23, "Him being delivered by the determinate council and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." I know there are those who say that the event accomplished by the death of Christ was so glorious and of so great magnitude as to justify the making use of wicked men or predestinating their acts relative to it. But this is measuring the mind of God by our little contracted views. We are apt to be so dazzled by splendid events as to overlook the means by which the event may have been accomplished; whereas if the event had been less splendid, we should have condemned those means. But let us beware of attaching such imperfections to God. As great as was the benefit accomplished by the death of Christ, it did not lead God to overlook the perpetrators of the act. Judas received his marked punishment, and went to his own place, and the Jews are to this day receiving the punishment of their crime, as denounced upon them by Moses in Deut.28. As great as was this event, there were many circumstances connected with it which were done with *wicked hands* and yet were foretold of God, and of course, had been determined. He *was delivered up*, that is, to be slain, *by the determinate council and foreknowledge of God*. Jesus says of His life, "No man taketh it from me but I lay it down of myself." John 10:18. Yet, in this laying down of His life was involved the wicked act of Judas in betraying Him to the Jews, of the Jews in delivering Him to Pilate, of Pilate sending Him to Herod, and His being sent back, and of Pilate's delivering Him up to be crucified though *he found no fault in Him*. Judas' act was evidently predestinated; for Christ said to His Disciples, "One of you shall betray me," and when asked of John who it was, He designated Judas by a sign; "And after the sop Satan entered into him," John 13:21-27. And even farther back than this, it was designated, compare Acts 1:15-20 with Psalms 41:9, and 109:8. Thus also Herod and Pilate's combining to deliver up Christ as also the Jews and Gentiles being united in that act was predestinated of God. See Acts 4:25-28, compared with Psa.2:1,2. The circumstance of the Jews wagging their heads at Him and mocking Him, &c., their parting His garments among them were prophesied of. See Psalms 22:7, 8-18; and that these circumstances were not foretold upon the mere ground of God's foreknowing that they would do these things. See the circumstance of their giving Christ gall mingled with vinegar as prophesied of in Psalms 69:21, and the fulfillment as recorded

in John 19:28-30; from which it is manifest that the prediction governed the event, hence that the prediction might be fulfilled, Jesus says, "I thirst." Indeed it is altogether idle to attempt to separate the foreknowledge of God from His predestination; for How could God foreknow that certain persons would give to Christ vinegar and gall unless He had predestinated to bring those very persons into existence, to preserve them alive to that time, to give them health and strength sufficient to attend on the crucifixion, to leave them to the enmity of their hearts, and to give them the occasion to act out this enmity by Christ's saying, *I thirst*, and then suffer them to offer that insult? So of every event fore-known to God. If God then fore-knows all things, all the circumstances necessary to bring those all things to pass must have been predestinated of God. It is said by the Apostle relative to what Herod and Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, did to Christ, that they did "whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Acts 4:27,28.

Another proof in support of the doctrine that the wicked actions of men are predestinated of God is found in Isaiah 10:5,6 - "O Assyrian; the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation, I will send him against an hypocritical nation and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets." Here God in the clearest manner declares what use He will make of the Assyrian. Can any say that He did not predestinate the Assyrians taking the prey, &c.? Yet, these were acts of violence and cruelty in the Assyrians as is manifest from the connection, verse 7, "Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so, but it is in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few." And verse 12, "Wherefore it shall come to pass that when the Lord hath performed His whole work upon Mount Zion and on Jerusalem I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the King of Assyria and the glory of his high looks." In perfect accordance with what God says of the Assyrians relative to their ambitions, murderous course, that they are the *rod* of His anger. The Psalmist in praying to be delivered from the wicked that opposed him, and from his deadly enemies, says, "Deliver my soul from the wicked which is *Thy sword*, from men which are Thy hand, O Lord, &c." Psalms 17:9-13,14. Can the wicked thus be God's *sword* and God's *hand*, and He not determine and govern their acts. And if their acts were fore-known to God, did He not *predetermine* or *predestinate* those acts? Hence it is said in Proverbs 16:4, "The Lord hath made all things for Himself, yea even the

wicked for the day of evil." Some may suppose that by *the day of evil*, for which the wicked are *made*, we are to understand their own destruction. But such is not the faith of the Old School Baptists. They do not believe that God in bringing the wicked into existence had no higher object in view than their destruction. By the *day of evil*, we understand, the day in which God brings evil upon His people or upon others. It has pleased God to bring His church and people *through great tribulations*; from whence are their tribulations to arise but from the persecutions of the wicked? God will give those blood to drink who have shed the blood of saints and prophets; by whom will He do it? Not by the righteous. He has made the wicked for *this day of evil*; and so has He prepared instruments for every evil day. Thus says the Psalmist, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain," Ps.76:10. What is this but a predestination, that limits and bounds even the wrath of man, letting it go just so far as to accomplish the purpose of God, and no further?

If the above is not sufficient to establish the fact that God predestinates the evil acts of men, we have additional proof from the history of Joseph and his brethren. Joseph says to his brethren, "Be not grieved nor angry with yourselves that ye sold me hither, for God did send me before you to preserve life;" and again, "God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So it was not you that sent me hither, but God." Gen.45:5-7,8. And in Gen.50:20, "But as for you, ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass as it is this day, to save much people alive." Thus we see that whilst Joseph's brethren thought evil against him and wickedly devised means to put him out of the way, in order to disappoint his dreams, God had determined that this very wickedness of theirs should be the means of bringing about the fulfillment of those dreams, and to terminate in His and their good. So also He employed the wickedness of Potiphar's wife, to bring about the ultimate exaltation of Joseph, and consequently to fulfill the purpose for which God sent him into Egypt. So full was Joseph in the belief of the predestination of God in that thing from the manifestation he had received that he said plainly to his brethren: *It was not you that sent me hither, but God*. And as full proof that this affair was determined on before-hand, or predestinated of God, we have not only the thing revealed to Joseph in dreams, but the dwelling of Israel in Egypt and the length of time they should be there was foretold to Abraham. See Gen.15:13-16.

These several proofs which I have brought forward are not to be considered as so many peculiar instances in which God's government is exerted over the wicked actions of men; but rather as special illustrations of the *universal government* of God. They show how *surely He will cause the wrath of man to praise Him, and the remainder of wrath He will restrain*. Ps.76:10. The soldiers must not break the legs of Jesus though so commanded, but they pierce His side that the Scripture might be fulfilled; that is, that the foretold purpose of God should stand. See John 19:31-37. So Joseph's brethren could neither kill him, nor leave him to perish in the pit, nor could Reuben deliver him; but the company of Ishmaelites must needs come along at that juncture of time and they sell him to be carried down into Egypt. These several instances which are thus particularly recorded of God's making the wickedness of men and devils subserve His purpose, are sure pledges that in spite of the combined malice and rage of both, He will roll on His gracious purposes, accomplish all His promises, and fulfill every prophecy. He that could make the enmity of Joseph's brethren, and desire of gain in the Ishmaelities, the wickedness of Potipher's wife and the ingratitude of Pharoah's steward all combine to accomplish the exaltation of Joseph and the purpose God had in view, will while He causes judgment to begin at the house of God, surely accomplish at the appointed time, the complete destruction of the *man of sin*, in all his branches.

And dear child of grace, however much men may revile you and hate you, or Satan may *desire to have you*, you have a sure pledge both from the declaration of God, and from what you have seen of His overruling providence that *all things work for your good*, as they did for the good of Joseph when taken from his father, and for the good of David when hunted as a partridge upon the mountains. For as it is said in Prov.16:9, "Man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps." In the next number I purpose noticing some of the objections brought against this doctrine.

PART 3.

Brother Beebe: - I will now notice some of the objections, which are made to the doctrine under consideration.

The objection most frequently made is that this doctrine represents God as the author of sin. Most of those who make this objection will allow that God governs the world and that no event takes place but by His permission. Where is the

difference between them and us? It appears to be something like this. We believe that God *worketh all things after the counsel of His own will*, that He has a wise design in every event which He either permitteth or causeth to take place, that each event and all the transactions of men, even the vilest, are as so many links in the great chain of that providence by which the eternal purposes of God are connected together, and drawn on to their ultimate and glorious consummation; that from eternity God drew the wondrous plan of His government, saw through the operations and bearings of every event, and assigned to each its place and use in the dispensation of His providence, His justice, or His grace. They, if I can comprehend their views, believe that God has not beforehand determined the wicked actions of men, that merely as a spectator He suffers the wicked to go on according to their own wills. Of course, if God has had no previous determination relative to their acts, He can have no design in permitting them unless it be simply the general design of leaving those persons to aggravate their condemnation. Now it would seem to me that if either of these systems makes God the author of sin it is the latter, for it makes God to be, in a most wanton manner, accessory to the vices of men. But why is such a system preferred? Surely, only because it takes the government from God and gives it to the will of man.

But says one in the case of an assassin's way-laying a man and murdering him, it would be horrid to suppose that God had predestinated this barbarous act. Where is the preacher who talks thus, if called to preach on this funeral occasion, that would tell the afflicted relatives that God had nothing to do with this affair, and therefore instead of exhorting them to eye the hand of God in it, and to be submissive to His will, would direct them to regard only the hand of the assassin? And yet he ought thus to tell them to be consistent.

The Master said to His disciples, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing, and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father? But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." Mt.10:29-31. Christ had been telling them not to fear them that kill the body, &c., in reference to persecutors, and then brings in the case of the sparrows. Would not the disciples naturally be led to think of the sparrows as exposed to the ravages of birds of prey? And when thus assured that the hawks could not seize their prey but by the will of God they would feel such confidence in the care of their heavenly Father, as to believe that their bloody

persecutors could not take their lives until His gracious purpose was accomplished, and He for wise purposes saw fit to suffer them to be put to death.

If God thus taketh care for sparrows, can it be supposed that any human being will be left to fall by the hand of an assassin without our heavenly Father? If any can find comfort in believing that men's lives are thus left to the sport of chance, I envy them not that comfort.

Let us take another view of this subject. I think it more consistent with what God has revealed of His universal government to suppose that the days of this murdered man were numbered, that the designs of God in His existence on earth were accomplished, and the period had arrived for his being taken from it; and that God had determined to leave him who was the assassin thus to manifest the enmity and depravity of his heart, to be a warning to others, and to receive that open punishment which his depraved principles merited. Also that such afflictions as attended this affair God had seen fit to appoint unto the relatives, if not to result in their good, yet for wise and good purposes.

I do not see that this view of the subject any more makes God the author of sin than any other system would short of that of the Magi which supposed the existence of two gods, the one good and the other evil. Not any more than the Lord's having appointed to Peter the death by which he should glorify God made Him the author of the sin of his persecutors. See John 21:18-19.

But to give, if possible, a clearer illustration of this subject, I will offer a few remarks on the text, Luke 13:4-5, "Or those eighteen upon whom the tower of Siloam fell and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." I have said in a former number there is no movement either of matter or mind but what has been so fixed by the counsel of God to work for His glory. In the text above quoted I think there is an illustration of this fact. In the case of the eighteen being slain by the fall of the tower of Siloam, are the following circumstances to be noticed.

First, the passage gives no statement of the special cause which produced the fall of the tower; neither is there any intimation that it was occasioned by anything miraculous. The whole account appears clearly to imply that it was what would be termed at this day a mere casual event. Second, the Jews having been taught by their *lively oracles*, to acknowledge the hand of God in every event, considered this a special visitation of God upon those who were slain and

accounted for it by supposing that they were sinners above others. This latter idea the Master evidently designed to correct and to impress upon the minds of His audience that they were sinners equally with those *eighteen*, and like them, exposed to the judgments of God, unless they repented with that repentance which their law required of them as national Israelites.

Whilst we are left ignorant of the direct cause of the tower's falling, whether it was carelessness in building, negligence in repairing, the wear of time, or some other circumstances, the fact is evident that the materials of which it was built, having been undermined or in some other way removed from their proper balance one upon another, fell by the regular operation of the law of gravitation, and in their fall killed eighteen persons. Can any be so hardened in opposition to the sovereignty of God as to contend that He by whom alone the sparrow falls, had no hand in the death of these persons? Yea, is it not manifest from the improvement which the Saviour made of the event that it was designed as a warning to the inhabitants of Jerusalem of the impending judgments which hung over their heads? These impending judgments of which the Jews were thus warned were brought upon them, as the event shows, by the instrumentality of the Roman arms. That these impending judgments were limited and bound by the predestination of God is evident from Matt.24:15-28, and Luke 21:17,24. It is equally manifest that it was the ambition and pride of the Romans which impelled them forward to the destruction of this devoted people.

Now if in the one case God could accomplish His purpose of cutting off those eighteen persons by the instrumentality of the effect of the law of gravitation upon the materials of the tower in Siloam without diverting that law from its regular course of operation, why could He not in the other case bring His threatened and defined judgments upon the Jews by the instrumentality of the Romans thirst for conquest and blood without being the author of their sin or without infringing upon their free-agency in the act? Some may say that God was the author of the law of gravitation. True, God did establish it in the original creation of matter; and so did He originally permit sin to enter into the world and man to become so depraved as that it is as natural for him to sin as it is for a heavy body to fall to the earth. And there was no more necessity for God, in the one case, to produce a new principle of depravity in the hearts of the Romans than, in the other case, to produce a new principle of gravitation or give a new bias to that heart. In the one instance God had only to permit the interposition of

certain occasions to bring the law of gravitation into effect upon the materials of the tower and to bring those eighteen persons within its reach to accomplish His purpose concerning them. So in the other case, He had only to permit the Jews, by their turbulency and rebellion, to provoke the resentment of the Romans to be the occasion of their acting out their bloody cruelty, so far as God had determined to permit them.

What I have said upon this subject is probably not sufficient to satisfy the minds of some who may think they are honest inquirers after truth. But it is not dependent on me to vindicate the revelation and ways of God from the charge of sin. Let those who charge that doctrine which God has revealed, with a sinful tendency, answer to Him for it.

I will offer a few remarks for the consideration of those who think that God has too great affairs to manage to concern Himself with the smaller particles of matter, such as are seen floating in the air; for such professors there are. I would ask them whether they believe in the resurrection of the body? If so, whether they believe that God will raise the bodies of all or only of such whose bodies He can find on the resurrection morn? We know that the bodies of many have been burned to ashes, and those ashes scattered towards the four winds of heaven; the bodies of others have been left to molder to dust on the surface of the earth; the graves of many have been opened and the dust that once composed the bodies mingled with other particles of earth, not to insist upon the continual process through which matter is passing of decomposition and new organizations, by which that which was once the component part of an animal body becomes incorporated in a vegetable substance, &c. How can any person with these facts in view believe that God will or can raise the bodies of all persons unless they believe that He exercises infinite knowledge and that universal disposal of all things, that every particle of matter is present to His notice, passing through what process it may, filling by His direction the very place and accomplishing the very object He designed? Is this knowledge too wonderful for your comprehension? So it is for mine. But is it too extensive for our God whose *understanding is infinite*? Other objections I leave for another number.

PART 4.

Another objection urged against the doctrine of predestination is that it would involve the notion of the fatalists and destroy the free-agency of man and consequently his accountability.

These notions must arise from ignorance of the true character of God who, as an efficient intelligence, governs the world in wisdom and righteousness, causing everything to result in the greatest good. But in answer to the objection, suffice it to say that the universal experience of man and the sure word of prophecy both unite in establishing the fact that man in all his sinful transactions acts freely, and is accountable there for. I will notice a few instances in which the consciousness of guilt was manifested in persons, relative to transactions manifestly predestinated of God. We have an instance in the case of Joseph's brethren. Although Joseph declared that it was God who sent him into Egypt, yet when their father was dead his brethren sent unto him saying, "We pray thee forgive the *trespass* of the servants of the God of thy Father." Gen.50:17. We have another instance in Judas who committed the very crime which had long been predicted, and which the Master pointed him out as the one destined to perform, yet when he had committed the base act, he in contrition said, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood." Matt.27:4. An instance of acknowledged free-agency we have in the case of the Assyrian, who was *the rod of God's anger against the Jews*. God says of him, "I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the King of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks. For he saith, by the *strength of my hand I have done it* and by my wisdom, &c." Isa.10:12,13. Thus it is that men and devils, instead of frustrating or retarding the righteous government of God by the acting out of their enmity, are, in their very acts of sinning against Him, made by His wise government to bring about His holy and eternal purposes. This view of the holiness and majesty of God, manifested in His overruling the sins of men to the promotion of His purpose of grace whilst it fills His enemies with wrath, constrains the believer to *exalt Him* and to *worship at His footstool* under a feeling sense that *He is holy*.

I now pass to the consideration of an objection made by the popular Baptists, more particularly against this doctrine as held by the Old School Baptists. Even those who profess to believe the doctrine of predestination make it, when professed by an Old School Baptist, to be a very Pandora's box from whence springs Antinomianism and everything which they are accustomed to consider as evil in us. It is, according to their representation, our belief in the Absolute Predestination of all things that keeps us from engaging in the Benevolent Enterprises of the day and prevents us from preaching repentance and faith as conditions of salvation, and from making any efforts to convert sinners, and in a word that it

makes us very idle and wicked professors. This is the most unhallowed of all the objections made against this doctrine. It is the very course pursued by the Jews against our Master, that by raising a prejudice in the public mind against Him and His doctrine that they might more easily accomplish His death. As they thus succeeded against Him to do *with wicked hands*, what the *counsel of God had before determined to be done*, so will they succeed against the two witnesses.

But let us, Dear Brethren, rejoice with His early disciples in being accounted worthy to suffer persecution for our Lord's name sake. This course pursued by the popular Baptists in reproaching this doctrine, and us for holding it, whilst they admit it even to be a Bible doctrine, is the most decisive testimony as to what manner of spirit they are of, that could be had. It is, I sometimes think, undeniably an instance of our being reviled and having evil said of us falsely for His sake. The christian knows ordinarily, owing to a sense of the corruptions of his heart, the instances are not many when he can clearly draw the conclusion that it is for Christ's sake he is reviled. Hence, how thankful ought we to be for the privilege granted us of having such an unequivocal testimony that the blessing recorded in Matt.5:11 & 12 belongs to us.

It is not in one solitary instance, or two that we are reproached for holding this doctrine. There appears for a few months past to have been a general concert on the subject. Preachers whilst professing to preach the doctrine of predestination, have in the very same discourses, represented it to be Antinomianism and to have the most deadening influence when held by certain Baptists, meaning the Old School brethren. Others have given the same views of the subject in their publications in the religious papers: witness the Letter of a certain celebrated preacher in Virginia published in the "Religious Herald" of Dec.20th,1833. But it is perhaps proper to answer the objection, however unprincipled it is. The objection seems to imply that the whole sum of our faith is the doctrine of predestination; that all our religious course is determined by our belief of this one point of revelation.

It is true that believing in the predestination of God, we have no idea of procuring or of being instrumental in producing the salvation of one individual not chosen of God unto salvation; nor that one of the *travail* of Christ's soul will die without experiencing the renewing of the Holy Ghost and thus being prepared for the society of Heaven, whether that individual die in infancy or in old age, whether he was born in New York, in Rome, in Mecca or in Peking. But we as firmly believe that God *has chosen His people to salvation through*

sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth; that: It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe, and that whilst the preaching of the Cross is unto them that perish, foolishness; unto us who are saved it is the power of God.

Let those who think and speak of tracts and Sunday Schools as the more efficient means of converting the world ponder this text and think seriously on the distinction drawn between those who *perish* and those who *are saved*. The one class esteem the preaching of the Cross, or Christ crucified, as far surpassing any scheme of men as the power of God surpasses the weakness of man. But they do not consider the difference between the *preaching of the Cross*, and Sunday School teaching or reading of tracts to consist so much in any natural superiority of the one over the others, but simply in the fact that the one is the appointment of God delivered to us through the volume of eternal truth and that the others are not. Attendance therefore on the one calls for and authorizes the exercise of faith in God, that He will bless His own appointments, whereas there can be no authorized faith in relation to the others because God has made no revelation concerning them. And according to the Apostle's views of the subject, the reason why God has instituted the simple preaching of the Cross, unadorned with wisdom of words, is that by such preaching God might *make foolish the wisdom of the world*, and that the faith of His people *should not stand in the wisdom of men but in the power of God*. I Cor.1:18-29 & 2:4,5. The above may suffice to show that it is not our belief in the doctrine of predestination alone that prevents us from uniting in the benevolent enterprises of the day, as they are styled, but the fact that God has appointed the one institution and but the one has its due weight with us, and ought to have with all who have confidence in the wisdom of God. But again our belief in the predestination of all things gives us confidence to believe that not an instrument shall be wanting, or a circumstance fail, that God ever designed to employ, or ever would own for bringing an individual of the election of God into the liberty of the Gospel, or for establishing him in the hope and consolations thereof. It also leads us to believe that Christ's people will *be willing in the day of His power*, according as they are called to believe in Him, to confide in Him, to profess His name, to enter the ministry, and that with just such gifts as He has bestowed on them, and to go and occupy these gifts wherever He in His providence directs; and that their willingness to these things will be from a manifestation of the *day of His power* to their souls, and not

from any offered worldly accommodations.

Hence we have no confidence in the Divine call of any person to the ministry who enters it or goes forward in it only as some salary or mission fund is proffered for his accommodation. Neither when they go forth from these considerations can we believe that God will make their labors a blessing. Consequently we stand opposed to Missionary and Theological school systems. The preacher made willing in the day of Christ's power to enter the ministry does not need these proffered accommodations to stimulate him to action. Neither does he need for this end the notion of becoming popular by a display of School polish or by multiplying converts. He has to preach to answer his own conscience. Being an earbored servant, he will desire to be found faithful. And feeling that he is a servant, he will feel it to be his province to follow the directions of his Lord, to keep strictly to his *written orders*; to preach the word, to be instant in season and out of season, and to leave it to his Master's will to accomplish his own purpose by the word preached. Thus the predestination of God has secured that belief in the Absolute Predestination of all things will not make His servants idle, but on the contrary, it becomes an incentive to active obedience. The same is the case, as might be shown from the word, with all His other children in their several relations.

It is true that the servant of the Lord may sometimes be left to seek his own accommodation, rather than do his Master's will, but when this is the case, the Lord will assuredly send leanness into his soul, or otherwise so chastise him as to bring him back to a cheerful discharge of duty.

As to *Antinomianism*, those who know the meaning of the word, when they use it certainly do know that it is a base calumny upon us. They know that what offends them in our preaching relative to the law is our contending so strongly for the spirituality and unchangeable nature of the law, and that nothing but that full and perfect righteousness, found in the obedience of Christ as the representative of His people, could release from condemnation. If instead of preaching the Apostles' doctrine which *establishes the Law*, we preached the abrogation of the eternal law and that man is, as they say, *on pleasing terms* with God, and by which many seem to mean that man is on *grounds for proposing terms of acceptance*, with God, we should then in the estimation of the *popular* be very *lawful* and holy men.

In reference to the charge that our belief in the doctrine of predestination occasions our not preaching that men should repent and believe, I would remark in the first place that

according to our understanding of the Scriptures, *repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ* are essential parts of that salvation to which the elect of God are predestinated. These things therefore we preach. But the repentance to which God has predestinated His people is a heart repentance, a *godly sorrow for sin*; a turning with *heart-loathing from self and all self-doings*, as being defiled with sin. We do not, therefore, and dare not, preach a mere *Ahab* or *Ninevite* repentance, as that which characterizes persons as entitled to the consolations of the Gospel. There is the same corresponding difference between the one repentance and the other, that there is between the deliverance granted to Ahab and Nineveh, and that salvation which cometh by Christ. It is true that if we could satisfy our consciences by preaching the word *repent* instead of preaching that repentance which is the result of the regenerating operations of the Holy Ghost, we should much better please the unregenerate and popular professors as we should then preach a repentance of which they have some conception.

Again, Christ, by *nauling the handwriting of ordinances to His cross*, so took the Sinai covenant, as such, out of the way that it never after should, by all the contrivances of men, be introduced into the plan of God as any part of the system of salvation. Hence Christ, after His resurrection, made known to His Disciples that *repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name*, among all nations beginning at Jerusalem. {Luke 24:47}. The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. If therefore there is any meaning in the expression, *In His name*, it must mean something very different from preaching repentance and remission of sins in a *legal form*. So we understand it as fixed by the predestination of God, and therefore we do not preach repentance as a *condition* upon which salvation is suspended. But while we preach the *manifested* obligation of all, both Jews and Gentiles, as the creatures of God to return unto Him by repentance, or as the Apostle has it, *but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent*, and whilst we preach the absolute necessity of heart repentance as a predestined part of the salvation of God, we preach that Jesus Christ is *exalted as a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance to Israel*; and that no repentance short of that which He giveth in making His word as a fire and a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces, either manifests the person as entitled to, capacitates him for receiving the consolations of the Gospel. Hence that no other is of any avail. Thus far our belief in the predestination of God effects our preaching repentance.

So *faith* we preach, not as a condition of salvation, but as the *gift of God*. And the faith we preach is as distinct from any natural belief of the human mind as the internal revelation or testimony of the Spirit of God is distinct from the testimony of men: the one is external and natural, the other is internal and spiritual; the one is comprehended and received by the natural powers of the human mind, the other can be understood and relied on only by spiritual life imparted. In a word, we believe that the predestination of God has fixed eternally the point that none but that system of salvation which God has decreed, that truth which God has revealed, and that order which He has established, shall stand. We would, therefore, be wholly conformed in understanding, in feeling and walk to that system, be grounded in that truth, and bounded and defined by that order which God has revealed. Being thus established in the truth of God and sustained by His word, if persecution come, let it come, we shall feel the assurance that the *two Beasts* and their *Image*, and all their drilled and mustered forces, can go no farther in their rage than our God has determined to permit them, that they cannot afflict us, only as He has designed the affliction in mercy unto us, that they cannot take our lives one moment before our Father has accomplished His wise purposes with us in this vale of tears.

Such an established belief in the predestination of God serves to preserve us, amidst the various trials of life, and amidst the rage of persecution from that fretful, sullen, and heart-sunken spirit manifested by Saul when he said, "Hear now, ye Benjamites, will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards, &c., that all of you have conspired against me; and there is none that sheweth me that my son hath made a league with the son of Jesse, and there is none of you that is sorry for me, &c." I Sam.22:7,8. But on the contrary, it will enable us to manifest that patient, resigned spirit which David manifested when he said to Saul, "The Lord judge between me and thee, and the Lord avenge me of thee, but mine hand shall not be upon thee," {I Sam.24:12}, and when he said of Shimei, "So let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David, who shall then say wherefore hast thou done so,&c., let him alone and let him curse for the Lord hath bidden him, it may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for His cursing this day." {II Sam.16:10-12}. In the case of Saul we see manifested the genuine temper of that spirit which will not have the Lord to reign over him, and which therefore rejects the purpose of God; in the other that humility and meekness

which is incident to a belief and acquiescence in the Sovereignty of God. But David did not believe that God's having bidden Shimei to curse, or in other words, His having predestinated this act, exonerated him from guilt. Hence David's directions to Solomon, I Kings 2:8,9.

I will here leave the subject, praying that whilst others reproach us for believing in the Absolute Sovereignty of God, the Lord would bless us with more unshaken confidence in His universal predestination and with a more entire submission to His Sovereign Will in all things, and that whilst others indirectly charge God with revealing a doctrine that leadeth to licentiousness, God may manifest in us that the belief of His truth and the power of His grace can so overcome the corruptions of our nature as to enable us to lead quiet, peaceable and godly lives.

Fairfax County, Virginia, Feb.24, 1834.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.2 {1833}

Further Remarks Relative To Predestination.

Brother Beebe: - Having understood that several of our Brethren in different places, as well as others, have so construed my pieces on the *Absolute Predestination of All Things*, as to infer that I represent God to be the Author of sin, I have been led to look over those numbers to see if I did make any slip on that point, and leave any sentence so worded as to give just ground for their construction. But I do not find a single sentence, which by any fair interpretation, represents God as being the author of sin in general, or as compelling the creature to a sinful choice by any arbitrary force put upon his mind. I think, if any of our Brethren, who have taken up this wrong idea of those numbers on Predestination would take the trouble to examine them again impartially, they will find that so far from my representing God as being so the author of sin as to exempt man from guilt in his sinful transactions, I have endeavored particularly to show, whilst the predestination of God determines that sin, and the sinful acts of men and devils, shall result in the accomplishment of His own glorious purposes, that this predestination does not destroy the free agency of man, but leaves him free to act, and consequently

conscious of his guilt, and justly subject to punishment for his crimes. As in the case of Joseph's brethren and of the Assyrian (No. 4; Signs No. 8), and of Judas and the Jews (No. 2. Signs No. 5).

Persons who make these objections to my views as published seem to overlook the fact that I speak of God's government in this case as being a predestination, or pre-determination, to permit such and such acts of depravity to take place, and to cause them to produce certain results, and to transpire under certain circumstances; and not a predestination to compel men to perform those acts.

I know that many persons have, in their minds, so attached to the term *predestination* the idea of arbitrary force exerted upon the minds of men, compelling them to act, as never to attend to any other explanation given to the subject. Whereas by attaching such an idea to the term *predestination* when spoken of God, they divest Him of that infinite wisdom and understanding which belongs to Him, and bring Him down to a level with us short-sighted mortals. Man when he absolutely pre-determines an act or event, acts foolishly, for he knows not what an hour may bring forth. Not so with God; He can, and does *declare the end from the beginning* with all the attendant circumstances.

Persons who suffer their minds to be thus swayed by their prejudices against a term, can scarcely fail of attaching to the combined terms, *absolute predestination*, every thing awful and tyrannical. The plain natural meaning of the term *absolute* is *unconditional*, in this sense, and in this sense only is it used in this connection. And whilst we contend for an *absolute* or *unconditional predestination*, we deny that there is any thing like an *arbitrary* purpose or act to be found in the government of God.

In order, if possible, to be more clearly understood upon this point, I will offer a few additional remarks:

1st. That such is the depravity of human nature, that so sure as he is given up to the sway of any one of his passions, and comes into contact with circumstances exciting him to the gratification of that passion, so assuredly he perpetrates the crime to which his depraved passion thus urges him. David, in the case of Bathsheba and Uriah, being left to the influence of his passion, needed but the exciting circumstance of seeing from *the roof of the King's house the woman washing herself* to lead him on to that course which resulted in the consummation of his whole crime. David therefore instead of charging this act upon God, was conscious that it was

chargeable only to the depravity of his own heart, and therefore justly says to Nathan, *I have sinned against the Lord*. And yet there is no room left to suppose that this whole affair was not embraced in the pre-determinate purpose of God, for it was a very important link in that chain by which Shiloh descended from Judah.

Hence, 2nd. That whilst the predestination of God extends to every event which takes place in the universe, it puts no other force upon the minds of sinful agents than that of restraint. God has predestined that men shall not act out the depravity of their hearts any further than He for wise purposes has predetermined to let them go in sin. For producing this restraint, He employs various instruments as education, public opinion, etc., and also frequently causes the various passions of man to counteract the undue influence one of another. In a word, the predestination of God secures, that so far as He has determined to leave any one to act out the depravity of his heart, so far attending circumstances shall be favorable thereto; as in the case of Pharaoh: *Even for the same purpose have I raised thee up*, (that is, by my providence, to the throne of Egypt, that full opportunity may be given thee to show the haughtiness and cruelty of thy heart), *that I might show my power in thee*, (in causing thy arrogance and rage to work thy own destruction and my people's deliverance.) So of Judas, the thirty pieces of silver are secured to him for a bait. On the other hand, wherein God has determined to restrain the wrath of man, or to put restraints upon his depravity, He places him in circumstances calculated to exert the necessary force upon his passions.

But from whence comes depravity and sin? Sin exists in the world in the depravity of man, and yet in its origin it was non-existence; not a creature, nor an eternal existence. God is but the *innocent* cause, if I may use the expression of its having an existence. Had not God brought intelligent creatures into existence sin could never have had a being; and if God had not created and placed those creatures under a law, and left them to the free exercise of their own wills whether to obey or not, sin would never have become an existence in the world; and yet not God but angels and men, each in his sphere, brought it into existence.

The existence of sin in the world may be aptly illustrated by the existence of darkness. Darkness could never have had an existence had not God made creatures needing the medium of material light, in order to the exercise of their organs of vision. For in God *is no darkness at all*. But when creatures

were produced needing material light to enable them to see, the absence of that light is what we call darkness. In reference to the statement in Genesis 1:2, *And darkness was upon the face of the deep*, I understand it to be spoken in relation to the progress of creation, and to be an intimation that the material light suiting this material world was not then created, and that this darkness, or absence of light, was no more a direct production of God than was the *formless* state of matter in its original production. The one was the absence of that *order* which was afterwards given to the matter created. The other, the absence of that light which creatures would need to the use of sight. It is true God has given to material darkness a permanent being in relation to creatures on earth by *dividing between the light and between the darkness*, instead of giving to the light an entire sway over the earth.

So of *sin*, to go back no farther than its relation to man, God made *man upright*, but made him a dependent and an accountable creature and therefore laid him under obligations to be *holy in heart and life* unto God, or in other words, to be *entirely and voluntarily devoted* to the will of his Creator. And being thus created, God gave him a *command* as a test by which to prove his voluntary subjection to his Creator or his voluntary holiness. I say to prove whether he would be holy to God. I know the general idea is, even among those whom we esteem sound, that God created man a holy being, but this is an idea I have not been able (perhaps from inferiority of intellect) to comprehend, that is, to say in relation to heart holiness or voluntary devotion to God. I know that the word holy is sometimes used to denote mere freedom from impurity, in this sense I cheerfully give in to the idea that man was created holy, that he came from the hands of his Creator pure. Man being thus put to the test, he soon showed a destitution of that voluntary holiness, that self-devotedness to God, which, his being a creature, laid him under obligation to exercise. This want of holiness was *sin*; it was a violation of his obligation and a transgression of the command under which he was placed. And I do not know but that Adam's thus preferring his own gratification to submission to the government of God, was as much a natural or necessary consequence of his being left to choose for himself as is the succession of darkness to the withdrawal of light. I know that being thus left to his own choice, the very first occasion finds him choosing to set up for himself, for *Adam was not deceived*; and I know that God with certainty knew that this would be the course of the man; hence the setting up of Christ before the foundation of the world. The act was Adam's own,

it was not that Satan infused any evil principle into him. Satan was only an instrument in beguiling Eve, of exciting him to a choice upon the point. Man having made his choice to serve self rather than God; the penalty of the command took immediate effect, and depravity runs through the whole human family, and became from the choice of Adam, the reigning power over the human heart, reigning unto death; the penal requisition of the law giving it that power, *for the strength of sin is the law*. Hence man exists under *the law of sin and death*, from which he could be ransomed only by the blood of Christ; and delivered only by being brought into a new existence as a *new creature* in Christ, and that only by the power of God.

Do any ask what has predestination to do with this? I answer that it has this much to do with it; that God predestinated man to be, or pre-determined to make him just such a creature as he was, and to leave him to encounter the temptation in his own creature weakness, that he might act freely without the restraints of communicated holiness; with the certainty of his *falling* and becoming *dead in trespasses and sins*, and thus an occasion should be offered for bringing in the *Sun of Righteousness*. And here is the counterpart of the figure of darkness. If creatures had not been so formed as to need material light, there would have been no occasion for the sun; if man had not so fallen, as to need a Divine Saviour, the Word had not been made flesh. Hence, says Christ, *I come a light unto the world*. And in the coming of Christ there is *Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will towards man*. If *glory to God in the highest* come through Christ, then predestination has assuredly secured a greater good by man's being left to fall than could have come to the universe by his being supported and confirmed by the power of God in his original state of uprightness. Thus the *predestination* of God, instead of making God *the author of sin*, secured that all the glory of redemption should result from the malice of Satan and the native weakness of man.

Fairfax County, Virginia, July 7, 1834.

S. Trott.

From: *SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.2 {1833}*

The external relation of visible churches.

Brother Beebe: - The following is in substance and with little variation, in form, a Circular which I had prepared for the Columbia Association, and which, was not properly rejected, but was withdrawn by me, on account of a disagreement between me and the Committee to whom it was referred, on some important points contained in the Letter, - I preferring this course, to insisting on its adoption, contrary to the judgment of a part of the Committee, and especially as I had another ready in case this should be objected to. I now send it you for publication, because the objections made to it, have not convinced me of the incorrectness of my positions; nor has the apparent indifference of some others to the subject rendered it in my estimation, any less important, that it should be laid before churches of the Old School stamp, and that they should examine it, and act upon it, if it appears to be according to the *mind of Christ*.

The subject embraced in the Circular, and that to which I now wish to call the attention of your readers, is, *the external relation of visible churches, and members, and to another, embracing their united and distinct relations and privileges.*

Of Churches: What is a church? The term church is frequently used in Scripture to denote the whole body of Christ as it exists in heaven and on earth, being the Bride, the Lamb's wife; the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. See Eph.1:22,23; Heb.12:23 & Rev.21:9. But it is again used to denote particular branches of the Zion of God. As the church or kingdom of Christ does not exist visibly in the world, but as it is manifested in these distinct organized branches, it is in reference to these branches the term church is used in the New Testament, when used with reference to the visible kingdom of Christ. What then is a *visible* church in the New Testament use of the term? I answer, that from the following Scriptures it appears to be a body or collection of *baptized believers*, who having given their ownelves unto the Lord, and unto us {says the Apostle,} by the will of God, regularly assemble together in one place, to attend to the ministration of the word and other ordinances, and to administer the discipline and other appointments of Christ's house. See in the order here marked the following texts: Acts 2:41; II Cor.8:5; I Cor.11:18-33 & 14:23-40; I Cor.5:4-12 & 16:1-3. Thus we read of the church of God which is at Corinth. {I Cor.1:2} Of the churches of Galatia, {I Cor,16:1} of the church in the

house of Priscilla and Aquila at Rome, {Rom16:5,} of the church in the house of Philemon. Philemon, verse 2.

I will now notice the relation the term *independent* bears to the churches of Christ, or in what senses they are and are not independent, according to the Scriptural account of them. This term when used in relation to churches, has been often misunderstood, and often abused, by adapting the meaning of the term to its usage in a political sense. Hence too great a conformity to the spirit and governments of the world has been introduced. The first enquiry therefore will be as to wherein they are not independent.

First. They are not independent as to the form of their government. By the appointment of God, the government of the churches is a *pure monarchy*. Christ is King in Zion. "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." Psal.2:6. Says Christ: "I will declare the decree," {Psal.2:7} and says the Father, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, Hear ye Him." Mt.17:5. Again, "For He must reign, till He put all enemies under His feet." I Cor.15:25.

Second. They do not exist as independent interests or kingdoms. The true churches of Christ will be recognized as having an *identity of interest* as being branches of the *same body* and parts of the *same kingdom*. "There is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, through all, and in you all." Eph.4:4-6. Where a unity of this kind is not, there fellowship cannot exist, whatever pretensions may be made. Hence, third: The churches of Christ are not independent of relations and obligations, one toward the other. They are bound to *keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace*; to have a fellow-feeling one for the other, remembering that if one member suffer all the members suffer with him, or if one member be honored, all the members rejoice with him. Hence also their obligations to administer to the necessities and help one another, as the church at Jerusalem sent unto Samaria, Peter and John, when they heard that the Samaritans had received the word of God, Acts 8:14; and sent chosen men of their own company, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas to Antioch, to assist in restoring peace to that church; {Acts 15:22;} and as the churches of Macedonia, Achaia and Galatia sent contributions to the poor saints which were at Jerusalem. I Cor.16:1.

The next enquiry is, wherein the churches are severally independent.

First. They are independent of the governments of this

world. Christ's kingdom being not of this world; churches lose their distinguishing characteristics as churches of Christ when they became blended with the governments of the world, or when they submit to be controlled in matters of religion, or assume to control the governments, or when they rely on them for support.

Second. Each church is an independent tribunal for administering the laws of Christ, judging for herself of the qualifications of her members &c., and exercising according to her own judgment the discipline of Christ's house.

Third. Each church is independent of others, in its right to believe and practice according to its understanding of the word of God. To *its own Master it stands or falls*. This independency is reciprocal, as no church has a right to compel others to believe and practice as she does, so neither has one a right to require others to fellowship her faith and practice. The only bond by which churches are properly united together is that of love; love to Christ, to His cause, to His people as they bear His image and submit to His government. Hence Articles of Faith when received and used in any other light than as a voluntary expression of our views of doctrine and practice and as an illustration of our mutual agreement in these things, are contrary to the genius of the gospel.

I pass to notice Associations. It is generally supposed that there is no Scriptural authority for Associations. With this idea I fully agree, so far as Associations have assumed to be distinct bodies, by being incorporated, by holding property and the like, or wherein they have claimed or exercised an authority either legislative or administrative over the churches; or when in forming these Associations the churches have entered into compacts, by which they have in anyway sacrificed their independent rights, or have bound themselves to hold or to fellowship any doctrine, to observe or tolerate any practice, whether convinced or not of its Scriptural authority. In all these cases Associations are certainly contrary to the word of God; because that reveals Christ as the only King and Law-giver in Zion, specifies the particular organization of Gospel churches and knows no other religious bodies, because, by it, is appointed in the churches individually the particular offices and order for administering the laws of Christ, and to the churches separately is assigned all the judicial authority of the kingdom short of the Judgment Seat of Christ; all of which I presume will be admitted without reference being given here to the particular texts in point. In fact, it must be manifest to the Scripturalist that Christ will have His people acknowledge no head and lord but Himself.

Some may be ready to ask, What is there then in Associations to which I do not object? I do not object to churches keeping up a correspondence one with another, where they are so united in faith and order as to render such correspondence harmonious, and conducive to an increase of fellowship and love. Whoever attentively reads the New Testament will be convinced that such social intercourse was kept up among the primitive churches not only through the Apostles passing from church to church, and in some instances to see how they did {Acts 15:36} and in their making reports &c., but also by special messengers being sent from one church to another. See Acts 11:22-30; Acts 15:22-27. We read of some that they were the messengers of the churches and the glory of Christ. II Cor.8:23. We also so read of letters being sent, as from the church at Jerusalem to the church at Antioch, {Acts 15:22,23} and of the Epistle from Laodicea, {Col.4:16} and of letters of commendation, which necessarily implies a social intercourse of the churches. And even the Apostolic Epistles were to the churches mediums of sending and receiving salutation. See Rom.16:1,2-5, 16; I Cor.16:19; I Pet.5:13. But whilst we thus have clear Scriptural authority for an intercourse being kept up among the churches of Christ, there is no particular order for carrying on this correspondence laid down in the New Testament; the manner and frequency of correspondence, appear to be left as indifferent circumstances. The churches are therefore at liberty to consult their convenience in these things, so that they do not infringe upon or neglect the order laid down. The present mode of keeping up a correspondence by the associating of churches together for that purpose, and which undoubtedly grew out of the state of things introduced by the Reformation, when there became a great intermixture of churches of different faith and practice, is perhaps as good a model as can be adopted under existing circumstances, provided they be so guarded as to prevent an infringement of the liberty of the churches, and an introduction of occasions for contention, by the attempt to blend in the same connection churches of different sentiments and practice. {Note: The order of the day is union. In this union men seek to blend the most discordant sentiments and practices. This mingling of everything together, is attempted to be justified by the inculcations of love to the brethren, so frequent in the New Testament. But the spirit and conduct of too many, go to prove that it is love to numbers rather than love to brethren which influences them to plead for this union.}

The difference of circumstances connected with the profession of religion at this day and in the apostolic age is not

duly considered. In the former age, we find a general union of correspondence because of a union in fellowship arising from a oneness in hope, in doctrine, in order. We read of them at one time, *all continuing steadfast in the apostles doctrine*, again of being of *one heart and one soul*. Of all the churches of which we read in the New Testament, we may confidently assert that they had *one Lord, one faith, one baptism*, and of course *one order*. They were all planted and things set in order among them by the Apostles, or under their immediate direction. The disciples in those days all appeared as brethren of the same family, and of course all loved as brethren. We find some disorders and some errors creeping into a few of the churches, but we find these churches sharply reprov'd for suffering these things among them. There was then but the one contending or opposing interest under the form of the christian religion, and that was expressly declared by the Apostles to be Antichrist; the churches were therefore cautioned against it. And those ministers which came bringing *another gospel*, that is who added to the proclamation of salvation, rites and obligations, as is evident in the case of the Galatian churches, were to be held *accursed*, that is as separated from the fellowship and privileges of the churches. And we find them characterized as glorying in their superiority &c., and denounced as *deceitful workers* and *ministers of Satan* transforming themselves as ministers of righteousness. Hence, they could not have been received and loved as brethren by those who loved our Lord Jesus Christ. But now, we have both *Beasts* and their *Image* in full vigor among us, all claiming to belong to the kingdom of Christ. We have every grade of *transformation* as the *ministers of righteousness*, from the grossly immoral up to the man of upright walk; from those who in doctrine deny the redemption of the Son and the regenerating operations of the Holy Ghost, up to those who profess to hold to both, but at the same time represent them as in-eflicacious or uncertain; and from those who bewildered with *Judsonism*, hold to the efficacious redemption of souls from hell with golden necklaces and such corruptible things on to those who discard these strong imitations of popery, but who still think, some room may be obtained for glorying by adding Bible Societies, Sunday Schools, or the moderate operations of a humanly systematized mission, to the order laid down by Christ in the New Testament. And all these are claiming to be fellowshipped as brethren; and even some brethren are imitating their corruptions. An important enquiry seems to present itself; it is, whether the prevalency of Anti-christ has so changed the order of things, that it is the

ministers of righteousness now who are transforming themselves as the ministers of Satan, and therefore to be held blessed; or whether remembering that as formerly, so now, the ministers of Satan, are *deceitful workers*, and that therefore we still ought to hold those who are seeking occasions to glory, are glorying in the flesh, glorying in appearance &c., as separated from the fellowship of the saints; and to receive as ministers of Christ, those only who *honor Him, not doing their own ways, nor finding their own pleasure, nor speaking their own words* in their ministry, as was foretold should be the case in the gospel rest or Sabbath. See Isa. 58:13. Without deciding on the above enquiry, I will say that to me it appears very inconsistent in a church, to reject those who came to her bringing *another gospel*, to cut off those that trouble her by *perverting the Gospel of Christ*, and to exclude heretical, disorderly and corrupt persons, and at the same time to hold correspondence with other churches as churches of Christ, which sanction and encourage all these departures from the gospel of Christ. I know that in the present smoke, everything is thrown into confusion, *darkness is put for light, and light for darkness*, and that many of the children of God have been bewitched and have their heads turned round; and I know that it is important to try to pull them out of the fire. But the enquiry is, what course shall we pursue to extricate ourselves and others from this mass of confusion.

One course is to contend for the superiority in the Associations, and having that, to separate from us those that appear obstinately bent on their corruptions. But this at once lays the foundation for a party contest, and numbers will be likely from various circumstances to be connected with the side to which they do not belong. Hence, the object which ought to be aimed at, namely: the *separating the precious from the vile*, will be more or less frustrated. Besides it is too much like contending for the particular Association in its name, formation &c., which involves too much of the appearance of the spirit of the world. There are some exceptions to this general view. Another course is to try to get along quietly without bringing up anything that may be a ground of contention, leaving everyone to hold his own sentiments and to pursue his own plans, so long as he gives a general assent to the principles of the constitution, and in the mean time the churches in their letters, and the preachers in their preaching, manifesting an entire discordancy of views; but still crying out for peace. But rest assured that the time of apparent peace is the time for the *deceitful workers*, the *ministers of Satan*, to underwork; and that the prophecy of Daniel concerning the

mystery of iniquity will be found true in this case; namely, that they, *by peace shall destroy many*. Dan. 8:25. There is no exception to this, where the false preachers are. The third course is, for those churches which are grieved at the corruptions around them, to exercise their liberty in withdrawing from all gospel correspondence with corrupt churches, and with Associations with which such churches are connected. And to make this withdrawal in the spirit of meekness, and as far as they can peaceably and orderly. And having done this, as they have opportunity let them keep up a correspondence, regular or occasional, and as extensively as they can, with such churches and such only as stand on *Scriptural ground*. All this can be done without declaring non-fellowship with others; otherwise than with what we believe corrupt in doctrine, order or practice, and of course with all individuals as advocate and seek to advance such corruptions. This is the course to which for years I have believed that those churches which *hold* to the Scriptures as the only Rule of their faith and practice would ultimately have to resort, excepting in some few instances where the Associations have still stood on old ground. And I care not how soon I see it adopted.

I now come to the second general point of enquiry, namely: The visible relation of members one to another. The associations of believers together in church relation and form, is evidently of Divine appointment, as showed in the consideration of a Gospel church. Those who were baptized at the time of Pentecost, were said to be added to the church, or to the Disciples, Acts 2:41; and in verse 47 it is said: "The Lord added to the church daily, such as should be saved." In another instance they are said to *be added to the Lord*. Acts 5:14, 11:24. From these several passages it is evident that the established order was, that the believers on being baptized should be added to, or join the disciples in the same place, in church relation. As the Apostle says of the Macedonian brethren, that it *was by the will of God that they gave their ownelves unto the Lord and unto us*. That is, in the first planting of those churches, the baptized disciples gave themselves unto the Apostle and the accompanying disciples, to walk in gospel relation.

But the particular enquiry we would institute is whether individuals having once been added to a church, continued in all instances, except in cases of exclusion, during their lives to be recognized as members of that particular church, or whether in certain cases their membership was not removed from one church to another, and if so, how this transfer of membership was made, whether by the church, or by the

individual.

In some instances when disciples had for some time, been absent from the church, which they had joined, and been too with other disciples in another place, they were still considered as belonging to the same church. Paul in writing to the Colossian church, speaks of Onesimus who had been with him at Rome, but was now returning and of Epaphras, who was still continuing with him, and says of each of them, *who is one of you*, thus acknowledging them as yet belonging to that church. Col.4:9-12. The probability is that neither of them had considered their settled residence as removed. These texts show that a special relation was considered to exist between the individual and the church, with which he had become connected. But I think it also quite manifest that in other cases, there was a removal of membership, from one church to another. We find at one time, Priscilla and Aquila spoken of as having a church in their house at Rome. {Rom.16:5} I should of course suppose it reasonable to infer that they were members of it; at another time as having a church in their house at the place from whence Paul wrote his First Epistle to the Corinthians, I Cor.16:19. A little comparison of this Epistle with those Epistles he wrote when in bonds at Rome, will convince, I think, anyone, that it was not written from Rome. In the several Epistles written from Rome, he speaks in one way or other of his bonds. Eph.3:1; Phil.1:13; Col.4:10. See I Cor. chapter 9, as illustrative that he wrote that Epistle not in bonds, and of course not at Rome. I think, from chap.16:8, and also verse 19, first clause, that he wrote this Epistle from Ephesus. Certainly not from Philippi, as the added clause to the Epistle says, for he speaks of passing through Macedonia as a future event, 16:5. Now if Priscilla and Aquila were members of each of these churches there was a transfer of membership in their case.

Again, Paul mentions Epeanetus, among the saints at Jerusalem, as being the first fruits of Achaia unto Christ, {Rom.16:5,} and by comparing this with I Cor.16:15, Epeanetus must have been of the household of Stephanas, and therefore have been baptized by Paul at Corinth; I Cor. 1:16. Indeed it appears to me as the most probable conclusion that all the individuals mentioned in this 16th chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, as being among the saints there, had been known to him as saints in other places, as he had not at that time been at Rome {See chapter 1:10-15,} of course their membership had been removed. Other proofs of this point will be noticed under the following enquiry.

The next enquiry is; How was this transfer of

membership made? There is not an example or an intimation in the New Testament of the transfer having been made by the church, as at this day among us. We read of *letters of commendation* but not of dismissal. Paul commends Phebe, a member of the church at Cenchrea to the brotherly attention of the saints at Rome, Rom.16:1,2. The brethren at Ephesus wrote to the disciples in Achaia exhorting them to receive Apollos. Acts 18:27. Paul speaks of letters of commendation, as though they were common; but he needed them not. II Cor.3:1. The conclusion is, that the transfer of membership must have been made in those several cases above noticed by the individuals themselves. There are, at any rate, instances in which it is manifest that no letters of dismissal were had in the transfer of membership. Saul was evidently first connected with the church at Damascus. From them he went out preaching the gospel in Arabia and thither returned and continued some time before he went up to Jerusalem. See Gal.1:17, 18 & Acts 9:19-24. "And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord, &c." Acts 9:26-29. {Note: Is it not manifest that if Paul had even a letter of commendation from the church at Damascus this difficulty would have been prevented. It is objected, that although it is said that *he assayed to join himself to them*, that it was not probable he intended uniting with that church on account of his short stay in Jerusalem. To this I answer; the term "join himself to them," is as explicit to convey the idea of becoming one with them as could be used. Besides, it was not Paul's wish or intention to make so short a stay. Acts 22:17-22.}

Again, Barnabas was a member of the church at Jerusalem, {Acts 4:36,37} and he was sent forth by that church on a particular occasion that he should go as far as Antioch. Acts 11:22. There was certainly nothing in this like a letter of dismissal from that church, yet when he was come and had seen the grace of God, &c., he it seems concluded on continuing there and went to Tarsus, to seek Saul; and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church &c. Acts 11:25,26. The next we read of them is that they were sent as Messengers from the church at Antioch to Jerusalem, Acts 11:30; 12:25. And in Acts 13:1,2; we read of certain prophets and teachers being in the church that was at Antioch, among whom was Barnabas and Saul, whom the Holy Ghost directed the others to *separate for the work whereunto*

He had called them. Here we find these brethren both acknowledged by the Holy Ghost as being in the church that was at Antioch; and this without any act of the church at Jerusalem by which their membership was transferred to this church. Indeed, every circumstance goes to show that the transfer was made by themselves. Hence Scriptural example evidently places the right of transfer of membership in the individuals themselves. But there is at the same time plain example for brethren taking with them, when traveling to a distance, whether for removal or otherwise, letters of commendation, and which they would do well to imitate.

In applying the result of these enquires to the present state of things among us and among the Baptists as a denomination, I infer that it is the right of any member, {as the right of transfer is in himself, if Paul and Barnabas were proper examples,} not only when a removal of his residence, but also when a due regard to what he believes to be the truth, order or purity of the gospel requires it, to withdraw his membership from the one church and to join himself to another. The inference of course naturally arises, that where an individual has removed from one church, whether locally, or in fellowship on account of the corruption or disorder of that church, or even if he has been excluded from it because he could not have fellowship for what he believed corrupt, it is the right of another church, having, in the exercise of their own independent right of judgment, fellowship with this person, and with his walk to receive him into membership with them.

For an illustration of the correctness of this inference let us suppose a case or two in point. Suppose a certain preacher has been indulging in either of the couplets of vices mentioned in Rom.13:13; say, in chambering and wantonness; that regardless of the honor of the cause or the feelings of his brethren, he shows a determination to persevere in his disorderly course; that a majority of the members of the churches to which he preachers, {a case hardly supposable, were there not too manifest a case before us,} justifies and supports him in this course, assigning as a reason that he had not been proved guilty of adultery, {by and by, they might as well support him in envying and strife because he had not committed murder,} and suppose that other members of these churches are so hurt at his conduct that they can neither fellowship him, nor the churches in sustaining him. They cannot obtain letters; to ask them, would insure their exclusion. Is there therefore no redress for these persons? Must these sheep remain as outcasts from the folds of Christ, because the churches of which they were members are of the

same denomination, or have stood in the same Associate connection with that with which they could cordially unite? Do not the Scriptures say, upon this point that, whether one member suffer all the members suffer with it? Is it not so? If one individual member of Christ's body suffer for his steadfast adherence to the truth or purity of the gospel, will not all the members, all the churches which duly regard the honor of Christ's cause feel for him? And can it be supposed that the Holy Ghost, by the *order* He has revealed for the government of the churches, has wholly precluded them from the privilege of manifesting this fellow-feeling? But if the Scriptures placed the right of a transfer of membership in the churches then there could be no relief for these persons unless the Scriptural rule is laid aside. For, if honest persons, they cannot go back to their church and profess fellowship, for that which they believe to be corrupt, nor make concessions for not having fellowship for it. They must therefore in the above supposed case be left at the mercy of those disorderly churches. {Note: Certain advocates for the right of transfer of membership being in the church, say that in extraordinary cases they would depart from the regular rule. But this will not answer for a consistent Old School Baptist, for with such, it is not admissible that there is any extraordinary or unprovided for case, relative to the government of the church, with the Holy Ghost.} Or if the Scriptures allowed of churches giving up their independent right of judgment, and of binding themselves by associate rules to abide by the acts of other churches with which they may be connected, whether those be Scriptural or unscriptural, then the case of these oppressed persons would be hopeless. But we have showed this not to be the case; that the right of a transfer of membership is in the individual himself; that each gospel church has deposited, by the Great Head of Zion, in its own body, the right of judging, and the obligation to exercise this according to the word of God, whether in relation to doctrine, to practice, to discipline, or to the receiving of members; and that each church is required to judge and act for itself, as accountable only to Christ, but with a due regard to the peace and unity of the whole recognized body of Christ.

What I have said on the supposition of churches supporting immoral practices, and of individuals separating from them on account thereof, is equally applicable in the case of churches becoming corrupt in doctrine, or of their departing from the word of God in practice, and of members conscientiously separating from them on that account. {Note: Although there was an apparent reference in the Circular to a

local case, yet it was designed to have a bearing, as it of course naturally would, on the situation of many of our brethren in different places, who are borne down under the burden of corrupt doctrine, and a multiplicity of the schemes of men, and know not how to extricate themselves, being clogged with the present established order among our churches, I will here observe, that the course pursued by many of the Baptists for years past in scheming to obtain majorities in the churches and Associations, then bringing in *their benevolent institutions*, and taking advantage of the order that the right of transfer of membership is in the church, and of the associational rules, to compel the minority to submit to their impositions, is to me a species of persecution of the meanest kind. It would be better, I think to live in a state of exclusion than to submit to it.} What one church may hold as a right of conscience another may claim. And the same liberty we would claim to ourselves, we would award to those who may differ from us in doctrine or practice; satisfied with the privilege of withholding, or withdrawing our fellowship from those whose faith or practice, we believe to be contrary to the word of God.

The view above, taken of this subject, has no tendency toward breaking down, or exposing to contempt the regular discipline of Christ's house. Those churches deserving to be recognized as visible churches of Christ, cannot be confined in their fellowship, their regard for the honor of Christ's cause, or in their distress for the wounding of that cause, by the precincts of their own little bands. That which scripturally subjects a person to exclusion from one church of Christ, will lead all churches that love the truth, and the pure and orderly walk marked out in the scriptures, to withhold their fellowship from the offender till he returns and gives satisfaction for his offense. The church that would countenance disorder and treat with contempt the regular discipline exercised by a sister church, by extending fellowship to the unrepenting excluded person, should, and would be disowned by all orderly gospel churches. From the whole view of the subject, it is evident that there may be difficulty in some cases, in deciding whether we ought or ought not to interfere with the discipline of another church, by receiving persons excluded or withdrawn from them. And truly the subject ought, at all times, to be approached with the spirit of meekness and candor, and with a firm regard to truth and order. And we ought to be satisfied from a careful enquiry, that the excluded person, has been excluded for truth's sake, and not for error, for a due regard to order and to the Scriptures as the standard, and not for disorder or immorality, before we extend to him the hand of

fellowship; and the same in reference to a person who has withdrawn from a church, not having removed his residence beyond its bounds. No orderly church would knowingly receive a disorderly person into fellowship.

I will just add, for the sake of any, who may dread to act where duty calls to action; from the fear of subjecting themselves to the ill will of others, that any church or any individuals that will not adhere to and be governed by what, after careful and prayerful examination, they conscientiously believe to be the requisition of God's word, even at the expense of standing alone and being reviled, are *not worthy of Christ*. See Mt.10:37 & 39.

Additional Remarks

It is objected to the position I have laid down, that the established order is, that the right is in the churches of dismissing their members, and that to depart from this rule excepting in extraordinary cases, would throw confusion into the churches, as they would not know what become of their members, or who belonged to them.

I will notice first: The principle, that the right should be in the churches of dismissing their members, that is, of transferring their membership to other churches. Do the Scriptures contain a perfect rule for the order and government of the churches? If they do not, the King of Zion stands impeached with a want of faithfulness or with a deficiency of wisdom; and the churches are left to be subjected to all the confusion of Babel; every one thinking his own device the best. If the New Testament does not contain a *perfect rule* by which the churches should be governed, then this order, general as it is, must fall to the ground; for there is neither precept nor example for it within the lids of the Bible. Surely, if the Great Head of the church had intended to establish so important a regulation as this, there would have been some instance given us by the Holy Ghost, of its being acted upon in the Apostolic churches. As there is not, and there manifestly are some instances, of persons becoming members of one church after having been members of another, the conclusion is inevitable, that they gave themselves to the church in the second instance, as they had done in the first, that is after their baptism, and were received by the same independent voice of the church; and this too in the case of Barnabas and Saul, as has been showed, men guided by the Holy Ghost, and who therefore must have set correct examples. The order which the

churches have adopted, shows in its operations the fallibility of a human contrivance.

First. Its direct tendency is to destroy the independency of the churches in one very important point, namely; in the reception of their members, depriving them of the privilege of judging for themselves of the experience of the persons whose membership is transferred to them. For if the right is in the church, of removing the membership of her members, she of course has the right to give them a membership in another church, that is, her letters of dismission gives them a title to be received in another church. And so in fact it is generally understood. It is true that when a person presents his letter to a church a vote is taken on his reception, but in most cases this is a mere form, as the general idea is, that to refuse receiving a person upon the regular letter of any church, is a virtual declaration of non-fellowship with that church. If one church may thus put one member into another church, she may put fifty or enough to constitute a majority of the church and thus by her members take the complete government of this other church; and all this without the other churches considering herself entitled to the privilege of enquiring into the experience of the members thus imposed upon her, to see whether she could have gospel fellowship with them or not. Known to you, Brother Beebe, and probably to some of your readers, is an instance of a church in a certain city, wishing to avail themselves of the accommodation of a valuable Meeting House owned by a sister church in the same city, and at the same time to enjoy the ministry of their present pastor. To accomplish this they dismissed enough of their members to the other church, to form with some of the members of that church, favorable to the plan, a majority of the church, and thus to enable them to dismiss the pastor of the church, and by whose exertions principally this Meeting House had been built, and to call the other preacher; this done, this preacher with the remainder of his flock went over to that church and now enjoy the possession of the coveted Meeting House. Certainly an order which can favor such schemes, cannot comport with the independency of the churches, or be infallible.

I have known one or two instances of churches having a standing rule, that they would receive no person by letter from any church without first examining him on his experience, &c., the same as a candidate for baptism. These churches thus maintained their own independence in the reception of members, and had the satisfaction of knowing for themselves, that they had experimental fellowship with all they received.

But by pursuing this course they accounted the letters of dismissal brought to them, nothing more than letters of *commendation*.

Second. The fallibility of this order is manifest from the frequent instances in which churches find themselves under the necessity of departing from it. Often are Baptists, in coming from England to this country, though in good standing in their churches, obliged to come off without letters of dismissal. And in some instances in removing to the far west, females have to start or follow their husbands at an unexpected moment. Besides some extraordinary cases which my objector admits. Now if this was the order established by Divine Inspiration for the transfer of membership, then there would be but the two ways of receiving members consistently with the word of God, by letter of dismissal and by baptism; and how many of the precious, conscientious followers of Christ would be thrown out from the privileges of church fellowship, were it so?

In reference to that part of the objection which supposes, that to admit the right of a transfer of membership, to be in the individual, would throw confusion into the churches, as they would then not know what members they had; I would just ask: Is it a fact that this order will increase the difficulty of the common plan? And I am confident that every candid brother on a little reflection will answer, No. It is a general received idea, that persons having letters of dismissal remain members of the church from whence they were dismissed, until they are received by some other church. How many members have been reported as dismissed, by most of our churches, of whom those churches know nothing, as to their present situation, whether they are connected with any other church, or not; whether they are walking orderly or disorderly. Is it not a known fact that persons often obtain letters of dismissal and then keep those letters for years? Churches on giving letters of dismissal to their members very frequently make no farther enquiry about them; and the individuals dismissed are apt to think their relation with the church and consequent obligations to it are dissolved. I cannot think it would be so were the churches governed by what appears to be the Scriptural order in this case. The churches would not think their watch care over their members as ended and consequently their enquiries after them would not cease until they found they had regularly given themselves up to a Sister church, or had so gone into error or disorder, by joining a church for which they had no fellowship, or into the course of the world as to dissolve the fellowship of the church for them.

Hence in due time they would report them either as *Removed* or *Excluded* as the case might be. And orderly members in going out of their neighborhood would feel no less solicitous to obtain letters of commendation from the church than they now do to have letters of dismissal. And removing from the bounds of their church and in fellowship with it, they would feel themselves under much stronger obligations to inform the church how they had disposed of themselves than if they had a letter of dismissal. Much more might be said upon this ground; but I will just add, that the present order is the ground of much deception being practiced to obtain letters of dismissal.

But here is the rub; many in our day are in favor of a greater amalgamation of everything, rather than of a separation of the discordant parts of which the Baptist denomination is now composed, and that which I think the Scriptural *order*, would have a tendency to facilitate this separation. In conclusion; if it is not presumption in me, as an individual, to ask it, I would request all our Old School Churches to investigate this subject; and if they find the views I have taken of this subject to be correct, that they would act upon them; if not, they can but let them alone. If any of your Correspondents or Readers, find I am incorrect, I should be glad if they would set the subject in a correct Scriptural light.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.2 {1834}
S. Trott.

A Hard Heart.

Brother Beebe: Writing a few days since to a distant friend, on a subject which she had proposed, namely a *hard heart*; I was led, in speaking on it as a distinguishing trait of an unregenerate state, to refer to Pharaoh as a Scriptural instance illustrative of this subject. And in drawing a contrast between the heart of Pharaoh and the hearts of the children of Israel, as manifested under God's dealings with them, I was led to some ideas, which may perhaps, be edifying to some, who have not thought particularly on the subject. I therefore send them to you for publication, if you see fit to give them a place in the *Signs*.

In contemplating that portion of Sacred History which relates to God's bringing Israel out of Egypt, I find the fact prominent, that Moses' mission, he having Aaron for his *mouth*

or *minister*, was directed both to Israel and Pharaoh; that whilst God's purpose in sending Moses into Egypt, as foretold, and as accomplished, was to bring Israel in particular, out of their bondage, yet that He had a demand upon Pharaoh and that demand was made through Moses. From the fact that in the New Testament, the name of Moses is substituted for the law as given by him, {see Luke 16:29 & Acts 15:21}, we are scripturally authorized to consider Moses as prefiguring the Law. And as Moses' message both to Israel and Pharaoh, was declared by Aaron as his mouth, {Ex.4:15,16,30}, so the true demands of the law, as *spiritual*, are brought to view only in the doctrine, the life and death of Christ. And it is the Law as thus *established* by the Gospel, and not the Sinai covenant, that speaks through our Spiritual Aaron, or in the gospel ministry, showing the just condemnation of all the human family, convincing the *regenerated* of sin, and producing *in them* a death to it, as the way of acceptance with God. I am aware that from Egypt's being denominated the *house of bondage*, Israel's bondage there, is thought to prefigure the situation of the sinner under the Law. To this I answer, that the *Law is good and the commandment holy, just, and good*; but the bondage of Egypt was unjust and oppressive. I therefore consider it more consistent with the tenor of divine revelation, to consider Moses as representing the Law. As Moses' mission to Israel, though the occasion of an increase of their oppression, for a season, was a gracious mission; so the Law, although the occasion of much bondage to the spiritual Israel whilst in their *Egypt*, was graciously given in reference to them, to convince them of sin, and to prostrate them at the feet of sovereign mercy. The fact is, the Law as given in *thunder* from Sinai, has no direct tendency to produce that slavish bondage under which men labour in seeking justification by their works; but on the contrary, by *entering that the offense may abound*, or in other words by searching out and bringing to our view the depravity of our hearts, its tendency is, to show us the folly of looking to our own works, for salvation, and to bring us to cry with the Publican for mercy. On the other hand the Egyptian bondage, prefigured that bondage under which the sinner labors, in consequence of his disbelief of the testimony of God borne through the Law, his predetermination to cling to legal principles for life; and above all, of his substituting the Sinai covenant as given nationally to Israel, for the Law, as the standard of individual justification before God. To these things the pride and self-will of man, has, in every age, predisposed him to; and his own consciousness of transgression, driving him from a confident

reliance on the moral principles of the Law covenant, substituting since the gospel day, baptism for circumcision, and natural faith and repentance, reformation, profession, prayers, &c. for the titles, and offerings to which the Jews clung. This drudgery is frequently called *legal obedience*, but it is more properly termed *illegal*, for it certainly is not sanctioned by the law.

Having premised thus much relative to Moses' mission into Egypt, and the bondage of Israel, I proceed to the point in view; namely, to show by the different effects the message of Moses had, upon Pharaoh on the one hand, and Israel on the other; the evidence of that hardness of heart, which is characteristic of unregeneracy, as manifested in the course pursued by the unregenerate relative to the demands of the Law as published through the gospel ministry, and as contrasted with that conduct produced by the heart being regenerated. For Pharaoh notwithstanding his exalted station, stood manifestly in the relation of a creature of God, and bound to yield obedience to the divine will, although his exaltation tended the more to harden his heart.

As the demand of God was pointed upon Pharaoh, and so declared by Aaron, so the demands of the Law are equally pointed toward every child of Adam, requiring him to give up his heart to God, and bow to His sovereignty; and should be so published in the ministry of the gospel. As Pharaoh in reply to the first delivery of Moses' message to him, said, "Who is the Lord that I should obey His voice &c.," so the unregenerate practically treat with contempt the demands of God's law, many of them living as though they knew not, that there is a Lord, whom they should reverence and obey. Again, as Pharaoh appealed to his magicians to invalidate the miracles of Moses by imitation, and as God permitted them in these cases to perform acts resembling those miracles He wrought by Moses; so the unregenerate, frequently, try to evade the manifestation of their obligation to God arising from His providential goodness to them, by ascribing their preservation, their health, prosperity &c. to their own prudence, exertions, &c. and so the Lord often permits those who disown His special government, to prosper in the world, whereby their hearts become the more hardened against Him, and they fill up the measure of their iniquities; and at the same time His purpose is accomplished by them, as it was in bringing about the occasion for manifesting His great power in bringing His people out from under the yoke of Pharaoh. They also seek to invalidate the truth of God's word, in which is revealed the helpless state of the sinner in reference to salvation, his

necessity of *being born from above*, &c., by appealing to their power to reform their outward lives, to perform the outward forms of religion &c. Indeed there are, at this day, many who are fitly prefigured by Pharaoh's magicians, from the mock conversions, they are producing by their various acts; and the Lord is permitting them to succeed in drawing the multitude after them, under the impression that theirs is the *great power of God*, and all this that God's mighty power may be known, not only in sustaining His church, in opposition to the rage of the foaming current, but also in the complete, ultimate overthrow of the man of sin in all his entrenchments.

In other instances, Pharaoh finding himself pressed by the judgments of God, sends in haste for Moses and Aaron, and proposes a partial submission to the demand made, and in some cases promises compliance on condition of being relieved from the evil he dreaded, but when relief was had, he forgot his promises. We see much like this, at this day, in persons under those natural convictions which are produced, either by the fears of approaching death, or by excitements produced, whether with, or without the methodical forms of camp or protracted meetings. Many persons condemn death-bed repentances, who extol as a high state of religious exercise the very same kind of terror when produced at meetings by the preachers harrowing up the feelings of the afflicted or, as though it was his element, pouring forth torrents of hell-fire against those who have not as yet submitted to be converted by him; and this in a manner that would be considered insufferably coarse, if coming from any other source than his pulpit. But these slavish fears, excited by what they may be, are as void of pure religion as was Pharaoh's which was occasioned by seeing the *fire and hail mingled*. The unregeneracy of the subjects of these excitements is manifested, frequently in their *sinning*, like Pharaoh, *yet more*, in going back wherein they had reformed; if not in this, yet in manifesting a determination to adhere to their own terms for acceptance with God; saying with Pharaoh to those who would point to a finished salvation; *look to it, for evil is before you*, that is in depending as helpless condemned sinners, upon the free and sovereign grace of God in Christ for salvation, without having their prayers, and other performances, acknowledged, as good and acceptable in the sight of God. And when they professedly submit to acknowledge themselves to be lost sinners, and to *give themselves up*, as they say, *to be saved by Christ*, it is with the understanding, on their part, that in consideration of their doing so, Christ has bound Himself to save them. Thus instead of acknowledging and submitting to

the righteous and unalterable demands of God's Law, and being willing to rely for salvation, as objects of mercy, upon the sovereign pleasure of God in Christ, they would have God to come to such terms as they according to their various systems, think are right. Who, that has eyes to see, does not see in this kind of religion, put on in order to be saved, a correspondence in principle and practice, with Pharaoh's attempts to escape the judgments of God? If his was the workings of a hardened heart, so must theirs be.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, March 10, 1835

S. Trott.

From: *SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.3 {1835}*

Missionary Priestcraft.

Brother Beebe: - As the Old School Baptists are so frequently charged with denying to others, the right of doing what they please with their money, a few remarks on this subject may not be unreasonable. It is said that we would deprive brethren the privilege of giving a nine pence, or a six cent piece to the missionaries, &c. But let us examine the subject; and would to God that those who thus charge us, and those who received these charges, were disposed to judge candidly.

In the first place, - Have the Old School Baptists, by their declarations of separation from the mission schemes, or by any of their resolutions attempted to dictate to others the course they are to take? We have not. I challenge those who complain of our stand to show an instance wherein we have. In our stand, we maintain that what is not of God, has no just claim to be put on the same footing with that religion, and its ordinances, which God has revealed in His word. And is there the missionary who has the audacity to say in direct terms, that the authority of man is equivalent to the authority of God?

We say that the whole mission system, or plans of *benevolent operations*, to use the *ashdod* phrase, is devoid of the sanction of divine revelation, and of course of divine authority. In confirmation of this position, we say and show, that God, in His word, has prescribed an order for the spread of His gospel and the gathering of His elect, entirely different from the mission plan; and has given no direction for any part of that plan. And further we have, by every different motive we could present, called upon the mission advocates, if we have erred in this position, to show us from the scriptures our error, and without effect. They, it is true, say that the success

which attends their plans, is an evidence that they are of God. But we cannot admit this as proof; because from the whole history of our religion, as given in the scriptures, as well as in posterior writings, we learn, that in every age, the multitude have been disposed to depart from the true God and His institutions, and to follow their own imaginations; and that in every age, has there been, comparatively, but a little flock, which adhered to the instructions of divine revelation, or have been owned of God as His true worshippers. Also, to receive such testimony would be to admit that the opinion and practice of the multitude is higher authority than the written revelation which God has given us of His will. And, thirdly, to decide on the truth of a religious system according to the multitude of its advocates, would be to brand those who were slain, in ages past for their religion, and the Witnesses who are yet to be killed, with being martyrs to error. For the persecuting class of professors in times past have always been more numerous than the persecuted; and the great majority of professors must be on the side of anti-christ, to enable him to establish his decree, that *no man may buy or sell save he hath the mark or the name of the beast, &c.*, and to kill the two Witnesses. Again, we not only believe and say that the mission system is not of God, from the fact that He has not stamped it with the *broad seal* of Christ's kingdom; namely, divine revelation, but we also say, that not being appointed of God, it must have originated with the *man of sin*. It not only bespeaks this origin, from its being palmed upon us as religious, by human authority, but in every branch of it, we see the image of the beast reflected, or a copying after the church of Rome, as a prototype. Where do we first find the mission plan brought forward, and acted on? In the Church of Rome. These enquires might be pursued if we had room, until every feature, of the pretended *benevolent* operations, would be shown to be but copies of what is found in that corrupt church.

Hence, we must necessarily, according to our belief, consider the whole mission system, as being at so great a remove from the religion taught in the scriptures, that whilst we truly reverence the latter as having God for its author we *must* separate ourselves, both in practice and in fellowship, from the other. And I cannot comprehend how any person who has known experimentally the spirituality of the religion of Christ, and the divine communication of it to the soul, can, after a moments reflection, harbor the idea of placing the devices of men in conjunction with that religion which is from heaven and bears the stamp of divine perfection.

The above principles have been fully published in the

several declarations made by Old School Baptists, as the reasons why we cannot fellowship as disciples of Christ, those who continue, after the subject has been thus brought to their consideration, to give countenance to the mission plan, in any of its parts. At the same time, we have, hitherto, and still would leave others to choose for themselves, whether they will seek our fellowship by giving evidence of a heart subjection to Christ the King of Zion, or will seek union with the missionaries by countenancing their devices. And resting on the merits of the case, we have never to make converts, resorted to flattery or any of those arts, which missionaries employ to draw persons under their yoke. We wish persons to *be fully persuaded in their own minds* upon this important subject, and to pursue with decision that course which they believe right. To fellowship the Old School Baptists in truth, and at the same time to approve of the mission plans, is impossible! *Can two walk together except they be agreed?* Or can any person be agreed with us in conscientiously opposing the devices of men in religion, and at the same time support the moneyed religious schemes of the missionaries?

But in the second place, I cannot admit the principle involved in the charge against us, which is now under consideration; that is, that members of a church may indifferently employ their money either in the support of vice, or of religion. I readily admit that the New Testament recognizes a personal property in the possessions providentially given to anyone. But at the same time, when a person as a professed disciple of Jesus, gives himself up in fellowship with a church, there is more implied, than simply that he will occasionally, or constantly, unite with them in their worship; however *loose* many churches may hold their members. So long as this person continues to fellowship this church as a church of Christ, he is bound duly to regard the fellowship of the brethren in *all* his transactions. And in professing to be a disciple of Christ he professes no longer to *be his own*, but to be *bought with a price*, &c. Hence, his independent right to employ any gifts which may be bestowed upon him, or anything he may possess to his own exclusive advantage, or to his own pleasure, is absorbed in his greater obligation to his Lord, and is under the guardianship of the church. Under such tenure, I think we should feel ourselves and all that we possess, as held, if we felt fully under the influence of the spirit of the gospel. Hence the New Testament recognizes in the church the right to call upon each member to lay by in store, according as God has prospered him, for the necessities of the poor; and to administer of his *carnal things*,

to those who administer in *spiritual things*. I Cor.9,11&16:2. Hence from this guardianship of the church, a member who shows covetousness, as illustrated in the parable of the rich man - Luke 12:16-21 - and as condemned by the Apostle in Col.3:5, or the member who expends his income in supporting his family in extravagance and folly, whilst he can spare little or nothing for the support of the gospel ministry, or for the wants of the poor, are each of them undoubtedly proper subjects of church discipline.

Again, the staking a nine-pence on a hand of cards or a billiard table, is as decidedly gambling as the staking of a five or ten dollar bill. Would an orderly church excuse from its discipline a member who should thus gamble, merely from his plea that his money was his own? And why not? Not on account of the money lost in itself considered, but because of the principle and practice he thus countenanced.

But to come to the case in hand, the ardently plead for privilege, of giving a nine-pence to the missionaries. What is your motive for wishing to give it? Is it on the principle of almsgiving, as you would give to a common beggar? They do not demand it on this principle; and a little reflection will, I think, convince you that such is a very foolish application of your charities. Remember that he who *giveth to the rich* is under the same condemnation with him *who oppressteth the poor*. Prov.22:16. The agents of the several societies, their managers and their missionaries, considering their high salaries, the style in which they travel and live may be considered rich. Whilst these various agents are making it a profitable business to travel and filch their salaries from the unsuspecting; there are many of the poor to whom your nine-pence would be a real cordial. Yea, are there not those who have given themselves to the ministry of the word, who are poor in this world, and who from a sense of duty, are often constrained to leave their families, not very comfortably provided for, to preach the gospel to these poor and destitute brethren, to whose care-burdened minds your spare nine-pences would often be a real relief? But those who are fond of giving to the missionaries, are not much disposed to give to those who preach the gospel, independent of fleshly considerations. The reason is manifest; because in giving to the one, they receive the applause of men, in the other case, they have to be content with the approbation of their own consciences. Or, secondly. Do you wish to give your nine-pence, merely from fear of being thought singular, and of being reproached for not giving? And can you claim to yourself the character of the one who is *not ashamed of Christ*, whilst

your money is given so freely to purchase an exemption from that reproach to which a conscientious and steadfast adherence to His word would expose you? And is nine-pence the price at which you value the fellowship of those who from principle will not sanction a departure from the word of God as the rule of faith and practice, that you can so lightly hurt their feelings by giving your money to support an interest, so opposite to that of the pure and heavenly religion of Christ?

Or, thirdly. Do you truly believe that the mission plans are of God, and believe the truth of the principle on which they are built; namely, that the giving of money to support those plans is essential to the salvation of the heathen? And can you satisfy your conscience, whilst you thus believe, with giving now and then a nine-pence, or a dollar? In what other light can we view you as that of unfeeling monsters, if you believe that God has suspended the salvation of the heathen on your giving money to provide them with preaching, and can content yourself with giving so sparingly? And in what light are we to view the mission agents who believe the above position relative to the situation of the heathen, {if we can credit their own repeated assertions,} and yet who can appropriate so large a proportion of the money so sparingly given to rescue those people from *dropping into the quenchless flames of hell*, in paying themselves those high salaries every year, and to decking themselves with their gold watches, guards, spectacles, &c.? Again, can you believe this mission system to be the religion of Christ, and yet wish to have any religious connection with us Old School Baptists, who are entire unbelievers in your *whole* system? We do not believe that the giving of money ever did, ever will or can procure the salvation of one soul that would otherwise have perished. We do not believe that ever a College or a Theological School made *one* gospel preacher, or gave to one person the necessary qualification for preaching the gospel of Christ. We do not believe that Bible Societies are at all necessary to enable those whom God *has converted to know that He has converted them*; or to those who have a desire for the scriptures to obtain them. Neither do we believe that Tract Societies, Sunday Schools, or Bible classes are of use in converting souls to God, or in any sense the so-called *means of grace*. Nor do we believe that God employs the modern, or the more ancient Romish missionaries for preaching His gospel, or making known His salvation. But we believe that all these are important links in that chain, which is forging to bind down the minds of our countrymen under the dominion of priestcraft; and that they are parts of the Image of the Beast, the

dedication of which by public decree, will consummate the power of Anti-christ. Hence those missionists who denounce us as infidels are much more consistent with their own creed, than those who pretendedly wish to enjoy our fellowship or to live in church relation with us. But before they decry us as infidels, they ought to give more decisive proof of their own genuine belief in their creed, by a more faithful appropriation of the money they collect, to the specific object for which it was given.

In a word, where there is a moral honesty and a faithful examination of the subject, there can be no neutrality, no indifference relating to the mission system. It either is of God, or is not of God. If we believe it is not of God, and truly love Christ and His cause, we cannot consistently countenance it by the giving of even a nine-piece for its support, any more than had we lived in the days of the primitive christians, we could have thrown incense on the heathen altars, to countenance those sacrifices, which Paul says they *sacrificed to devils*. If we believe this system to be of God and have any love and reverence for God, we certainly should feel constrained to enter fully into the whole system, and be actively engaged by every exertion and every sacrifice in our power to promote all its branches and to prove the superior efficacy, over the death and life of Christ, of human contrivance aided by money, to save souls and evangelize the world. Paul said: "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*." {Rom.5:10}. But Paul was an Old School Baptist. The gospel which he preached, he *received not from men, neither was he taught it but by the revelation of Jesus Christ*. {Gal.1:11,12}. Therefore Jesus Christ and Him crucified - not money - was the sum of his preaching.

To conclude, my Friend, if you believe the mission system to be of God, be consistent, give your money freely, but neither fellowship us in our opposition to it, nor ask us to fellowship you. Let each be governed by his own religion, as distinct, the one from the other, as is the production of the Eternal Mind, from the imaginations of the human brain.

If you do not believe the mission system to be the appointment of God, take heed how you countenance it as religious lest you give the world reason to conclude that you consider all religion to be the device of men, and lest you be found enlisted among the enemies of truth. Farewell,

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, Jan.5, 1837.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.5 {1837}

My Thoughts on Justification.

Brother Beebe: - In heading this communication as "My Thoughts", I have only reference to the fact known to many of the Old School brethren that I differ in my views from them on this important article of gospel doctrine, or at least in my manner of treating the subject. Whether these views are thoughts of my own hatching, or whether I have received them from Him whose office it is to guide the disciples into all truth I leave for my brethren to judge for themselves.

I have for some time intended, as soon as opportunity would serve, to communicate my views on this subject. My wish for doing so has arisen from the circumstance that in occasionally touching this subject in preaching, my brethren have discovered a difference, without perhaps being able to discover, wherefore and wherein, I thus chose to make myself singular in departing from the beaten trail of our Old School brethren on this point. And I freely admit that my brethren have on their side all the true advocates for the doctrine of Sovereign grace, who have published anything on this subject, perhaps for the last hundred years; that is, so far as I have been acquainted with their writings. On the other hand, I have met with no human author who has advanced my views on this doctrine. But though I thus stand alone on this point, if it should be that my views, weak as I am, are sustained by the Scriptures of truth, they will stand the test.

I am further induced to publish my views from the circumstance that the fact of a difference on this subject having existed has been brought to the notice of the readers of the Signs through your Baltimore correspondent, {Signs, Vol.5, #13, pg.103}. I would here just reply to our esteemed Baltimore friend that the correspondence between brother Hezekiah West and myself was not designed for publication, but merely for a free interchange between ourselves of the reasons of our different views on this point.

Lengthy as my apologies have already been touching this communication, I have still another one to offer, before I can enter upon the subject before me; that is, for coming out with this communication so soon after the publication of the recent Circular of the Licking Association lest any should suppose that I had the vanity to design this as an attack upon that ably written Letter. As I have already remarked, I have for some time had this communication in view; and I had intended writing it as soon as I had done with Mr. Giddings. Another inducement has pressed upon my mind for not

delaying it, which I will not mention. Perhaps, however, it is quite as well on a general scale, though not so pleasant to me, that the two pieces should appear near together, as our brethren at large can thus conveniently compare the two, and see more clearly wherein the difference of our views consist and thus be able more clearly to judge of the correctness or incorrectness of my grounds for differing from my brethren on this point. I will now drop apologies and come to my subject.

My first objection to the term "Eternal Justification" as used by my brethren, or to the sentiment that the justification of the elect was an act of God passed in eternity, grows out of that prominent sentiment embraced in our Old School stand, namely: that a "Thus saith the Lord" is requisite to justify us in what we believe as well as in what we practice. I do not mean by this that the doctrine must always be expressed in the Scriptures in so many identical words. The doctrine of the "eternal union" of Christ and His people is not, that I know of, declared in just so many words in the Scriptures, yet I think this doctrine is therein clearly revealed. For instance compare Heb.2:11, "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," with Rom.8:29, "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," and they show that the oneness or the union is of as old a date as the predestinating decree of God; and that we know that from Eph.1:4 & 5, to have been from before the foundation of the world. Inference is thus plain, because according to Heb.2:11, Christ recognized His people as brethren on the ground of their oneness with Him; and according to Romans 8:29, the predestinating decree of God recognized them as the many brethren among whom Christ was first-born. This doctrine is also taught by the several figures by which the union is illustrated in the Scriptures. For instance, in the figure of the creation of Adam and Eve. As Eve was of Adam's body, of his flesh, and of his bones, so the church is of Christ. {See Eph.5:25-32} Eve was created in Adam in his original creation. Gen.5:1 & 2. That the figure as used by the Apostle may hold good, we must therefore admit that the church was brought forth and set up in Christ, her head, when He was brought forth from everlasting, when there were no depths, &c. Prov.8:23,24. The same is further confirmed by the general doctrine of the gospel such as that they were chosen in Him, &c. Eph.1:4. I would here remark that the doctrine contained in this text is not that they were chosen *into* Christ; but chosen *in* Him. Neither does it sustain

Doctor Watts in the following couplet,

"Christ be my first-elect he said,
Then choose our souls in Christ our head."

These lines found in that otherwise excellent hymn of Dr. Watts, 54th, 1st book, are in my estimation an entire departure from the Scripture doctrine; both in reference to the idea that our being chosen was an after act, and as to the notion of our souls being chosen in Christ.

But to return to the subject, if there are any passages of Scripture having reference to justification, which thus represent it or bring it to view as an act passed in eternity, I have never discovered them, neither have the advocates of that sentiment, as far as I have seen, brought them forward. Besides there are texts which, so far as I understand them, plainly contradict that idea. As Rom.4:25, "Who was delivered for our offenses and was raised again for our justification." If the sentence of justification in behalf of the church of Christ was actually passed in eternity I cannot conceive how Christ only eighteen hundred years ago was raised for our justification. We needed not to be twice justified before God. "For by one offering He {Christ} hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." {Heb.10:14} Remember, it was by one offering He perfected. They could not be justified from all things without being perfected, and the one offering which perfected them was that making His soul an offering for sin; that offering of His body once for all, which He has accomplished on Calvary, as a time act. {Isa.53:10 & Heb.10:10}.

Again, according to Rom.3:24, we are "justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." This justification must be the act of God, being "freely by His grace," and it is through the "redemption that is in Christ Jesus." If so, the act of justification cannot be considered as actually passed until the redemption was actually made. Redemption is "through His blood." {Eph.1:7 & Col.1:14}. Again, "In the fulness of time, God sent forth His Son made of a woman and made under the law to redeem them that were under the law." {Gal.4:4,5}. Hence, as redemption is so manifestly a time act for those who before "were under the law," I cannot believe that the act of justification was passed until Christ was raised again. It is true Christ is said in Heb.9:12, "To have obtained eternal redemption for us;" but a moment's reflection on the passage and its connection will, I think, convince anyone that the redemption is here called

eternal, not because it existed from eternity, but because it shall be, in its effects, of eternal or everlasting duration. The fact of Christ's obtaining it denies its having eternally been, as well as the connection.

I will not multiply testimonies upon this point seeing that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established. I will just ask how it is, if justification was designed to be received as an eternal act of God that it is never thus declared in the Scriptures? The choice and predestination of God are revealed as being before the foundation of the world; also that the "purpose and grace of God" were given in Christ before the world began.

I pass to a second objection - namely: That the sentiment of eternal justification as contended for perverts the plain Scriptural use and design of the term "justification." To *justify* and *justification* are terms which have special reference to legal proceedings as admitted by all writers on the subject, and signify the act of pronouncing a person clear from charges which may have been exhibited against him. In this sense these terms are evidently used in the Scriptures. We find them connected with law, Acts 13:39, with offences, Rom.4:25, with redemption, which, of course, refers to law, Rom.3:24. It is true that as taught in the gospel, justification has a more extensive bearing as used in other cases. The decisions of human judges whether in relation to the Sinai or other laws cannot embrace futurity; but the justification which the gospel reveals embraces all futurity, as well as past transgressions; it is a clearance from all the demands of the law past, present and to come; it is a judicial pronouncing of those whom Christ hath redeemed from under the law, as legally perfect, and that forever, as Christ "by His own offering hath forever perfected them." Hence justification is in this sense, as is the redemption obtained by Christ, eternal; that is, eternal in its duration. If then the meaning of the term "justification" refers exclusively to legal proceedings, and if it is uniformly so used in the scriptures, what can it have to do with any period before the foundation of the world? Before creatures had an actual existence and before therefore the obligations of law had any place? "Where no law is, there is no transgression" so of course no charge? How then can a legal sentence of justification be passed in the absence of all charge, of all law? It will be asked, had not the children of God an existence before the foundation of the world? I answer "yes" as is evinced by that I have said of the union of Christ and His people? They existed in Christ, as His seed, His bride, His body; as Adam's bride and posterity existed in him in his

original creation. But this existence was as distinct from their existence in Adam and his posterity as Christ is distinct from Adam. And the Covenant under which they were set up and existed in Christ was equally distinct from the law under which Adam was created. This Covenant was "ordered in all things and sure;" had no requisitions to make excepting of Christ as its surety. {Heb.7:22}. This existence therefore opened no room for the requisition of a legal justification. A legal righteousness could just as soon be required of the Son in order to His enjoying the love of the Father, as it could be required of His seed and bride as they thus stood in Him, heirs with Him, to the same inheritance. Herein, I cannot help imagining that my brethren have confounded, or at least, have not kept clearly in view the distinction between the headship of Christ and Adam, and between the law and the everlasting covenant. Herein also I object to the system of my brethren upon this point as transposing the act of justification from its relation to the law, to a provision to meet a demand of the everlasting covenant.

Should any say that they do not view the sentence of justification as actually passed in eternity, but only existing in purpose to meet the predetermined event of the elect's being created in a fallible head, and being left to fall into sin, &c., I would remark that I believe in the pre-existence of such a purpose, as strongly as any of my brethren do; and not only that such purpose existed in the Divine mind, but also that God made sure and full provision in Christ as the surety of the better testament to meet all the demands of law and justice, that, should stand against the elect, as they were to be related in time to the earthly head, Adam. But why confound language by representing that which existed only in the predeterminate purpose of God as being actually past in eternity? The creation of man was as much predetermined and stood as present to the view of God as did the justification of the elect. But I have heard of none who pretended to say that man was created in eternity. Why then say that the elect were justified in eternity? By this confusion of language will you not lead men to think that when you say that the people of God were elected in eternity you mean only that God proposed to elect them in time?

I will now notice some of the arguments used to support the sentiment of eternal justification. 1st. The argument drawn from the everlasting love of God to His people. This argument is that God could not have loved them as sinners, and therefore that He must have previously justified them that He might love them. But really if these premises were correct I do

not see how this provision of justification would help the difficulty any. For according to this argument God must have extended His *electing love* to a people who were not then fit objects of His love, and provided for them a redemption in His Son, the strongest possible expression of His love, in order to justify them, and this done, that He might love them.

The premises, however, on which this, to me, absurd conclusion rests is wrong. Christ and not Adam is the channel through which the love of God flows to His people. Viewed in Christ their Head, and in that life which they had in Him, I may confidently ask what sin was then in Him as their Head to bar the love of the Father from them? And what love was there to charge a failure upon Him? Christ speaks of the Father having "loved them {His people} as He had loved Him." John 17:23. The Father loved Him as His only begotten Son, and not as having a legal righteousness to justify Him. And if He loved them as He loved Him, He loved them in Christ as His children and joint heirs with Christ; and above what a legal righteousness could entitle them to. The truth is, Christ as the only begotten Son of God and Head of the church, had a glory with the Father before the world was, which no law servitude, no legal obedience could add to; and when about finishing His servitude under the law as the Redeemer of His people, He prays the Father to restore Him to that same glory. And what is more, He says to the Father, "the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them." {John 17:5 & 22}. And surely, if Christ had given them, through their union with Him, that glory which He had with the Father, nothing which the law could impart could be necessary to make them lovely in the sight of God. Again, although it pleased the Father that the members of Christ's body should have an earthly existence, as such be under the law and fall under its curse; yet that law with all its divine rigor could no more destroy the love which God in eternity had placed upon them in His Son, than the Sinai law thundering its curses from Mount Ebal {Deut.27:13-26} against the posterity of Abraham, could disannul the promise which had been confirmed only four hundred and thirty years before, of God in Christ, that is, to Abraham. {Gal.3:16,17}.

As another plea for the doctrine of eternal justification, it is asked, if we admit that the sentence of justification was passed eighteen hundred years ago in behalf of the whole church of Christ, why not admit that it was passed before the foundation of the world? I answer, for two of the best possible reasons. First, because eighteen hundred years ago, Christ completed the redemption of His church, by which they were

cleared from all the demands of the law in Him, it was therefore fitting that the sentence of justification should then be declared in their favor, in and through Him their Head. But previous to Christ's being made of a woman and made under the law, the redemption of His church from under the law was not actually paid, and the sentence of justification could not therefore previously be passed in their favor, without clearing Him, as He stood as their Head through whom the sentence must pass, and as one with them, from His obligation to suffer the penalty of the law, and without making void the law. Second, the Scriptures declare that Christ, eighteen hundred years ago, was raised for our {the church's} justification, but they no where declare that she was justified antecedent to His redemption. Again it is argued from the doctrine of imputation that the church was justified in eternity. To carry this out it has been said that it was in consequence of the sins of the elect having been imputed to Christ, and His righteousness, which if it had remained His own, would have sustained Him under the load of their guilt, having been imputed to them, that He was subjected to fall under the curse of the law. But this is not the way I have read the Scriptures. If I have read them right, this position must fall. First, it calls for a double righteousness; for if Christ originally had such a righteousness as the sins of His people called for, to shelter them, He needed it not, only as He was one with them; and if therefore it sheltered them it must equally have sheltered Him as one with them, so that the curse could not have troubled either, the Head or the body. In the second place, the Scriptures teach me that Christ had not originally such a righteousness as was called for by the sins of His people to cover them. What righteousness was this? Remember that their sins were altogether sins under the law, the righteousness therefore which could counterbalance them could be nothing other than a perfect actual obedience to the law, a complete honoring it as a transgressed law. This righteousness, holy and pure as He was before, Christ had not actually, until He was made under the law, took upon Him the form of a servant, became obedient unto death, &c. Let us see how the Scriptures read upon this point. "For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through suffering." {Heb.5:9}. Hence, there was a perfection, a completing, wanting in Christ as He stood connected with His people in their apostasy, and as their deliverer from sin, until He was "made perfect through suffering." Again, "He made Him to be sin for us," not because we had been made the

righteousness of God out of Him - but, "that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." II Cor.5:21. More I need not repeat, but read for yourselves.

Another argument in support of eternal justification is drawn from the fact of the Old Testament Saints having been accounted righteous, or justified. The conclusion drawn is that if the sentence of justification was not passed until the resurrection of Christ, all that lived before His coming must have remained under the condemnation of the law. If there was nothing brought to light touching this point in the Scriptures, the above would appear a very plausible conclusion. Justification as presented to view in the Scriptures is in a two-fold relation.

The first is the public declaration from the throne of God of the justification of the whole body of Christ collectively, though having reference to every individual member thereof. This transaction was wholly with and through Christ as the Husband, and surety of His church. Her sins were laid on Him, law and justice looked to Him for satisfaction; He met the demand in that nature from which the law required it, and having in His death fully satisfied the demand, was raised again for the justification of His people. In the resurrection of Jesus by the power of God, in the same body in which He was delivered for the offenses of His people, not only was justice declared to be satisfied, and therefore their justification made manifest in Him; but also the righteousness of God was made manifest in justifying whosoever believeth in Jesus and also in the remission of sins that were past, or previous to the coming of Christ. Rom.3:35,26 & Heb.9:15. Here, therefore in this public declaration of justification, there was a reference to the individual justification of the saints under the former dispensation, as though that had been done in anticipation of the great sacrifice to be offered by Christ.

The second relation is the experimental justification of individuals. This is at the bar of the believer's conscience, faith is the medium by which this act of justification is communicated. "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." {Rom.5:1}. This justification is necessary to our enjoying peace with God, and secures it. As it is by that faith which "is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen;" and as Christ was set forth from the beginning as the object of faith; hence said to the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," {Rev.13:8} I see not why the Old Testament Saints might not realize something of this justification and peace which we experience. But that they did not experience it in the

same perfection I shall have occasion shortly to show. By Christ's being the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," I presume no one will contend that He was then actually sacrificed, and by the expression, "from the foundation of the world," I do not understand the act of appointing Christ, by the Father to be the sacrifice of His people, intended for that was from *before* the foundation of the world, I consider the expression as having special reference to the fact of His being set forth from the first introduction of sin; in promises, types, &c., as the Lamb which God had provided for sacrifice, and as the object of faith. Thus Abel offered his lamb *in faith*, {Heb.11:4} not faith in His sacrifice, but in the bloody sacrifice of the Lamb of God as showed forth by his. "For without the shedding of blood there is no remission," {Heb.9:22} consequently no justification. How does this stand with eternal justification?

My brethren, I think, ought to admit that if the act of justification in behalf of the saints was passed before the foundation of the world, the faith of all must look back to that act to find their justification in experience, seeing this is no other than a receiving and applying by faith the justification as found in Christ. According to the notion of eternal justification, Abel's faith must have had the same back and perfect view of justification as have ours. And we to find peace with God must not stop in our view by faith at Calvary. If then the Scriptures show that the faith of the Old Testament saints looked forward instead of backward for this justification, it is proof positive against the notion of their justification having been in eternity. Not to multiply proofs where one case in point is sufficient, I will just cite to Abraham's faith, the object of which "was accounted to him for righteousness;" and ask was that in a revelation which God made to him for something past? Or was it in the promise of something future? The apostle says, and that settles the point, "that God gave it to Abraham by promise." {Gal.3:18}. See also Romans 4:20, 24, and notice the difference brought to view in this passage, in the manner in which the object of faith is presented to Abraham from what it is to us. Abraham believed that God "was able to perform that which He had promised." We believe He has performed it in that He "has raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead." I will also notice one instance of prophetic faith, namely: Isa.45:25, "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified and shall glory." This surely presents justification of something then future. Other passages will be found to correspond with the above, as this is the name whereby "He shall be called the Lord our Righteousness." {Not *was called*.}{Jer.23:6}. Hence

the Apostle's account of those worthies who went before {Heb.11:39,40}, "And these all having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." They received a *good report* - the report of good to come, but the manifestation of this *promised good* they received not. This text not only manifests that the faith of the ancients was in anticipation of good to come, but it also shows that there was an imperfection connected with their faith which nothing but the coming of the gospel day could do away. "That they without us should not be made perfect." Hence it is no wonder that the *prophets enquired* - "searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory which should follow." {I Peter 1:10,11}. There is a *glory* connected with the full manifestation of justification, which they had not. For though as the redeeming Lamb, Christ was "foreordained before the foundation of the world," yet He was not *manifested* until *these last times*, for those that *believe*. {I Pet.1:19-21}. If these texts consist with the idea that the justification of the elect was completed in eternity, I must confess my utter inability so to understand them.

From the remarks which I have interspersed with my objections to the doctrine of eternal justification, it will be discovered that my thoughts concerning justification are that as it is presented in the Scriptures, it is altogether a legal transaction; though a gospel or gracious provision that has to do with the people of God, only as they stood connected with Adam, and under the law; and with Christ, as He was involved by His union with them in the demand of the law. That its use is to manifest their clearance by the redemption of Christ from under the law, and the righteousness of God in bestowing upon them, encompassed as they are with humanity and sin, the adoption of children. It is, I think, altogether a mistaken notion that justification is what entitles the saints to heaven. Equally erroneous is the notion that Christ by His death purchased heaven for His people. This union to Christ as His bride, His body, and being the children of God, is what entitles them to the heavenly glory. Justification could no more entitle them to heaven than the law could give life. {Gal.3:27}. Hence, my view of justification is that it was a provision made for the people of God in Christ, and which they needed, wholly as they are creatures of time, and from the nature of it, that it is altogether a time act, though appointed and provided for in the counsel of eternity, as were all other time things.

In reference to the eternal standing of the elect before God, as they were set up in Christ, they forever possessed in Him a spiritual beauty, excellency, and glory which nothing arising from their connection with Adam and the law could ever add to, or diminish from, excepting on the one hand this connection was till they were delivered from it, an insuperable barrier to their inheriting the kingdom prepared for them, and indeed to their being manifested as the sons of God; and on the other hand the experimental knowledge which they thereby have of the evil and misery of sin, and of the grace, love and mercy of God, manifested in delivering them from their thralldom and sin, will enhance to them the excellency and enjoyment of their heavenly inheritance.

I have thus given a summary of my thoughts upon this subject. If they are wrong, it is because I have a wrong understanding of the Scriptures upon this point. If they are right, it is because God has graciously given me to understand the Scriptures concerning this doctrine, for I certainly never learned it from men. Were it not that the Scriptural account of this doctrine appears to me so clearly to support my views concerning justification being a law, and time transaction, the circumstance that so many more excellent, and more gifted brethren differ from me in their judgment concerning it, together with the reflection, *what am I* that I should be made thus to differ; would lead me much to doubt the correctness of my views. As it is, I must retain them, till I am led to see some direct Scriptural authority for the doctrine of *eternal justification*.

With love to the brethren, and a hope that I may be found to share with them in the perfection there is in Christ Jesus our Lord. I subscribe myself yours, S. Trott.

P.S. I wish not my apologies, with which I commenced this communication, construed as a plea with my brethren not to answer my objections if they see fit. As I wish on this and all other religious subjects to see eye to eye with them, if any of them can give a more correct view of this subject founded upon direct Scriptural authority I shall be glad to see it. I would further remark that perhaps some may think the view I have given of justification, and especially from my remarks being especially designed to illustrate those views in distinction from the sentiment of *eternal justification* are calculated to diminish the importance of this gospel doctrine; but I do not view it as presented in the Scriptures in a light any less important by its standing so immediately and intimately connected with the *actual obedience* of the Son of God *unto*

death; an obedience yielded especially to bring about the accomplishment of this act, than though it was revealed as, like predestination, an absolute act of the Divine Mind, or as being passed in anticipation of the obedience of Christ. The fact is, the grace, love and mercy of God is far more displayed in the act of justification by viewing it as thus involving as essential to it, the actual obedience unto death of the Son of God, than they could be, by separating the act in any measure from the obedience and sufferings of Christ. And it can be no less precious to the believer by viewing it as coming to him, a poor, guilty, law-condemned sinner of Adam's race, alone through the righteousness of Christ brought in by His actual substitution of his law place. And as they are made to view it, in their experience, whatever may be said of their having been eternally justified.

Fairfax C.H., Virginia, Nov.22nd, 1837.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.5 {1837}

Views on Justification Defended.

Brother Beebe: - I much regret that my thoughts on Justification have been so much misunderstood, as they evidently have been, by several worthy brethren.

I cannot account for this so great misapprehension of what I advanced on this subject, but upon the ground that these brethren have in their early experience, as I did, drank in from the writings of men or the preaching they heard, the notion of eternal justification, along with the doctrine of salvation by grace, and had both thus blended together in their connection of the plan of salvation; the one their experience told them was true, and they therefore did not doubt the truth of the other. Hence when they found me objecting to the notion of the eternity of the act of justification, although I admitted all that many of them contend for - its existence in purpose - they felt as though I was striking a blow at the whole system of salvation by grace, and they therefore had not patience to examine candidly what I did write. As however brother Pitcher has proposed certain queries involving some of his objections to my views, and others have also communicated their objections, I feel it my duty to meet those objections, as I desire that mine should be met, that is, by a fair examination of them, so far as I am capable, and the removing of them so far as the scriptures appear to warrant it.

But previous to coming to brother Pitcher's queries, I wish to notice certain ideas which seem included in the observation, which in substance has been made by several, namely: of regret or surprise that Brother Beebe should have admitted my "thoughts concerning justification" into the Signs. This remark might have originated either from the idea that my communication was a departure from Old School principles, or that it tended to do hurt by producing divisions among the brethren, or that it was calculated to weaken our cause, and occasion our opposers to rejoice. Feeling confident as I do, that my views are supported both by the scriptures, and by experience, I think there is not so much danger of their injuring the *lambs*, as there is of setting the *old sheep* to butting.

First: *The idea of a departure from Old School principles.* Brother Beebe certainly stands pledged that the Signs should be devoted exclusively to the Old School Baptist cause, and I am confident he has no disposition to forfeit that pledge. But this term as defined by Brother Beebe in the Signs, and by the brethren meeting at Black Rock, when it was adopted to designate our views and stand, has a meaning different from that in which it has been sometimes used; as when those who adhered to Dr. Gill's system, have been called *old school* in distinction from those who embraced Fuller's gospel. The sense in which it was adopted at Black Rock, and in which we use it, passing by all human schools, points out the fact that we profess to belong only to the school of Christ, and to submit alone to what He has taught in the scripture, in matters of religion. It indeed has a bearing towards the ancient baptists, in reference to the prominent trait in their character that in accordance with their professing to receive the scriptures as the only rule of their faith and practice, they required a "Thus saith the Lord," for what they believed and practiced as religion. Were it not thus, were our Old School brethren, in the stand we took at Black Rock, pledged to any particular system taught by men, I would be willing to be cast out as evil among you, - the New School would then have good ground for calling it *Black Rockism*, for it would be but one among the many *isms* into which the religious world is divided.

In my first attempt to preach, I was admonished by a female friend, to be cautious, never to have to say "Alas Master! for it was borrowed;" and before this, on a particular occasion, the expression of Paul had been applied to me with some weight, namely: "Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." Gal.1:16. The impressions arising from these two circumstances, have in some measure, followed me thus far

through life, and I wish them not effaced, for I feel more and more their importance. If I were to give myself up to depend on, and be led by men, in religion, I might as well take Fuller for my master, as Gill; and Arminius or Socinus, as Calvin; for as a system that is only learned of men, will be of little use in reference to salvation; it would therefore be good policy to choose that which is most popular. If however, we speak of the merit of systems, in reference to their comparative consistency with the scriptures, I should prefer Calvin's to that of Arminius or Socinus and Gill's, by far, to that of Fuller. I was much pleased with an anecdote which I read somewhere not long since, of a boy and a priest; the priest was exhorting the boy to come to confession, offering to admit him for a small sum. The boy enquired, Do you confess? O yes, said the priest. To whom? To the bishop. Do you have to pay? Yes, a large sum. Does the bishop confess? Yes, to the Pope. Does he pay? Yes, roundly. Does the Pope confess? Yes. To whom? To Jesus Christ. And does he have to pay? O no, Christ pardons freely. Then {says the boy} I believe I will in future make confession only to Christ, that being the safest as well as the cheapest. So I think, if we must first try the systems of men by the scriptures, before we decide which we will take as our guide, we had better, as the safest way, take the scriptures only as our guide. I have seen so much evil resulting from those who preach from books, &c., who are in a habit of borrowing their ideas and illustrations of scripture from men, that I wish not to fall into the practice myself, nor to have my brethren do it. To notice but one of the evils to which I refer, we have all felt the disappointment of certain persons falling away, whom we once esteemed sound brethren. Who were they? As to preachers, they were Gillites, or some other *ites*; they preached *Gill*, not Christ, any farther than they preached Him through Gill's view of Him. Show me the man who preaches sound doctrine as he has been taught by the Holy Ghost from the scriptures, and I will show you the one who will stand the test of the world's persecution or its flatteries.

But I do not wish it to be understood from these remarks, that I am opposed to the reading of human authors. I only wish them read as the productions of fallible men, and that we should be guarded against receiving or retailing their ideas as truth, because they advanced them. If the Holy Spirit is pleased to give me an idea, or understanding of a passage of scripture, through the instrumentality of any man, it is just as valuable as though given directly through the scriptures, it equally becomes my own. My brethren, know the difference between receiving an idea merely because it appears plausible,

or because it is the opinion of one in whom we have confidence; and its being given us by the Holy Ghost. In the latter case it is spoken to us, as Isaiah says, "with a strong hand," {Isa.8:11,} the scriptures are brought to our mind as supporting it, and we feel the internal witness of its truth.

To conclude my protracted remarks on this point. Had my "Thoughts on Justification," been a manifest departure from the scriptural account of that subject, Brother Beebe should not have published it; but if it was sustained by the scriptures, it was not a departure from Old School principles; and before my brethren decide on its being a departure, I hope they will examine it fully, comparing it, not with Gill, but the scripture.

Secondly. *The idea that it may do hurt by producing divisions among the brethren.* I did hope, and I still hope, that our brethren had counted the cost, and were conscientious in taking the Old School stand upon the platform of the scriptures, as our only rule of faith and practice. If, in accordance with this stand, we come to the enquiry raised upon any point of doctrine, desirous of unlearning all that we have learned not from the scriptures, and willing to abide by the plain declaration and construction of scripture, by comparing scripture with scripture: I, for myself, think that such enquiries, instead of creating divisions, will produce a greater oneness of views among us. But, my brethren, we ought to have our hearts more deeply impressed than they are with the fact that the blessed Holy Spirit hath revealed in the scriptures everything which Infinite Wisdom saw proper we should believe and practice in religion, and that agreeable to the prediction going before, {Isa.35:8 & Heb.1:2,} it being so plain, that *he may run that readeth.* Excuse my digression, while I say, not that he *may read while he runneth*, but that reading it, it will be to him so plain, and give him so much confidence, that he will immediately *run* forward in the command, and not linger along as we do when in uncertainty.

To return, the time is coming when the watchmen *shall see eye to eye*, {Isaiah 52:8}. Before that time comes there will probably be some annoyance of feelings, some disturbing of our repose on many points; for when it comes, depend upon it, all the systems of men, with all our pre-conceived notions, will be laid aside, and we shall allow the scriptures without wresting or distorting them, to decide for us. There is no possibility of an entire union of views, upon any other ground, whilst we are allowed to read the scriptures for ourselves. But if we come to the investigation of a subject, this or any other, each striving for the mastery, and determined at all costs to

maintain his own views, we had better let it alone, for it will then be, as Brother Beebe says, a *war of words*.

Third. *The notion of its tending to weaken our cause, and occasion our opposers to triumph*. I beg leave entirely to dissent on this point, for I am confident that every unscriptural tenet or practice, which is retained among us, so far weakens our cause, weakens us in the race, and gives our opposers, who are watching us with eagle eyes, occasion to doubt the sincerity of our profession, in pretending to take the scriptures as our only guide. If my bringing forward this subject should lead my brethren to establish the truth of the doctrine of eternal justification, by plain scriptural proofs, it will throw confusion into the whole host of Arminians and Fullerites, for they have heretofore ridiculed it as a mere visionary whim. If, on the other hand, they through my instrumentality, should be convinced that this sentiment which has been so long cherished by them, is not in accordance with scriptural revelation, and should abandon it, this would be to the world, a fresh and strong proof of their sincerity in professing the Old School stand. I now come to Brother Pitcher's queries.

1st. Query. - "Is justification a spiritual blessing?" My definition upon this point in my "Thoughts &c." was, "That it is altogether a *legal transaction, though a gospel provision*, that it had to do with the people of God, only as they stood connected with Adam and under the law." As a gospel provision, it is properly a *spiritual blessing*.

2nd. Query. - "When were the people of God blessed with all spiritual blessings?" Had I answered this without looking again at the text, Eph.1:3, and connection, I should have said, before the foundation of the world. And I still say that in setting up Christ from everlasting, and His people in Him, God then gave them, in Him, all spiritual blessings. Hence the Apostle says, "Who hath blessed us ... *according* as He hath chosen us &c." Eph.1:3 & 4. But I now think from the general use of the terms, *bless, blessed* &c., and from the connection, that the Apostle designed by the expression, *hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings*, that God had brought the Ephesian brethren, to an actual experience of those blessings, *according* to His election and predestination &c., verses 4 & 5. The term *heavenly*, here, and which occurs also in Eph.2:6 & 3:10, and to which the translators have in each instance added the word *place*, I understand as designed to distinguish between these blessings and those promised to national Israel, the one class belonging to the gospel dispensation, and everlasting covenant, the other to the legal dispensation, and Sinai covenant. See Heb.9:23 & 12:22.

But not to insist on this exposition as necessary to support my views of justification; admitting that the Apostle's reference was, to the giving them these blessings in Christ, and what proof will it afford of their having been actually justified in eternity? Brother Pitcher will, I presume, admit that the *sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth*, through which "we were chosen to salvation," {II Thes.2:13,} also the sending forth "the Spirit of His Son into our hearts crying, Abba Father," {Gal.4:5 & 6} are included in the *all spiritual blessings*. Yet, my brother will not contend, that although *chosen to be holy*, we were actually sanctified by the Spirit; or though *predestinated to the adoption of children*, we were actually *sealed with the spirit of adoption*, or that we were actually brought to *believe the truth*, before the foundation of the world. If then Eph.1:3, does not prove the above to be eternal acts how does it prove that justification was an eternal act?

3rd. *Query.* - "Was justification included in the gift of grace?" Yes, and so was being *saved and called with a holy calling*. {II Tim.1:9.} Yet our being actually *saved and called*, brother Pitcher will admit were time acts, and why not admit that justification was so also, unless he finds some Scripture which teaches otherwise?

4th. *Query.* - "Was justification included in the everlasting covenant?" Yes.

5th. *Query.* - "Were all things included in the covenant?" Yes, all things connected with the elect, from their being set up in Christ from everlasting, to their being brought home to glory. Not only their justification, but also their creation and fall in Adam, their individual birth, their call by grace, &c. And my brother, were the actual existence of all these things of the *same date* with the everlasting covenant? They were all unalterably fixed and secured in the everlasting covenant. The creation and fall of man were as fully contemplated in that covenant as the redemption and justification of the elect were. And yet my brethren would have thought me wilder, than they did think me in my views concerning justification, had I asserted that the creation and fall of man, were not time acts, but that they were eternal, or even had I said that redemption was not a time act, {although as I before showed the Scriptures speak of justification as resting on the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,} they would have condemned as contradicting several express assertions of Scripture, such as Gal.4:4 & 5.

Brother Pitcher adds, "I would wish our brother to remember that the Scriptures speak of the eternal purpose."

My dear brother I do remember it; and I may have occasion to recall it to your remembrance before I close.

6th. *Query.* - "Did the eternal purpose include all things? And are not all things which are therein embraced, of the same date?" All things are included therein; and the purpose is of one date - *eternal*. But, was the actual shedding of Christ's blood, of the same date, with the sitting up of Christ as Mediator?

7th. *Query.* - "Will our brother attempt to exclude the justification of a sinner from the eternal designs of God?" If brother Pitcher had read with more close attention, my "Thoughts on Justification" he would not have asked this and some other of his questions, I will not now repeat what I then said on this head, as I must beg my brother to examine that communication more impartially, from a desire, which I have no doubt, he possesses, to do me justice, if from no other motive.

Brother Pitcher says, "It appears to me that our brother has confounded the Spirit's work in making the things of God manifest to the Saints, with the everlasting purpose of Jehovah &c." I should have thought that even a hasty glance at my former communication would have given my brethren a different view of it from this. Had he blamed me for making a distinction between the eternal purpose of God to justify the elect, and the actual justifying of them in the clearing away their sins by the shedding of the blood of Christ I should not have wondered, seeing he appears not to admit that distinction. But besides making that distinction, I also noticed particularly the different views which the Scriptures give of justification. The one having reference to it as passed on Christ and His people in Him, in His resurrection, being the act of the Father as exercising the prerogatives of the Divine Throne; and that which passes upon the believer, at the bar of conscience, being the work of the Holy Spirit.

8th. *Query.* - "Was not the Spirit of God as competent to reveal 1800 years before as 1800 years subsequent to the coming of Christ?" He truly was, for to the prophets, "He testified *before hand* the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow;" {I Pet.1:11,} as He now testifies to the believer that Christ *has suffered* for his sins. But whilst He could reveal in promise that the *woman's seed should bruise the serpent's head*, and that "the sceptre should not depart from Judah, &c., until Shiloh come," {Gen.3:15 & 49:10,} He could not, at the time of delivering those promises, have revealed, in the sense thus promised, that Christ *had bruised* the serpent's head, or that He *had come*, because He is the

Spirit of truth.

The next remark of brother Pitcher which seems to require particular notice, is this, "Our brother's argument on the *tenses* will not carry him out; for by his rule of argument it would be no difficult task to prove that the Lord Jesus Christ was crucified before the days of Isaiah." He refers to Isaiah 53. I did remark on Abraham's faith resting on the promise of God, which implied that the object was yet *future*, I also noticed two or three other Scriptures which looked forward to justification as then *future*. I readily admit that the prophesy of Isaiah 53 and other prophesies, speak of things to come in the *past tense*. But to me there appears a very great difference between the Holy Spirit, speaking of things *to come*, as though they already *were*, and the speaking of things that actually *had been*, as though they yet *were not*. Because it is the prerogative of God *to call the things that be not* {that is as yet manifested} *as though they were*. Rom.4:17. See also Psalms 139:16. As it was thus His prerogative, God was pleased in some instances, to exercise it in delivering prophesies of events, which of course already existed in His purpose, though future in their manifestation, to speak of them in the *past tense*, as a greater confirmation to those who heard, of their certainty. But can it be consistent with God to speak of things that are actually past, as being not past, that is being yet future? Certainly not; for God *cannot lie*.

Let us again notice some of the texts on which I before remarked. For instance: II Cor.5:21 - "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." Now I appeal to the candor of brother Pitcher, to say whether any person having a suitable reverence of the Scriptures would dare, in an exposition of this text, to transpose the order of the tense? And if it is allowed to stand, as it reads, does it not plainly show that the *making Him to be sin for us*, was a prior act, and one designed to bring about the other, as an effect; namely: *that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him*? And on this one text, if there were no other, might I, at the bar of candor, rest my proof, that our being made the *righteousness of God*, that is being justified *in Him*, was subsequent to, and an effect of Christ being *made sin for us*.

Another text is Isaiah 45:25. "In the Lord *shall* all the seed of Israel *be justified*, and shall glory." Now if my brother would presume to read the former part of this text, thus, "In the Lord *have* all the seed of Israel *from eternity been justified* would he carry out the change and say *and have gloried*? I think not, for he is too sensible of human depravity, to think of

establishing as a fact, that the elect have from eternity *gloried in the Lord*. I am willing to let the whole text stand, just as the Holy Ghost directed it to be penned. But my brother suffered his zeal in defense of his sentiment, to lead him to remark inconsiderately upon this point; for so far, as what he said relative to the *tenses*, he believed, it will throw confusion and uncertainty over the whole language of Scripture.

Brother Pitcher says further on Isaiah 53 that "they viewed the work as accomplished &c." They rested on the work of Christ as being as sure, as though it had been accomplished. But I cannot agree that they viewed it *as accomplished*. See I Pet.1:10 & 11. Isaiah, I think well knew that he was prophesying of the Messiah who was yet *to grow up* &c., in distinction from thinking that he was narrating events already accomplished or past.

Brother Pitcher again says, - "Our brother's remarks on faith would lead us to conclude that he believed in two faiths." I would reply, that I supposed it would be so understood, that my argument on this point rested on the fact that the principle of faith was the same in the Old Testament saints as in those under the New. The object, Christ, embraced by both, I spoke of as being the same. But I spake of a different vision which the patriarchs had of Christ, from what we have; that they looked forward to Christ, and we look back to His work as finished. I will add that they had to look through shadows of the night, whilst we behold the sun of righteousness as having arisen in the full splendor of gospel day. Hence their vision as I noticed from several Scriptures, was not so clear as ours. If the Scriptures support me in this, as I think they do, my brother, must not condemn me. I in one instance used the expression, *prophetic faith*. If this is what brother P. refers to, I will just ask him, were all who believed in the Messiah, under the Old Testament, prophets? If they were not, did the Holy Spirit give to all, faith to believe that the *word of the Lord* was given to them, or in other words, that they had a message from God to deliver to the people concerning events to come? This distinction is all I intended.

9th. *Query*. - "How could the mercy of the Lord be from everlasting to everlasting toward His children, if they were not viewed as justified in Christ?"

I would in return ask, does mercy imply a previous act of justification toward the object of it? For instance, two persons are brought before a court charged with crime; one is proven innocent and acquitted, that is justified, and the other is found guilty and condemned. Which of these is an object of mercy? Not the first, the law sustains him; but the second

would be very likely to feel himself an object of mercy, and to sue for pardon. If this is a correct illustration of the distinction between justification and mercy, we see how the mercy of the Lord, foreseeing the fallen state of the elect in Adam, could go before, and provide for their being both pardoned and justified through the redemption which should be wrought out by Christ; for both come through that channel. See Rom.3:24, Eph.1:7 & Acts 13:38,39.

In reference to my brother's concluding remarks, in which he represents my views as involving a change in God; I would observe, first: That he does not rightly represent my views by the expressions, "View His people in Christ, and *not justified*," according to the common import of that expression. My views, as represented by me were that the elect as set up and viewed in Christ, in their relation to Him, needed no justification, that in Him as a Head, they were free from the charge of guilt, were not set up under the law and possessed in Him, as He *dwelt in the bosom of the Father*, a heavenly glory and excellency, superior to a legal righteousness. That though viewed in another relation, according to the purpose of God, to create them a fallible head, as fallen, condemned, &c., yet, as their oneness in Christ could not be broken, it seemed that He should in the fulness of time, come with them under the law, and by His perfect obedience to it, magnify it, and accomplish their complete redemption, and hence their justification. Hence this oneness of Christ with His people, constituted, and on His suretyship could justice suspend its demands until the appointed time, fixed by Eternal Wisdom; and as Christ was, in His suretyship, in promises, types, &c., revealed unto the Old Testament saints, they embraced Him by faith, and rested their plea and hope for acceptance with God, on the assurance thus given them that the Messiah should, as the anti-type of their sacrifices, remove their sins, and be for them righteousness. Hence as faith is the *substance of things hoped for*, and the evidence of things not seen, they felt justification in this reliance, at the bar of conscience, as we do; or to refer to another scriptural figure, Christ as thus embraced by their faith, was *imputed to them for righteousness*. Now, my brother, if you can think of God as viewing His people, as existing in Christ from eternity, and also as viewing them as brought into existence, *in time* as the children of Adam, without any change in Him, I see not why you may not admit that God could view them, as in Christ, as free from legal charge, and yet see them in time according to His foreknowledge and purpose, existing, in their relation to Adam, as fallen creatures, needing a justifying righteousness,

&c., and bring that in through the substitution of His Son in their law place, according to covenant provision, without any change being in God.

Having thus passed through brother Pitcher's Queries without finding anything which, to me, appears to bear against my views of justification, I must beg leave to present an additional objection to the idea of justification having been from eternity.

The objection I am about to propose, rests only against those who believe that the elect actually were justified in eternity. To those who believe that the justification of the elect existed only in purpose in eternity, I have nothing to object, except their saying one thing, and meaning another when they speak of eternal justification.

But the idea that the sins of the elect, actually were from eternity so transferred, from them to Christ, that they stood justified from them, necessarily involves the idea of the whole being a *third-person* transaction, like human suretyships, and therefore leads to the fundamental error of Fuller, namely: a denial of the eternal *oneness* of Christ and His people. Do you ask, how is this? I answer, that if the sins of the elect were in eternity actually laid on Christ, and He was found, as the scriptures testify, only a little more than 1800 years ago, *bearing them in His own body on the tree*, and being made a curse, &c., He must have been during that whole period, a *sin bearer* exposed to the demands of the law, and therefore in a state of condemnation; and hence, whilst the elect stood on the bright side of the throne He stood on the dark side, as much removed from them, as were the Egyptians from the Israelites by the cloud.

I admit that in one point of view, Christ is, by the scriptures, represented as a third person in the work of redemption, namely: in His office of Mediator. Paul says, "As a mediator, is not a mediator of one, but God is one." Gal.3:20. Again the Mediatorship of Christ is ascribed to His humanity; for "there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the *man*, Christ Jesus." I Tim.2:5. And Christ, in His humanity, we know was separated from sinners. He was the *seed of the woman*, not of Adam, and therefore free from human depravity. See Heb.7:26. Hence whilst Christ was in His humanity, as a third person, that He could sustain the office of Mediator between God and man, could suffer, without Divinity suffering, and could bear the curse without its coming on His people; He was, on the other hand, so completely one with God, yea, was *God manifest in the flesh*, that His blood is spoken of as the blood of God, Acts 20:28; and so one with His

people, that the punishment which was laid on Him, is spoken of as laid on the church, and she is said to have "received of the Lord's hand, double for all her sins." Isa.40:2. And He even confesses the foolishness and sin of His people, as His. Psa.69:5. And therefore He actually represented them on the cross, "For both He that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified are all of one." Heb.2:11. The language in general of the scripture on this point, that "He bore our sins in His own body on the tree" - "Was made a curse for us" - "I lay down my life for the sheep," &c., is to me very different from that *severing* notion which represents Him as suffering to put away sin from *Himself*. The piece taken from the "Gospel Standard," No.4 of the present Volume of *Signs*, pg.31, contains the following sentence, "Hereby sin was honourably removed. It was removed from the elect in Jesus by imputation, and Jesus removed it from Himself, by making an atonement *for it* by the shedding of His blood." What is this but completely severing Christ from His people? Sin is transferred from the elect to Christ as a third person, by imputation, and Christ's death was to remove it from Himself, not from *them*. This sentence is objectionable on another point; it, like Fuller, represents Christ as making an atonement, not for His people, but *for it*, for *sin*.

These brethren may be pleased with viewing themselves thus severed from Christ, whilst He was agonizing on the cross, they standing off yonder having nothing to do with His sufferings, they being already justified, and it being wholly a transaction between Him and divine justice. I have been made to shudder reflecting on this subject, to think what must have been the consequence if ever for one moment I had been severed from Christ, left to stand distinct from Him, my Husband, my Head, my Life, my only Protector! I have not a faith that can apprehend myself justified and accepted with God merely on account of my sins having been imputed to Christ; I must behold Him representing me, and in my very stead, suffering the penalty as due to my transgressions, and bringing in an everlasting righteousness as mine, before I can feel confidence of my acceptance with God. Doth not the scriptures authorize this view of oneness in reference to righteousness. "This is the name whereby He shall be called *The Lord our Righteousness*," and "This is the name wherewith *she* shall be called *The Lord our Righteousness*." Jer.23:6 & 33:16. Both are in these texts, identified as one, having the same peculiar name. If I look back to my first faith, I found myself bound under the condemnation of the law, justly exposed to its curses, expecting them to fall directly upon me, when behold, to my astonishment and joy, I saw Christ, not

abstractly as having my sins imputed to Him, but as stepping in between me and the drawn sword of Justice, screening me from the stroke, and receiving it in my stead, just as the ram was substituted in the place of Issac on the altar. Hence the following verse a little varied from the original, expresses my faith on this point:

“One on the cross, one when He rose,
One when He triumphed o’er His foes,
One when in heaven He took His seat,
While seraphs sang, all hell’s defeat.”

My faith and feelings may not be those of a christian, but hoping they are, and therefore that they agree with my brethren’s, I have dwelt upon them to remind them that their experience, as well as the express language of scripture, as I showed in my former communication, go against their favorite sentiments concerning justification.

But my brethren will say we have no idea of admitting your conclusion, no notion of being severed from our Lord. I know it, my brethren, but must you not admit this to be the legitimate conclusion of your views, concerning imputation and justification? How can you sustain the position that the church was one with Christ, as His body, and yet that whilst He, the Head, was under the condemnation of the law, she, the body, was justified from the demands of the law? That His people were in Him as His seed, as Adam’s posterity were in him, and yet that He fell under the curse of the law, whilst they were raised above it? No, my brethren, as our union with Adam involved us in the fall with him, so our union to Christ involved Him in the condemnation of the law with us, and that same union raised us above the law with Him, when He had borne the curse. That is, if you admit our oneness with Christ, our being in Him, you must admit that we stood in Him, when He stood, fell in Him, when He fell under the curse, arose in Him, when He was *raised again*, and therefore justified in Him, when He was justified from the demands of the law, and not before. See Eph.2:4-8; Col.2:10-14 & Isa.26:19. But I must stop.

Brother Pitcher will please to recall to mind what he wished me to remember. Yours, &c.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, April 19th, 1838.

S. Trott.

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A Nazarene.

An explanation of Mat.2:23. "And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets: He shall be called a Nazarene."

Brother Beebe:—From the conversation which passed when I was last in Alexandria, on the above text, I was led on returning home to give the subject a more close examination. The result of this examination I will now offer to your readers as an illustration of this scripture. The apparent difficulties of this passage, are: 1st. That there are no prophecies in scripture directly asserting that Christ should be called a *Nazarite* or according to the Greek termination a *Nazarene*; and 2nd. That He was principally called a Nazarene from the mere circumstance of His being brought up in Nazareth. There is some difficulty in deciding from which of the two Hebrew words the name of the city *Nazareth* was derived. One is *Nazar* which signifies *separated*; the other *Natzar* which primarily signifies *preserved*. These words, in Hebrew, are both spelled with three letters, the one with *zain* answering to *z*, in English; the other with *tzadhe* answering to *tz*, but both answering to the letter, *zeta* in Greek. Parkhurst {in Hebrew Lexicon} considers Nazareth derived from *Nazar*, others derive it from *Natzar*, and Calmet and others derive it indifferently from either. As the Evangelist refers to the prophets without specifying any one, we may with Calmet, consider both words, and their use in the scriptures embraced. Whatever may have been the design of the founders of the city in giving it this name, it was evidently designed of God to point out, as the designated residence of the true Nazarite and Branch, or the *separated* and *preserved One*. The expression, "He shall be called a Nazarene," means nothing less than that He should be made manifest as the Nazarene: the term *called* is frequently used in this sense in the scriptures, as in Jer.23:6.

I will 1st, mention the word Nazarene as derived from *Nazar*, and show some of the instances wherein, in the use of that word, Christ is prophesied of. *Nazar* is the word to point out the Nazarite under his vow of separation. Here permit me to remark, that vows generally, as recognized by the Levitical law, had a typical reference to the Messiah, to that suretyship which He had entered into, and to His devoting Himself to God in the place of legal sacrifices, and in behalf of His people, hence the strictness with which vows were to be observed. Lev.27:1-29; Num.30:1-15. Hence Jephtha's affliction in consequence of his vow: hence Christ says, "Ought not Christ

to have suffered these things, &c." Luke 24:26, and the Psalmist I think, personating Christ says: "Thy vows are upon me O God." Ps.56:12. If it is not so, and the laws concerning vows are to teach the spiritual Israelite the rigidness with which he must perform his promises to God, what a miserable case should we be in!

But to return to the subject, the law concerning the Nazarite, {Num.6} required that the person, during the period specified in his vow should refrain from wine and everything of the fruit of the vine; should not come nigh any dead, even his nearest relatives; should not let any razor upon his head; and that he should all the days of his separation, be *holy to the Lord*. These things taught typically, or prophetically the perfect holiness of Christ, in His humanity, His entire separation from the depravity and defilement of sinners. Heb.7:26. And thus also was showed the separation of His people in Him, from sin and the world *which lieth in wickedness*. The Nazarite in not being allowed to drink any wine or anything fermented with the grape, showed forth Christ as acting in the work of salvation, from His own Divine, and not from a borrowed power, that He was not excited, nor empowered to act from anything external or derived. Hence those, who in this day would by their prayers and schemes excite and help Christ to save the world, are comparable to those who gave wine to the Nazarite to drink. Amos 2:12. But the hair of the Nazarite was the distinguishing thing in his separation. Hence Num.6:5. His hair is called the *consecration*, or rather *separation, of his God*. "Because the consecration of his God is upon his head." In verse 19, in the translation we read: "After the hair of his separation is shaven;" but the words, *the hair of* are in italics, showing that in the original it reads: "After his separation is shaven." Hence if a person died suddenly by him, he was said to have defiled the *head of his separation*, verse 9. Thus in the case of the Nazarite, it is seen that the principal part of his consecration consisted in his unshaven hair and in the case of Samson, who was a Nazarite from the womb his great strength lay in his Nazaritical locks, Judges 16:17,19 & 22. So in the unshorn glory of Christ, the Head of His Church in His contest with Satan, sin, death and the law, lies all the strength and action of His people; and the cause of their being made manifest as consecrated to God.

But it may be asked, what had Jesus' dwelling at Nazareth to do with His being a true Nazarite? I answer, first; by His being brought up at Nazareth, He had the name given Him which pointed Him out as one separated to God. 2nd. As the Nazarite was to keep himself separated from the dead

bodies even of his nearest relatives, so because Christ's brethren the Jews were now dead as a nation, as a typical people, and as a peculiar people to God, seeing that the Messiah, the promised Seed, and Substance had come out of them, and also that for their transgressions they were dead under the curse of the Sinai covenant, He must not be brought up in Judea, the national province of the Jews, but in Nazareth a city in the province of Galilee, called *Galilee of the Gentiles*. Is.9:1-2 & Mt.4:15. Thus Jeremiah prophesied of the Jews, saying: "Cut off thine hair O Jerusalem and cast it away, and take up a lamentation on high places; for the Lord hath rejected and forsaken the generation of His wrath." Jer.7:29. The word here rendered hair, is *nizer*, from *nazar*, showing that it was the *hair of their separation* which was to be cut off, having reference to the fact, that hitherto they had been a *Nazaritical* nation, a people separated from the other nations and consecrated to the Lord. Christ, as He lay in them in type and in promise, was the *Nizer*, the *separation* or *consecration* of that nation. And as Jeremiah thus intimates, in the prophecy under consideration, Jerusalem for her sins, was left to reject Christ when He came to them in His ministry; and in rejecting Him their peculiar national glory was shorn from them; the *middle wall of partition* between them and the Gentiles was broken down. And Christ being cut off from Jerusalem, became the *Nizer* in truth and in accomplishment of prophecy, or the manifestation of consecration to spiritual Israel, a people consecrated to God from both Jews and Gentiles. This, Christ intimated, was about to be accomplished by His being brought up among a mixed people, of Jews and Gentiles, and in Nazareth a city *separated* from the province of Judea. Galilee was like Samaria, a part of the land originally inhabited by the ten Tribes, and was, when they were carried into captivity, re-peopled by those nations which Shalmaneser King of Assyria brought and placed there; {II Kings 17:24,} and who were considered as aliens by the Jews, though many Jews in the time of our Saviour dwelt among them. Hence as before noted, it is called Galilee of the Gentiles and the inhabitants are said *to walk in darkness, and to dwell in the region and shadow of death*. Is.9:1-2. Mt.4:15-16.

2nd. The word *Nazar* is used in reference to Joseph, and to his being *separated* from his brethren; intimating that in his separation he was a Nazarite to God. Joseph's Father and his brethren, in his being made a *Nazir* or *separated one* from them, considered him lost and his Father's expectations concerning him cut off, yet Joseph from that separation rose to great power, and to be a preserver to his Father's house. In

this, as in other things, Joseph was a figure of Christ. Christ as the Anti-type of Joseph, received from His brethren the Jews, the name of *Nazarene* which is the same as *Nazir*, *Nazarite* or *separated one*, and that out of envy and spite, as Joseph's brethren from the same cause made him a *separated one*. Not only so, but Christ from being separated from the Jewish nation, in His rejection and crucifixion, was *highly exalted*, and *had a name given Him which is above every name* &c. "That at the name of JESUS every knee should bow &c." "And He hath put all things under His feet;" excepting Him who did put all things under Him; so that only the Father is greater than He. See Phil.2:9-10 & I Cor.15:27. Christ also became salvation unto His Father's spiritual house; not only to them of the Gentiles, but of the Jews also. We find also an indication of these things, and a personal correspondence in Christ as in the flesh, with Joseph. For, from Jesus' being born in Bethlehem, the city of David, and from other events connected with His birth, the expectations of many were raised concerning Him, that He was born to be a *Ruler over the people Israel*, yet from His being driven thence and being brought up in Nazareth a city held accursed by the Jews, those expectations were, in their estimation, wholly blasted; and He was truly as a *Nazir*, as *one separated* from His brethren, according to the flesh. But though they viewed His infantile indications cut off, as Joseph's brethren considered his dreams brought to nought, yet God was with Him, owning Him as His Son, and preparing the way for His being manifested as the Messiah. I will now notice one instance in which the word *Natzar* is used in reference to the Messiah. This word as before said, signifies primarily *preserved*, it also signifies a *sucker* or *young tree* springing from the roots of a tree that has been cut down, as being preserved whilst the old tree is destroyed, or perhaps as being *separated* from it, so that the idea differs not materially from the meaning of *Nazar*. It is used in this sense in reference to the Messiah in Isaiah 11:1. "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a *Branch* shall grow out of His roots." In this text Christ, in His manifestation in the flesh, is pointed out, as a *rod* {a weak or tender shoot} growing out of the stem {the *stump* as the word properly signifies} of Jesse, {the father of David} and as a *Branch* {*Natzar*} growing out of his roots. The idea therefore is clearly held forth in this prophecy, that the family of Jesse should be cut off from the throne of David and should be nearly extinct, {as knowing their direct lineage,} when the Messiah should be born; and that the Branch of David, {Christ} should grow up, in the eyes of the Jews, as a slender twig having no promise of being the

King of Israel. Or as Isaiah, in another place, has it, that, "He should grow up as a tender plant and as a root out of dry ground, &c." that, "He is despised and rejected of men, &c." Is.53:2-3. Thus we find Jesus born at Bethlehem the place of Jesse's residence and of David's birth, and at a time when Joseph, his supposed father, went there to be taxed, because he was of the house and lineage of David, and therefore at the time when his name was recorded as being of the family of David and a rightful heir of his throne, but immediately he is compelled to flee to save the child's life from the cruelty of Herod, who had usurped the throne of David. He fled first to Egypt, and when recalled from there, he returned aside into Galilee, and went and dwelt in the city of Nazareth, for fear of Archelaus who reigned in the place of his father Herod. Mt.2:13-23. Thus was clearly manifested the low estate of the family of David at the time Jesus was born. Joseph it is true was acknowledged to be of the lineage of David, but this was in the act of being taxed by a foreign power, by the decree of the Emperor of Rome, and in danger of the child's life from Herod who reigned in Judea by the privilege of the Roman Emperor. Jesus being brought up at Nazareth, made Him, as professing to be the Messiah, peculiarly the contempt of the Jews. Even Nathaniel, an *Israelite in whom was no guile*, when Jesus of Nazareth was spoken of, to him as the Messiah, directly replied: "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth." John 1:46. The Pharisees reply to what Nicodemus said, "Out of Galilee ariseth no prophet." John 7:52. Thus the Jews, out of contempt, calling Jesus a *Nazarene*, was in direct accomplishment of the propesies in Is.11:1-2 & 53:2-3. And His being brought up at Nazareth was made the occasion of it. Besides the Jews calling Him the Nazarene, though in contempt, was as directly an involuntary acknowledgment of Jesus being the true *Nazarite* of God, and the *Branch* from the roots of Jesse, as was Pilate's superscription, an acknowledgment of His being the *King of the Jews*, and as was Caiaphas' advice that He should be put to death, a prophesy that "He should die for that nation and not for that nation only, &c." John 11:49-52.

Thus let infidels say what they may upon this point, it is evident the Scriptures fully bear the Evangelist out in giving it, as a fulfilling of prophecy, that Jesus should be *called a Nazarene*. Yours, &c.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, Jan. 26th, 1838.

S. Trott.

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Did Christ purchase Heaven for His people?

Brother Beebe: - I am aware that this by many, may be considered as mere speculation; and it may not appear to any to have the same importance attached to it, with some other subjects. There is however, with me, one consideration, alone, besides others which I shall notice, which renders it, I think not an uninteresting, nor an unimportant enquiry; that is, whether we as Old School Baptists will conscientiously carry out our professed stand by allowing the Scriptures to decide for us, on all points of doctrine, that is, receiving the doctrine as therein revealed, or whether, to carry out certain systems of the schools, we will hold and contend for principles which subvert the plainest declarations of Scripture.

I have been led to this subject, by the remarks of Brother Janeway, in his communication opposing my "Thoughts on Justification." He quotes the following passage therefrom. "It is I think, a mistaken notion that justification is what entitles the saints to heaven. Equally erroneous is the notion that Christ by His death purchased heaven for His people. Their union to Christ as His bride, their being the children of God, is what entitles them to the heavenly glory." He then remarks: "I believe the above sentences to be *egregiously false*," and refers me to the arguments, which he quotes at some length, of an English author, as justifying his *condemnation* of my remarks. But as neither this author, nor his arguments possess with me, sufficient weight to decide this point in contrary distinction from the Scriptures, I must be allowed to bring forward the testimony of Scripture, in the case, in justification of those remarks which my brother considers so false. "To the law and to the testimony" {Isa.8:20,} is what I wish to have inscribed as my motto in the spirit, and in the letter, of all my discussions of religious subjects.

In bringing forward the revelation of Scripture on this point, I shall, first, give its testimony concerning *the title to the heavenly kingdom*; secondly concerning *the object of Christ's death*. First. Concerning the title to the heavenly kingdom: The Scriptures not only speak of the heavenly kingdom, as being a gift, and a gift freely bestowed, as in Luke 12:32; Rom.8:32, and 6:23, &c., but also as an inheritance. 1st. It is expressly called an *inheritance*. "Which is the earnest of our inheritance &c." Eph.1:14. "Giving thanks unto the Father which hath made us meet to be partakers of the

inheritance of the saints in light." Col.1:12. In this text we have two ideas distinguished, which I apprehend that brother J. and others confounded, namely, the title, which is that of *inheritance*, and the *making us meet for being actual partakers* thereof. The latter they have mistaken for a purchase of the title. See also I Pet.1:4 and other texts.

2nd. The saints are denominated heirs. I will write a few of the texts on this point. "For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect." Rom.4:14. Compare this with Gal.3:18. "For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise &c." I have in these a twofold testimony, and that Divine, that it is not a *legal righteousness* or *justification* which *entitles to heaven*. Again Rom.8:17 - "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and *joint heirs* with Christ;" and Gal.4:7 - "And if a son then an heir of God through Christ." These are the two texts which brother J's author quotes, and tries to explain away. He seems to suppose that they are all, on which we rest our proof, for the idea that the title to heaven is derived from *inheritance*, and not from *purchase*. He also mistakes in supposing that we found the right to all spiritual blessings, in adoption, such as pardon, liberty, peace &c. We believe these come to us in consequence of our being predestinated to the adoption of children, not as the inheritance, but as that *meetness* for it, which is spoken of in Col.1:12, and that the right to these could only exist in our being redeemed from under the law. Not only do these texts represent the title of saints to glory, as being that of heirship and founded on their being sons of God, but the one, Rom.8:17, places their *title* on the same footing with Christ's. If Christ's title to that *glory which He had with the Father before the world was*, was the purchase of His blood, then is the saints title derived from the same source; not otherwise. One more text on this point: "If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." Gal.3:29. He does not say *according to a purchased right*.

3rd. The new covenant is represented under the idea of a *testament*. Heb.9:15-17. Hence the Scriptures are very full and pointed in representing the title of the saints to heaven as being an *inheritance*, in distinction from a purchased right. See this distinction illustrated in reference to the possessions of natural Israel, in regard to the year of Jubilee. Lev.25:14-55.

Second. The testimony of Scripture as to the object of Christ's death. I will under this head commence with some of the types of the Old Testament. It will be admitted, I presume, by our brethren, that the redemption of national Israel from

Egypt, and bringing them through the wilderness into the promised land by the hand of Moses, Aaron and Joshua, was typical of Christ's redeeming spiritual Israel from under the law, and bringing them home to glory. I will then ask: Did God thus redeem Israel from Egypt &c. to purchase for them a right to possess the land of Canaan - or was it to fulfill the promise He had made unto their fathers to give it to them for an everlasting possession? The latter I presume my brethren will admit was the fact. If any do not, let them look at Gen.17:8; Exod.32:13; 33:1; Deut.9:4-6 & 10:15. If they do admit the above, what becomes of the notion of Christ's purchasing or meriting heaven by His death and obedience to the law? If Christ's obedience to the law is that which entitles the saints to heaven, why was it that Moses and Aaron must both die short of the promised land, and that Joshua alone could be allowed to lead Israel into their possessions? And on the same supposition we might say that there *was a law given which did give life*; contrary to what is implied in the Apostle's remarks in Gal.3:21.

Again the sin offerings and other sacrifices under the law were evidently typical of that *one offering* which Christ should make of Himself. These in their relation to national Israel, were not to purchase their title to their typical inheritance, but to remove their sins that they should not mar their possession of that inheritance. The law concerning ceremonial redemption, does not present the right of redemption as a privilege to purchase a title to the land of the Israelites; but is founded on a previous, unalienable title which they had, by inheritance, to their possessions, and was designed to remove the hindrances which were in the way of their peaceable possession of such inheritance. See Lev.25:14-17; 25:28.

The New Testament account of Christ's death will be found exactly to correspond with those Old Testament types, in reference to the design &c. thereof. "But now once in the end of the world hath He appeared" - for what? - "To *put away sin* by the sacrifice of Himself." "So Christ was once offered to *bear the sins* of many." Heb.9:26-28. "He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin," - for what object? - "That we *might be made the righteousness of God* in Him." II Cor.5:21. "Who was delivered *for our offenses*, and raised again, *for our justification*." Rom.4:25. The Scriptures go farther in defining the spiritual object to be attained by Christ's death; as in Gal.4:4,5 - "God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might *receive* the adoption of sons." Eph.5:25-27. "As Christ loved the church and *gave Himself* for it, that He might

sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He *might present it to Himself a glorious church &c.*" Titus 2:14 - "Who *gave Himself for us*, that He might *redeem us* from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself, a peculiar people &c." If Christ *gave Himself* for these objects, I would ask brother J. what He had left to give for the purchase of heaven? It will be readily seen that I have selected but a few, of the many texts, having a bearing upon, or a direct reference to this point. But if we allow those to speak, according to their plain, legitimate meaning, we shall be convinced that Christ gave Himself, not as a purchase price, but as a *ransom, a redemption price*; not to purchase or *redeem heaven*, for His people; but to *redeem them* from under the law, and *meet them* for heaven. The Apostle speaks in Eph.1:14 of the *redemption of the purchased possession*, which some may understand to mean heaven. But if any do understand that heaven is the *purchased possession*, I would like for them to tell me, what idea they can have of its being *redeemed*, after having been *purchased*. Besides there is no corresponding passage of Scripture to support this idea. And, remember that it is in the *mouth of two or three witnesses* that every word shall be established. But understanding by the *purchased possession*, the church of Christ, and we have our two witnesses to support the idea; thus: "Ye are bought with a price." I Cor.6:20; 7:23. "To feed the church of God which He hath purchased with His own blood." Acts 20:28. But as I have showed from other Scriptures this purchase, is a *redemption purchase*; not a purchase of *title*. And the idea of *redemption* as applied to this *purchased possession*, is perfectly consistent, according to the sense in which the term is used in I Cor.1:30, and in other passages, as meaning the complete deliverance of the whole flock of Christ.

In reference to the absolute necessity of the people of God being *redeemed* from sin and from under the law, in order to their being brought to heaven, we consider the Scripture to be full of this doctrine. And for myself, I cannot conceive of any way how *creatures* could be made to partake of the privilege of sons of God, but in that way unfolded in the Scriptures, namely; their being left to fall under the curse of the law, whereby occasion was given for their Spiritual Head to be manifested as their Redeemer, to deliver them from under the law, and from sin. Without death to the law, we never could have been severed from it. And while under the law we never could partake of the privilege of the sons of God. See Rom.7:1-6 & Gal.5:18. Neither can I conceive that Christ as the Messiah, being once *made of a woman and made under*

the law, could ever have re-possessed that *glory which He had with the Father before the world was*, without *finishing*, by His perfect obedience, the redemption of Himself as the Husband, Surety &c., of His church, and of His church in Him, from all the demands of law and justice. Hence; Luke 24:26; John 17:4,5; Heb.1:8,9 & 2:9,10. But all this, the Scriptures teach me, are the *means* which God had appointed in His eternal purpose, for *bringing the many sons unto glory* - not, to purchase glory for them. But the sentiment that Christ purchased or merited heaven by His death, is not merely a departure from the plain language of Scripture, but also involves other errors. It degrades the personal merits of the Messiah as He was set up from everlasting and His church in Him. For as He and His church were *one*, if He had no merits, independent of His blood, by which to present His church, as in Him, and one with Him, as proper objects of His Father's love, and worthy to be recognized as sons and heirs, with Him of God; it must have been the merits of His blood only, that entitled Him to be *appointed heir of all things*. But very differently from this is the testimony of the Scriptures concerning the glory of the Son of God. See Col.1:15-19 & Hebrews chapter one.

Again the idea of Christ's purchasing heaven by His blood, savors too much of the cold speculations of a mercantile transaction to correspond with the riches of Divine grace as revealed in the Scriptures. For according to this, although God was willing that His predestinated sons should be made partakers of heavenly glory, and therefore appointed for them, a Surety who should *purchase* it for them; yet He could not bestow it upon them as the bequest of a Father, but must have an equivalent for it. Some are fond of talking about the provisions of the everlasting covenant being *suspended on conditions* to be performed by Christ, and about the *great contracting parties* in the covenant &c.; but this savors entirely too much of the wisdom of this world. To suppose the Divine Three meeting in council to devise ways, and close a bargain concerning the redemption of men, each proposing and accepting of terms &c., by which they enter into *contract* infinitely degrades the idea I have of God, of His unity, His dignity, His sovereign majesty &c. And as neither the above; nor any equivalent terms, are used in the Scriptures, relative to this subject, I feel at liberty to enter my protest against their use. It is contended by the school men, and those who derive their system from the schools, that the term, *covenant*, implies the idea of a contract; but this I deny to be the case as we find that term used and explained in the Scriptures. When

God made a covenant with Noah &c. Gen.9, was there anything like a contract between God and Noah? Did Noah propose any of the terms of this covenant? Did its being established depend in any measure on his giving his consent to the terms? Very different from all this. God established a covenant with Abraham, Gen.17, also with David, II Sam.7:4-17; 23:5 & Ps.89:19-37. Is there anything like contracting, like proposing and accepting conditions between the parties in either of these? Does not God in these declare His Divine sovereignty, saying *I will*, and *thou shalt*, whilst at the same time He gives them the strongest ground to rest their faith and hope upon? If we look at the new covenant, Jer.31:31-34, we shall find it in conformity with the others. The *shall* of Jehovah establishes all! If we look at the promises which the Father makes unto the Son as in Psa.89 as above quoted, in Isaiah 42:1-9; 49 & 53 &c., we find them made in the absoluteness of Divine sovereignty and freeness; no condition, no *ifs* to clog that freeness. Hear the language of the Son, "Then said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart." Psa.40:7,8; Heb.10:5-10. What harmony and oneness does this express in the Godhead! What loveliness and beauty in the Divine freeness with which the Son does the will of His Father, and offers Himself in the place of burnt offerings and sacrifices, for His people! How different would it appear, if we were to suppose Him adopting, instead of the above declaration, language suiting the idea of a contract, and saying, seeing O God, that according to stipulations, thou hast prepared a body for me, Lo, I will come and fulfill my part of the contract? What a letting down of dignity there would be even to the littleness of human bargaining.

Once more, the notion of Christ's having purchased heaven by His blood, tends greatly to diminish the view which the Scriptures and our experience give of the exceeding evil of sin; for according to this notion, it was not for our sinfulness and vileness alone, that debarred us from heaven; a title to heaven must be purchased. Neither was it our sins, and to redeem us from the curse of the law, alone that caused Christ to bleed on Calvary, but His blood was in part shed for purchasing a title to heaven.

If on the other hand we will let the revelation of God speak for itself, in this manner - *not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth*, making known that the kingdom of glory, is an inheritance given, in the better Testament, to His Son and to the church in Him, as His bride, *bone of His bone*, and as joint heirs with Him, of

which Testament, Christ is made the Surety or Executor, we discover the whole transaction to be a display of the rich, free and sovereign love of God, as of a Father to his children, in Christ; and the barrier to our felt enjoyment of it - not the want of freeness in the gift, but our vileness as creatures of the dust, and sunken, by transgression, under the curse of the law. And the pureness of Divine love, and the riches of Divine wisdom, is displayed, in God's predestinating His people to the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ, constituting them *one* with Him in that *life*, which was, *in Him*, which they derive from Him, and which is thus the *light of men*; by which union, on the one hand, they are entitled with Him to the heavenly inheritance, and on the other hand, He was involved in their accountability, as creatures, to law and justice, and bound to meet the demands thereof in their behalf, whereby their complete redemption and justification from all demands of law and justice were secured. Pure justice thus shines forth in the infliction of the penalty of the law upon Christ, and the heavenly inheritance, whilst it comes to the heirs as the free gift of the Father; comes to them through the *redemption that is in Christ Jesus*, by which His love to them, as His bride, is sealed by His heart's blood.

Hence, in the Scriptural view of redemption; instead of beholding the deadened colorings of a mercantile transaction, we see every attribute of our Jehovah God shining forth with heightened lustre and glory, all secretly combining and harmonizing, in the predestination, calling, justification and glorification of the elect sons of Adam.

Our sins as they are seen contrasted with the love of God and felt to be a barrier to our enjoying that love which nothing but the fountain of a Saviour's blood, applied by the energies of the Holy Ghost could remove, appear indeed as exceeding sinful and odious; and whilst the value of a Saviour's blood and righteousness is enhanced by a sense of our vileness and sinfulness, we are humbled in the dust on account of that vileness as contrasted with the stupendous love and favour of God to us.

From those Scriptural considerations, I feel fully justified in maintaining that it is not justification from the law which entitles the saints to heaven, and that the object of Christ's death was not to purchase heaven for His people. Whether brother J. and others will ever in this life see eye to eye with me on this point and on the subject of justification I know not. I desire that we may, providing it be as the Scriptures teach. But if kept by the grace of God I trust I shall adhere to the doctrine as taught in the Scriptures, as far as my mind is

enlightened to understand it, whether thereby I go, with, or against, my brethren. And I cannot feel that my Old School brethren are justified in blaming me for not going with them, wherein they fail to show some direct Scriptural authority for their belief or practice; neither do I wish to blame them for not seeing with me on every point, so far as the Holy Ghost is pleased to teach them or me, we shall be made to see whoever else may remain blind, and however strong our prejudices may have been in opposition. May He teach us all, to know, to feel, and to live more and more the truth as it is in Jesus.

One word more, if my brethren cannot agree with me on these points, I think from what I have now written they will discover that my views do not clash with the doctrine of Sovereignty in predestination, election &c., nor with the richness and freeness of the gift of grace that bringeth salvation, nor of the fulness there is in Christ to present His people faultless before God; neither in the sovereignty and perfection of the work of the Holy Spirit. Why then are my brethren so alarmed?

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, April 24th, 1838.

S. Trott.

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Duty Faith & Repentance.

An enquiry concerning the duty of the unregenerate to believe, repent or pray.

PART 1.

Brother Beebe: - I will now notice the charge which Brother Meredith has been informed is made against the Old School Baptists, that they hold it "not to be the duty of the unregenerate to believe, repent or pray." I will in my examination of this charge endeavor to show what there is of truth and what of falsehood in its several items. I will commence with the subject of *belief*.

The charge that we hold it "not to be the duty of the unregenerate to believe," has originated evidently from persons who do not know or distinguish the difference there is between *believing the Son*, and *believing on the Son*, or between believing the record that God gave of His Son, and believing *on the Son of God*. See John 3:36 & I John 5:10.

Such distinction not only is made in the texts above referred to, but is evidently manifested in christian experience. The one, *the believing on the Son of God*, is no other than the exercise of that faith which is the *gift of God*, and is distinguishingly denominated *the faith of God's elect*. It is a reliance on that obedience which Christ has rendered to law and justice in behalf of His people, as our alone and complete righteousness before God and redemption from under the law, and a trust in Christ, as our whole salvation. But it is evident that, from a very early period in the travel of the church on to this day, a great proportion of the professed church of Christ have mistaken a simple *belief of the truth of the record* which God has given of His Son; or indeed a *simple belief in the truth of the scriptures*, for that faith which characterizes one as a believer in Christ. That is, the revelation made of Christ in the scriptures has been considered as a proposition presented to the minds of men for their reception; and the reception of this proposition either as dogmatically laid down, or on examination, has been understood as constituting one a believer in Christ, and the rejection of it, the ground of condemnation. Hence the solicitude that has been manifested to instill into the minds of children the knowledge and belief of certain summaries of what was considered essential points to be believed in order to constitute them christians. Hence the catechumenical system in the earlier ages of the church, and Sunday School and Bible Class plans of our day. Hence also creeds and catechisms as essential summaries of christian doctrine which must be driven into the minds of children by parental and priestly authority, and often beaten in by the rod of the schoolmaster, in order to make christians of them.

Owing to the mistake which has thus existed, when it has been asserted that the natural man is not required of God to exercise that faith which is peculiarly *the faith of God's elect*, and is not condemned for not exercising it, it has been construed into a denial of its being his duty to believe, that is, the record which God has given, or the testimony of the scriptures.

The fact is, so far as I understand what is the Old School or apostolic Baptist doctrine on this point, it is this; that the peculiar faith which constitutes one a believer in Christ, in a gospel sense, and which goes out from one's self and from all he has done or felt, to rest upon, and plead Christ's obedience to the law, as his whole righteousness, and ground of acceptance with God, &c.; is a belief which the law knows nothing about; for *the law is not of faith*; and which can in no sense be considered a natural duty, it being not the acting of

any natural powers or faculties of man as created of the *earth earthy*, but is the peculiar exercise of that spiritual life which was created in, and is derived from the Son of God, as the Head of His people; and which requires that a person be born of God to exercise it. Hence this faith in contra-distinction from its being a legal duty, is declared to be *the gift of God*. On the other hand, I understand the Old School doctrine to be, that it is the duty of all rational beings to believe all God has spoken in the scriptures as they have access to them directly or indirectly, and to believe the testimony of the works of creation and providence, where the scriptures have not come. To disbelieve the record, which God hath given of His Son, is to *make God a liar* {I John 5:10;} and surely no person can do this and be guiltless. The obligation man is under thus to believe God, arises, not from any demand which the gospel as such peculiarly makes upon him, but from the nature and fitness of things, and from what God is. It is a law of our creation.

The "duty of the unregenerate to repent," comes next under consideration. This owing to the confusion into which it has been thrown by the introduction of the various systems of conditionalism, and other causes is a difficult subject rightly to understand and explain in all its bearings. My own mind I confess has been much diffculted to draw a clear line of distinction between the different relations and senses in which the idea of repentance, is presented to our view in the scriptures, and between the idea of its being a duty incumbent on men at large, and that of its being a free gospel blessing bestowed by the exalted Saviour on the spiritual Israel of God. But as it is highly important that we should understand the true import of the scriptures on this subject, I have at different times elicited considerable enquiry from me; and such as I have, give I unto you. I will add that ever since I knew by experience what repentance is, as given by Christ, {as I have a hope that I do know it to some extent,} I have been fully convinced that the manner in which repentance is held and preached by the conditionalists of all grades, is altogether foreign from the scriptural view of it. On the other hand I have never been able to receive in all points as correct, the explanations which Doctor Gill and other sound brethren have given of it. There will be found some difference between the explanation of this subject which I have to give, and that given by Brother Beebe in No.14, more particularly in relation to John's preaching repentance; this difference I trust is not such as to break any bones.

I shall lay down the following positions, as waymarks, in

the investigation of this subject. First: If we suppose that the original law of man's creation, or the law as published in Ten Commands from Sinai, commanded repentance as one of its requisitions, it will lead to the following insuperable difficulties. 1st. Repentance presupposes sin, therefore the law's commanding repentance as one of the conditions of its fulfillment, would be to command the previous existence of sin. 2nd. If the law commands repentance, then repentance is essential to that righteousness which the law requires, and consequently Christ in bringing in that righteousness and magnifying the law in behalf of His people, must have repented for them, as well as obeyed in their behalf in other respects. This supposition therefore I think cannot stand. 3rd. If we suppose that the gospel commands repentance as a condition of acceptance with God, then the gospel must in some sense be a law under which the human family exists. Consequently a failure to obey this command would involve condemnation. And if the gospel thus comes from God who changes not, with its demands upon the human family at large, then from the moment any individual existed as an accountable creature to God, he was obligated to render obedience to this *gospel-law*, and failing at any moment to do it, he incurred condemnation from it. If he lived twenty years, or more, or less, in impenitency or in transgression of this command of the gospel, and then became a penitent, his after repentance could not make satisfaction for his former neglect of it. Hence it is evident that all must be viewed as transgressors of this *gospel-law*. Now Christ redeemed His people from the curse of the law; but who is revealed as a redeemer from the condemnation of the gospel? And if not redeemed from it, must we not lie under the condemnation or suffer the penalty? If then no Redeemer is provided to save from gospel condemnation, who can be saved? If it be said that Christ redeemed from this as from the law, then as before He must have repented for His people. This is but one among several absurdities arising from a supposition of this kind.

4th. If on the other hand we suppose that the unregenerate are under no obligations to repent, we must consider them as justifiable in continuing on in their sins of whatever grade they may be. This I think none will admit; for there certainly are instances in the scriptures of unregenerated persons being exhorted or admonished to repent. The query then arises, whence does this obligation to repent arise? This I will endeavor to answer, after a little. The difficulty on this subject has frequently been attempted to be solved by a reference to the fact of there being two kinds of repentance

spoken of in the scriptures. There certainly are these different repentances brought to view, designated by different words in the original of the scriptures; but I find there is but one word in its formation and derivations, used in all those passages of scripture which are immediately connected with our present enquiry; such as Matt.3:2; 4:17; 11:20,21; Acts 8:22; 17:30; the same also is used in these, and the like texts, namely: Luke 24:47; Acts 5:31; also the word repentance as found in II Cor.7:9,10. {The word repented in this 10th verse, is a different word in the original and of different import.} Hence I think there is but the one kind of repentance we have to do with in this case. And I know not that it is here necessary for our present enquiry to consider this repentance as classed into outward, and heart repentances, or the like. The original word used in the above texts, *metanoco*, according to its etymology, signifies "To reflect on, or to be wise after the act, or to return or come to a right understanding." This repentance therefore imports a change of mind after an act has been committed, and which therefore implies a condemning of the act, and of course, sorrow for it, and a change of conduct. This sorrow may be natural or worldly sorrow, or it may be godly or spiritual sorrow, as the act is viewed in the light of reason, or in the light of the Spirit. If the former, it needs to be repented of again. But the main point in the idea of repentance, is I think altogether missed by conditionalists, and perhaps is frequently overlooked by others, and which in fact, is the substance of the thing. It is this, that as repentance is self-condemnation, it stands in direct opposition to all self-righteousness, self-justification, or reliance on our own acts for acceptance with God, &c. Hence the utter absurdity of making repentance a condition of salvation.

In pursuing the enquiry concerning the obligation of men to repent, I shall have again to refer to the law of Ten Commands; and as I had occasion in the preceding communication, and have again in this to speak of it in distinction from the original law under which man was created, I wish here to guard against being understood as meaning that they are separate laws. I understand them to be in substance the same law, but differently revealed. In the original creation of man the law requiring him to *love God with all his heart, &c.*, was not delivered to him verbally in so many words, nor in a series of implied prohibitions as in the Decalogue; but was written in indelible characters upon man. I do not say, nor mean in his heart; but upon his existence as a rational being, and upon all by which he was surrounded, for all declared the wisdom, power, and goodness of their Creator, and therefore

reflected the obligation of man to love his Creator with all his powers and faculties. Thus it is said, Rom.1:19,20. "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." Had man continued in the state of uprightness in which he was created, he would not have needed the specifications contained in the Decalogue to show him what was right or wrong. Though a test of his love and subjection to God was needed, and that was given him in the prohibition of the *tree of knowledge of good and evil*. But man *having sinned and come short of the glory of God*, and sunken into a state of condemnation, God, in bringing in that dispensation which was particularly designed to typify the salvation in all its parts, of spiritual Israel; as well as to prepare the way for the manifestation of the Messiah, saw proper, to give a new edition of the law, or to declare it in Ten Commands from Sinai, which commands are but so many specifications by which are showed man's entire departure from the standard of right. Hence says Paul; "I had not known sin but by the law; for I had not known lust except the law had said Thou shalt not covet." Rom.7:7. This law was given in the letter of it, in covenant form to national Israel; and was written on *tables of stone* to show that the law in itself cannot give life; that its commands in their outward address to man leave the heart as lifeless and hard as the stones on which they were written.

This law of Ten Commands, in its spirituality and as addressed to all, both Jews and Gentiles, I understand was given expressly to teach repentance. I do not say, to show that repentance was a part of the original requisition of the law, and a part of the righteousness it required; but that it is addressed to man as depraved and condemned, to call him off from self-confidence, and to repentance. I feel myself fully supported in this by the declarations of scripture, that the *law was added by reason of transgression; entered that the offence might abound, &c.*; and especially by this text, "What things soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law" - for what? - "*that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God.*" What is this but self-condemnation before God, that is designed to be accomplished by the declaration of the law? And what is such *self-condemnation*, but *repentance* toward God? It is then I think clear, that it is the law of Ten Commands in its spirituality that calls for repentance. But it may be asked, Is it the laws thus

calling for repentance that makes it the duty of man to repent, or thus to be humbled and abased before God? I answer no; for the law calls for it only as it shows the nature and truth of man's case, that he is a guilty condemned creature, polluted in all his ways. The fitness, propriety and obligation of man to repent arises from the nature and truth of the case. If it is a duty of man to practice truth toward God and toward man, then it is his duty thus to be humble and abased before God and men, because the truth is that he is thus debased by his transgressions of the law; and to plead or trust to his works for justification is to plead and trust a falsehood, as showed by the Decalogue; for his works condemn him. However I would here remark that I doubt the propriety of using the term duty in a strict sense in relation to repentance, although it may be admitted in a loose sense. Of the fitness of repentance, and of the obligation man is under to exercise it, from his still existing as the creature of God, and a subject of His moral government, I have no doubt, that is, so far as the light of reason and external revelation can show them the evil of sin.

Let us now look a little at christian experience on this point; for the Spirit's teaching is truth. When a person is led by the teachings of the Holy Spirit truly to know the law and by it to know his guilt and depravity, he at once falls prostrate at the footstool of mercy, acknowledging the justice of his condemnation, and feels that from the fitness of things, he cannot be too much abased and humbled before God against whom he has sinned. It is true that in the former stages of his exercises, he may have sought to work himself up to a repentance, as a something that was to make amends for his transgressions and make his peace with God; but he now abhors this attempt to mock God and dishonor His law as much as any of his former open sins. And he would no sooner think of pleading the condemnation and contrition he now feels as a reason why he should escape punishment, than the criminal before a court would think of pleading the fact of his being clearly proved guilty, as a proper ground for his being cleared. This contrite penitent sees and feels that there is no way by which in justice he can be released from enduring the curse of the law, until he is led by faith to behold that satisfaction which Christ has made to the law for such sinners as he. He now feels that there is a natural fitness that he and every other person should be abased and humbled before God as transgressors of His law and abusers of His goodness. But further, being brought into the light of the gospel, he sees that it was sovereign grace alone which brought him thus to repentance, and that the condemnation which man lies under

in consequence of his awful departure from God, is that he should be *given over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient*, or fit, or as the Master saith, that he should *love darkness rather than light*.

In accordance with what I have above shown as taught by experience, of the fitness and propriety of men's being thus humbled before God, the Apostle speaks of the *goodness of God*, that is, in the *riches of His goodness, forbearance, &c.*, toward man, *leading him to repentance*, or in other words, as naturally tending to produce in him humbleness and contrition of heart, if he rightly viewed himself, but that instead of its having this proper effect, he, *after his hardness and impenitent heart, treasureth up unto himself wrath against the day of wrath*, &c. See Rom.2:4-5.

Now I understand the Old School doctrine thus to teach the natural fitness that all men, to be consistent with truth, should be abased and penitent before God as transgressors of His law. And farther, I understand it to be in accordance with Old School doctrine for a person, when he knows of another's committing any sin, whether he be regenerated or not, to exhort him to repent of that sin, as Peter exhorted Simon, Acts 8:22. But this exhortation will of course with propriety, be nothing other than a persuading of the person to use that light which God has given him, relative to this sin, whether that be the light of reason, or of grace. Such exhortations however must not be considered as, peculiarly a part of the ministerial office. If the above comes up to what others would import by saying that it is the *duty of the unregenerate to repent*, let them have this phrase, to convey the idea that men can or are required of themselves to exercise that *repentance* which is *unto life*, or that it is their duty to exercise repentance as a part of legal righteousness, or to make amends for a deficiency in that righteousness, or as a condition proposed by the gospel, in either of these senses the Old School doctrine does not represent it *to be the duty of the unregenerate to repent*.

Although I have already drawn out this subject to what many will think an unprofitable and unreasonable length, yet I cannot as I have entered upon it, feel satisfied without pursuing the enquiry as to what constitutes the preaching of repentance both under the *day spring*, and the sun rising of the gospel.

PART II.

The branch of the above enquiry now before us is, what

constitutes preaching repentance both under the *day spring*, and the *sun rising* of the gospel day?

The *day spring* of course comes first, and under this we find both John and Christ preaching, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." In order to come to a proper understanding of the import and design of this preaching, it is necessary to refer back to the peculiar standing of the Jews. I have already remarked on another branch of this inquiry, that the law of Ten Commands in the letter of them, were given in covenant form to national Israel. Connected with these commands and as conditions of the same covenant, was the observance of the whole Jewish ritual as commanded by Moses. In the offering of sacrifices and in other rites, repentance or an acknowledgment of guilt and condemnation was implied and taught; also the hearing and reception of the Messiah, when He should come, was commanded. Deut.18:15-19. Hence the "foundation of repentance from dead works" is named, Heb.6:1,2, among the *principles* or first rudiments of *the doctrine of Christ*, which the believers from among the Hebrews were called upon to *leave*. Hence also when Messiah came, it was according to the Divine and revealed plan of His manifestation, that He should first present Himself to the Jews, nationally, for their reception or rejection; on the principles of the Sinai Covenant. Hence it is said, Christ "came to His own and they received Him not," &c. John 1:11. It was as I understand it, in accordance with this arrangement, and the provisions of the Sinai Covenant, that John came preaching repentance and that Christ preached it; and also that the Seventy were sent two and two to give notice of His coming, or that the *kingdom of heaven was at hand*. They preached repentance to show that according to the order of Messiah's kingdom, and to what had been figuratively taught in the Sinai ritual, repentance, and not self-righteousness, was requisite to a right reception of the Messiah, and to entering into His kingdom. They called upon them thus to repent upon the principles of that covenant under which they as a nation in a peculiar manner existed, and according to which Christ thus first presented Himself to them as the Messiah for their reception or rejection.

It is true, as Brother Beebe said, in his remarks on repentance, that a special design of John's being sent preaching repentance was "to make ready a people prepared of the Lord." But still I think John's *preaching, saying Repent, &c.*, was addressed to the Jews nationally upon the principles of their covenant; and that it was thus left to the Holy Spirit, whose province it peculiarly is, to make manifest the "people

prepared of the Lord," to lead such through John's preaching to be convinced of their sinfulness and just condemnation, and to hope for the immediate manifestation of the Messiah; and as a fruit of their repentance, to renounce their self-righteousness, and their dependence on, having Abraham for their father, for justification; and were accordingly prepared to come to John's baptism as a baptism - not of self-righteousness for justification, but of "repentance for the remission of sins." Hence in the text already quoted, John 1:11, after it is said "He came to His own, that is nationally, and His own received Him not, it is further declared that to as many as received Him, to them gave He power, &c., which were born not of blood," &c. Thus showing that their being distinguished thus from the nation, was peculiarly of God.

From this view of this subject, Pedobaptists may think it consistent to preach repentance according to John's manner of preaching, because they imagine their children to have been brought in under the Abrahamic covenant; but surely no consistent Baptist will think of blending the principles of the Sinai covenant with the gospel ministry in calling upon men to repent as a self-preparation for receiving the gospel.

I will now come to the preaching of repentance under the sun rising of the gospel day. On this point we have a plain direction in Luke 24:47, where Christ after His resurrection teaches His disciples that, "Repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." This I understand to be the particular instruction given how repentance is to be preached since the ascension of Christ.

1st. It is to be preached in His - Christ's - name. Not in Moses' name. Not as a demand of the law; nor as John preached it to the Jews on the principles of the Sinai covenant. Neither does preaching repentance in the name of Christ, consist with calling upon men to repent, for this implies that the repentance called for is such as the natural man can exercise, or the reflections of the natural mind will produce. Hence this preaching tends to build men up in the notion of their own ability and to satisfy them with such repentance as they are capable of exercising; and therefore tends to produce in their minds the very reverse to that repentance which Christ gives, a being abased in the dust as guilty, ruined, helpless sinners.

Repentance is truly preached in the name of Christ, when the law in its exceeding broadness, unchangeableness and spirituality as taught and illustrated by Christ, and established by the gospel is preached, as cutting off all human

works as the ground of acceptance with God, "Stopping every mouth and presenting all the world as guilty before God." This is the preaching which, when the heart is opened by the Holy Ghost to receive it, and by Him applied, produces the fruits of genuine repentance, namely: a being stripped of all self glorying and self confidence and an abhorring of one's self and being humbled as in *dust and ashes*. But further in preaching repentance in the *name of Christ*, as He is "exalted as a Prince and a Saviour for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And the intimate connection between this repentance, and the receiving of the forgiveness of sins, must be clearly held forth; so that none, on the one hand shall indulge in the hopes of experiencing pardoning mercy through Christ, unless brought to know and feel the odiousness and exceeding sinfulness of sin; and on the other hand, that those who are mourning over their own vileness and ruin may be encouraged to hope for the forgiveness of their sins through Christ. Now I will leave it to Brother Meredith and others who have been alarmed at the cry against our Old School preachers, that they *do not preach repentance to sinners*, to judge whether the above described kind of preaching; or the calling upon the unregenerate to repent and the trying to scare them to it by dwelling on the horrors of hell, and thus leading them to infer that repentance is a *bodily exercise*, a mere excitement of the passions, appears the most consistent with gospel doctrine and preaching, and the most like preaching true "repentance toward God."

But there is another point which it is incumbent on me to notice before I quit this subject, namely; Acts 17:30. "The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent." We must first notice the import of the expression *now commandeth*. If the obligation of the Gentiles to repent, rests upon this command, as a *new law* then instituted, as those who dwell so much upon this text seem to intimate, then their previously gross idolatry afforded no just ground for repentance, and they were guiltless in practicing it. But such a conclusion is entirely inconsistent with Paul's view of their case given, Rom.1:18-32. The true import of this expression as connected with the idea that God had heretofore *winked at the times of this ignorance*, appears to me to be this, namely: That although hitherto the law of Ten Commands as designed to teach *the knowledge of sin*, was confined mostly to the Jews, while the Gentiles were left without any special revelation to teach them their sins; yet now under the gospel dispensation, this law as connected with the gospel proclamation was "to be preached in all the world

for a witness unto all nations," showing the absurdity and wickedness of idolatry, and the guilt and condemnation of all as transgressors of the divine law. Hence wherever the gospel came among the Gentiles thus accompanied with the proclamation of the law, those Gentiles whose hearts were opened to receive the word, were led to renounce all their hopes arising from those idolatrous rites which they had performed and to fall prostrate before God as guilty sinners, needing His pardoning mercy; as were the Jews stripped of their legal righteousness. In accordance with this view of the import of this text, I will add that the primary idea of the word here rendered command, is *to instruct, teach, direct*, and hence also it came to be used to denote *commanding* as one mode of *directing*; it further signifies to *give notice or warning*, &c. Hence I understand the text as designed, not to intimate that under the gospel God had instituted a new command or law for the Gentiles, or laid them under a new obligation to exercise repentance; but to show the bearing and effect the gospel proclamation as embracing an illustration of the spirituality of the law was designed to have upon all people, and that it was thus addressed to all, in distinction from what was the case under the former dispensation.

Lastly, the subject of prayer, or the enquiry whether it is the *duty of the unregenerate to pray*, demands attention. If the charge that Old School Baptists "believe it is not the duty of the unregenerate to pray," is designed to convey the idea that they do not hold, or preach that it is the duty of unregenerate persons, or right for them, to read or say over a form of prayer, as a regular or occasional task, and as means of salvation, or a condition of acceptance with God, whilst their hearts are insensible of the wants their words express; every consistent Old School Baptist, and every other person who knows the wickedness of mocking God with lip service, while the heart is far from Him, must plead guilty to this charge.

But as this charge imports that we do not admit it right for any person, under a sense of his dependence on God and feeling his need of divine mercy or aid in any case to ask God for it; I think the charge is false. I for one believe it right for anyone to pray to God for any aid or mercy that he truly feels the need of, and is authorized by the Scriptures to believe that God bestows upon the sons of men.

To say it is the duty of unregenerate persons to pray, as a form of worship is to say that God requires of them that worship which is neither spiritual, nor from the heart. But Christ informed the woman of Samaria that, "God is a Spirit and they that worship Him, must worship Him in Spirit and in

truth." John 4:24. But for a person to pray, not as a form of worship, but simply to ask God for mercy because he feels he needs it, is the privilege of any; hence Peter exhorts Simon to *pray God, if perhaps the thought of his heart might be forgiven him*; under the impression, undoubtedly, that Simon from the sharp rebuke and warning he had given him, would see and feel the wickedness of his thought and the need of forgiveness.

I have thus traveled over a good deal of ground upon these subjects, whether Brother Meredith will be any better satisfied than with Brother Beebe's brief explanation, I know not. The confusion into which these subjects have been thrown by conditionalists and their use of them, seemed to require a general and particular examination of them. I cannot say that after all I have said, and my anxiety to place the subjects in a clear light, I have succeeded to any degree.

But I leave it. God may enable some others to set the subject in a clearer light, or may lead some to comprehend the ideas, I have attempted to convey; and if they are wrong to show the right. Yours in the gospel of Christ,

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia.

S. Trott.

From: *SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.7 {1839}*

On the import of the terms everlasting, eternal, &c.

Brother Beebe: - I see that Brother William Moseley of Georgia, requests, through the *Primitive Baptist*, that you or I, or both would give the legitimate meaning of the terms *everlasting* and *eternal*; and to show the difference, if any, between them. As he includes you as well as myself in the request, I presume he expects the answer through the *Signs*; and as you are absent, I will take it upon myself to attend to the request. The etymology of our English word *everlasting*, ever lasting - that is, lasting unlimitedly, shows the import to be *unlimited duration*. The words *eternal* and *eternity* are from the Latin words *aeternus* and *aeternitas*, signifying infinite or unlimited duration. But the import of these words as found in the scriptures may perhaps be more accurately defined by an examination of the Hebrew and Greek words so rendered, and the subjects to which they are applied, &c. 1st. In the Old Testament there are several words which, by the translators of our Bible, are rendered *everlasting*, *eternal*, *forever*, &c. The word more frequently found in the Hebrew as answering to

these English terms, is from a root which signifies to *hide, conceal, &c.*; and therefore denotes primarily, hidden, or unknown duration. It is applied to time things and thus used necessarily implies a duration limited by the continuance of time or perhaps in some cases by a shorter period. We thus find it used to denote a temporal; but otherwise a continued, unknown duration, in {Gen.17:8-13} as applied to the Abrahamic covenant and the land of Canaan, and in other instances. It is used in other cases without any such limitations being implied in the application or connection, and therefore with propriety in such cases is considered as conveying the idea of duration, unbounded, or extending *ad infinitum*. This word also is used both in reference to past and to future duration. Another Hebrew word rendered *everlasting, &c.*, has for its primary idea *beyond, further, &c.*; and as a noun denotes *time* or *duration*, and hence when not limited in its extent by the connection or the nature of the subject to which it is implied, it denotes an unlimited or infinitive continuance onward that is most generally an eternity to come or future. The two words above defined, we find sometimes combined, and translated *world without end, evermore, &c.*, that is as denoting an eternity to come. Again, these two words are frequently found connected, but not combined, and according to the import of the particles by which they are connected, they are either both considered as having a future reference, and are translated, *forever more, hence forth even forever, and forever and ever, &c.*, as Psal.10:16, 18:50; Isa.9:7; {in Isa.57:15, they are rendered *eternity*;} or one has a past, and the other, a future reference, and are translated *from everlasting to everlasting*.

The word translated *eternal* in Deut.33:27, is from a root signifying to *remain, dwell, &c.* Another Hebrew word which we find translated *evermore, eternity, &c.*, has for its primary ideas, *superiority, enduring, &c.*, and when applied to time or duration imports *continuing, enduring, &c.*, that is overcoming and outlasting all the changes of time. In the New Testament we find different Greek words used corresponding to the Hebrew words above noticed, and translated *everlasting, eternal, forever, evermore, &c.* AIONIOS in its formations is that which is principally used. This word is from AION, signifying *eternity, age, &c.*; this again is from AEI, always and on, being, that is *always being* the proper import of the word. AIONIOS is sometimes doubled, and then translated, forever and ever. From what has been said, it is evident that the translators considered the words EVERLASTING and ETERNAL as being of the same import, as are also *forever,*

evermore, &c., excepting that these latter words are confined to the idea of future duration, and the other are used both in reference to *past* and *future* duration. There are other equivalent words used in our translation, confined in their idea to past duration, as ancient times of old, &c. But from the diversity there is in the applications of the same original words, as well as of the English words: ETERNAL and EVERLASTING, it may appear on a superficial observation, that there is a good deal of uncertainty in their use, whether importing a future, or past duration, or both; and whether importing a temporal duration, or absolutely an infinite one. But not so, in reality, if common sense be allowed to decide on the point. It is unfortunately the case however, that there are those who are so exalted with their attainments as linguists, that they would think it vulgar to submit to a common sense exposition of the expressions of scripture, and who think their learned verbal criticisms lead them to a deeper and more refined understanding of the scriptures than the common people can have. These often mistake the plain import of scriptural expressions, being led into mazes by their critical definitions. Unprincipled cavilers also by a resort to verbal criticisms, can make a show of establishing their own positions and of overturning the arguments and proofs of those whom they oppose, when in fact it is all a deception. It is a matter of manifest fact, that what would be called learned criticisms, upon the scriptures have tended as much as any one circumstance to darken and confuse the plain meaning thereof. It is equally manifest that the scriptures as originally written were adapted to the understanding of uneducated and common sense readers, and that this excellent trait in them has been preserved, with few exceptions, in our common translation, through the interposing providence of that God who has all hearts in His hand and under His control.

I presume that I shall be understood as speaking here of the literal import of scripture, not of that *hidden wisdom*, that spiritual mystery, which none of the princes of this world knew, and which the Holy Spirit alone can make known to any. But to return to the subject under consideration. There is perhaps no word that is always used to convey the same, one definite idea, hence the connection in which a word is used must be taken into consideration, in order to decide on the precise idea intended to be conveyed by it. So in reference to the words *eternal*, *everlasting*, &c., their connection as used in the scripture will be found to have some bearing on their import, and will enable a candid, common sense observer to determine in any, or at least, most cases, whether they are

used, to denote duration absolutely infinite, or simply duration unknown in its extent, to man, but limited by the continuance of time; also whether they refer particularly to duration either past, or future; or absolutely to the eternity or existence of God. The primary ideas of the original words which they represent as has been showed are those of continued and unlimited or indefinite duration. Hence when used in reference to existence either before or after the period bounded by time and its changes, we can conceive of no periods by which they can be limited in their import, and are therefore necessarily led to understand them as conveying the idea of duration extending to infinitude. On the other hand when either of these terms are applied to a subject that we know belongs exclusively to time, surely common sense would forbid our supposing that it was there used to convey the idea that such a time subject had infinite duration belonging to it. As for instance when *hills* and *mountains* are spoken of as *everlasting*, we certainly cannot with propriety suppose that literally there are any hills or mountains belonging to this earth which will escape the general conflagration of the world; neither that the literal priesthood of Aaron because said to be an *everlasting priesthood*, was actually to exist beyond the limits which the purpose of God had fixed to that dispensation. But at the same time this term denotes that these time subjects were to have a continuance, and that of a duration unknown and unlimited in its extent, in reference to the knowledge of those to whom these things were addressed. And further I think it will be found that all those time subjects to which the term *everlasting* is applied, have a figurative reference to things not temporal in their duration, but heavenly and truly eternal.

In reference to a distinction to be made between past duration, and duration onwards, I have already noticed that in the Hebrew, this distinction is generally marked by the use of distinct words. The words eternal and everlasting as used in our translation do not of themselves mark this distinction, they being used indiscriminately to denote past duration or future, or the existence of God absolutely without the intervention of time, as when God is said to inhabit eternity. The translators however have frequently substituted other words, more definite to denote duration onward or an extending forward *ad infinitum*, such as *forever*, *ever more*, *world without end*, &c. And the instance are I think very few where the words *everlasting* or *eternal* are used, in which there will be any difficulty in deciding whether such terms denote past or future duration, or duration undivided by time. For instance when the

existence of God or the actings of the Divine Mind are spoken of, it would be absurd to suppose them bounded in either sense by the limits of time. Thus the terms eternal and everlasting prefixed to the purpose of God and the love of God, as these are the actings and exercise of the Divine Mind, must import that such purpose and love exist exterior to all the changes of time, and unchanged by them.

Again, when terms are used in the connection pointing out the beginning of a thing which is said to be everlasting, I should suppose that common sense would at once decide, that the term everlasting or eternal in such case was intended to convey the idea only of duration onward *ad infinitum*. Thus when Messiah is spoken of as bringing in, within a limited time, {seventy weeks} everlasting righteousness, {Dan.9:24,} if the terms, bring in do not import the bringing into actual or manifest existence the particular righteousness there intended, I do not know what they can import in that case. And if that is their meaning, then the term *everlasting* denotes only the infinite continuance of that righteousness. Should any one say, not so; the term *everlasting* must denote the past duration of that righteousness to have been infinite as much so as the future; then I will say that if such idea is absolutely essential to the use of the term *everlasting*, we must suppose that circumcision actually existed in the flesh of Abraham and of his seed from everlasting, that is from before the foundation of the world, for this is said to be for an *everlasting covenant in their flesh*. Gen.17:13, compared with verses 10,11. The same remarks will hold good concerning the expression *eternal redemption* {Heb.9:12} as the expression *having obtained* imports a beginning to that redemption, if it imports anything.

I would remark further, that when the terms *eternal* and *everlasting* are used in relation to that whose existence is manifestly after the dissolution of the world, as God has revealed no after terminating period, the Holy Ghost in directing to the use of these terms, in such relation, must surely have designed to convey the idea that such things are to have an infinite duration, as when we read of everlasting punishment and *life eternal* as existing after the close of time or the final judgment. And this, for this very plain reason, that these terms as have been shown denote of themselves continued, indefinite or unlimited duration, and if therefore there is nothing in the connection implying a limit to the extent of such duration, they necessarily denote its continuance *ad infinitum*. I have thus Brother Beebe given, in obedience to the request of Brother Mosely, what I understand to be the manifest import of the words *everlasting* and *eternal* as found

in different passages of scripture. If what I have said should be of any use to him in defining their import, he can apply it as he may have occasion for, whether in reference to the doctrine of justification, or to the sentiment of universalism, or to any other subject. I remain yours, and His, to serve,

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, June 13, 1839.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.7 {1839}

Antinomianism & its relation to Arminianism examined.

Brother Beebe: - I received a letter a short time since, from Brother P. Meredith, in which he requests me also to give my views of the text, Job 28:7,8, in reference to the enquiry *whether there is not a path which passes between the sand bars of Arminianism and the granite rocks of Antinomianism.* Your answer to this enquiry as published under the editorial head in No.9 of present volume, he says is very explicit in reference to Arminianism, but not so full in reference to Antinomianism as he wished. He gives as a further reason for requesting my views, that he has lately heard, "that to be a thorough going Old School Baptist, one must believe that it is not the duty of the unregenerate, to believe, repent, or pray." I will therefore add my testimony to yours on this point. The one may strengthen the other.

I will first examine the subject of Antinomianism and see whether "the path which no fowl knoweth, and the vulture's eye hath not seen" can be a middle track between that and Arminianism. The signification of the term *Antinomianism* is, according to its etymology, *against law*, as shown by Brother Beebe; and the charge evidently intended to be fixed upon those to whom this term is applied is that they are opposed to the law of God, or do it away by their doctrine. This charge, if the enemies of truth were admitted to be judges, would have been fixed upon the *Master of the house*, and upon those of *His household* in every age, from Paul down to Brother Meredith and myself, who preach a finished salvation in Christ. But I appeal from those *would be* judges to the scriptures of truth. I would stand at the judgment seat of Christ. Those who anciently claimed to be disciples of Moses in distinction from Christ, evidently supposed that the letter of the Sinai laws, moral and ceremonial, together with the traditions of their fathers, constituted a code of law which supplanted the original

law under which man was created; and that this was the standard by which man's acceptance with God, or rejection, was to be decided. Because Christ and His Apostles preached a doctrine adverse to this Pharisaical law, they were denounced as opposers of the law of Moses. The modern *Nomians* or legalists also understand the original law of God to have given place to a milder law, compounded of the letter of the Ten Commandments and what they conceive to be certain requisitions and conditions of the gospel, and that this *gospel law* is the standard of righteousness, by which all men under the gospel are to be tried, and a want of conformity to it is the ground of condemnation; and according to some, a personal conformity to it, is the ground of justification. But no individual who has been brought truly to love the law of God, can admit of its being supplanted by such a medley of human contrivance, and when it is opposed, either as a standard of right or as a yoke of bondage attempted to be put upon the neck of disciples of Christ, its opposers are at once denounced as Antinomians.

In making my appeal from these partial Judges, I file the following answers to their charge: 1st. That God in creating Adam a living soul, laid him, and his posterity in him, under obligation to love the Lord his God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his strength; and to love his neighbor as himself; that this constituted the law of his creation, and the eternal standard of right, which no apostasy of man could make void. 2nd. That the revelation which God has made of His mind and will in the scriptures, the alone standard of truth, no where teaches that God has ever abrogated this law of man's creation, altered its requisitions, or abated its demands to suit the weakness of fallen man. This answer is sustained by Mt.5:17-20 & Rom.3:31. 3rd. That the prohibition given to Adam in the garden not to eat of the forbidden tree, was designed as a test of his subjection to God and to the law of his creation; his transgressing this prohibition was therefore the just ground of his being condemned and his posterity in him to a state of depravity or *death in sin*. And that the law of Ten Commands given from Sinai, in its general bearing upon all men, distinct from its special reference to Israel nationally, was not designed as a *covenant of works* and to lead men to depend on their obedience to it for their final acceptance with God, either Jews or Gentiles; but it "was added because of transgression, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made, &c.;" {Gal.3:19} it "entered that the offence might abound." {Rom.5:20} In a word, it was given in its spiritual import, in the sense in which Paul says *the law is spiritual*,

{Rom.7:14} as a schoolmaster to teach both Jews and Gentiles their entire depravity and guilt, and the impossibility of their being justified by the deeds of the law, and their need of just such a salvation as is revealed in Christ, a salvation from sin and sovereignly free. Hence it is written, "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 all the world become guilty before God;" and again, "For by the law is the knowledge of sin." Rom.3:19,20. Neither, I will add, was this law of Ten Commands given, in itself considered, to be a *rule of life*; it was designed to teach us what sin is, and its moral precepts are sanctioned by the New Testament as illustrating that which is a proper deportment toward God and toward man in a general and moral point of view. But a *rule of life*, to be correct must be an exact measure of all that is required of us to perform. This law was not such to ancient Israel; other laws were given them, which they were required also to obey, and which were of course component parts of that rule by which their lives were to be squared, such as certain positive institutions of a ceremonial nature, &c. Neither is it a perfect rule to spiritual Israel; the life of a christian as such, must be upon a broader scale than the letter of the Decalogue, in order to its being squared with the gospel. Repentance toward God for his daily wanderings of heart, and living daily by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and an establishment in the truths of the gospel must enter into the composition of a christian's life or walk in order to his conformity to the gospel standard; and these things are beyond the compass of the Ten Commands, "For the law is not of faith, but the man that doeth them shall live in them." Gal.3:12. There are also positive institutions belonging exclusively to the gospel to be observed by the christian if he would "walk uprightly according to the truth of the gospel." If therefore the legalists call us Antinomians for denying that the law is a rule of life to the disciples of Christ, we may well call them *anti-gospelers*, or *anti-new-testamenters* for their attempts to make it a full rule to the christian's life. Thus much for our views concerning the much insisted upon notion that the law is a *rule of life* to the christian, and I will now return to the further consideration of the answers I have filed.

1st. Whilst these answers stand, and they must stand according to the standard of eternal truth, it is evident that we are justified in opposing this law of conditions of which faith and repentance and various religious ceremonies, are the principal terms, being foisted into the place of that unchanging standard of right, the law under which man was created, as

that by which man is to be judged before God, and consequently their charge against us of being Antinomians on this account will not stand. 2nd. So long as it is written, "Whosoever offendeth in one point is guilty of the whole," it must be evident that whoever sets up anything other than the spiritual or original law of God in its exceeding broadness as the standard by which man is to be tried before God, by which he is to be justified or condemned, opposes or makes void that law and is therefore an Antinomian in the strict import of the word. The teaching that the law will accept of anything short of perfect obedience to its everlasting demands, or that it will admit of any substitution in the place of this perfect obedience, such as repenting and believing the gospel and the like, is according to the above view of the subject Antinomianism. Having thus shown what Antinomianism is, and the characters on whom the charge properly rests, I will briefly show its position in relation to Arminianism by a few questions. 1st. Who are they that are opposed to the enforcing the rigorous demands of the spiritual law of God? The unregenerate, whether professors or not; "for the carnal mind is enmity against God, not subject to the law of God," &c. But unregenerate professors more fully act out this opposition; they then are the practical Antinomians. 2nd. Who are they that are fond of the Arminian, or do and live system? The unregenerate universally; but those of them who profess religion, more openly avow this system. Hence the Arminian in heart is an Antinomian in heart, and the professed Arminian stands in his doctrine opposed to the unchangeable demands and rectitude of the original law of God, and is therefore in truth an avowed Antinomian. Or thus: Those who make void the law of God by their traditions or systems must be Antinomians. What is Arminianism, but a system that teaches that men's acceptance with God depends on certain conditions to be performed by them, short of a perfect obedience to the original law of God? Christ having according to some taken away the original law, and according to others, made an atonement for sin abstractly considered, to make room for such conditions being accepted. Hence Arminianism and Antinomianism terminate at the same point, are two different names for the same system of opposition to the law of God. How then can the "path which the vulture's eye hath not seen" pass between the two? There is no middle ground there. But Brother Meredith is ready to ask, is there no system which opposes the obligations of the law of God, different from the systems of conditions? In answer I admit it has been said that there were those who held that the elect were never under the

law, and that God never saw any sin in them &c. But such a sentiment would as completely do away redemption by Christ as it would the law. Besides this sentiment would be so irrational, so contrary to that sense of accountability which men have, that I cannot think such a sentiment ever existed in the breasts of any who believed there is a God and admitted the authenticity of the scriptures. The sentiment also that the elect as the children of Adam were actually justified from all demands of the law before time began, and were then, absolved from all charge of guilt, would, if carried out in its legitimate bearing, amount to an abrogation of the law in their behalf, and therefore be Antinomianism. But I know of none who contend for this sentiment that would admit of its being carried out to what I think its full implication; therefore, though they may be inconsistent, they are not Antinomians in the way they hold it.

Consequently, my brother, we in vain look for the granite rock of Antinomianism {where the charge of Antinomianism is just as implying opposition to the law of God} so severed from the sandbars of Arminianism as to admit of the path or *way of holiness* passing between them. Indeed I may confidently ask, how would sandbars ever be found in the sea were there not a granite rock or something like it to form an eddy or obstruct the passage of the drifting sand and thus cause it to become a deposit? And how could any conditional or Arminian system ever get foothold were there not enmity in the human breast to the government and law of God; an Antinomian principle latent there, that would overturn the sovereignty of God, and bring down His perfect law from its pure and holy demands, to a level with the capacity of depraved mortals to obey?

I will notice that *path which no fowl knoweth*, that *way of holiness* in which the child of grace is led. And my brother, if you have eyes to see, as I think you have, and do not suffer men to put their fingers or systems into them, I shall show you that this path as Brother Beebe stated, leads directly off, alike from the ground of Antinomianism and of Arminian opposition to the truth. The very first step in which a person is led in the christian life takes him off from that firm standing he before had on Arminian ground; regeneration being the implantation of that life in the soul which is love to God and to His law. Sin, instead of holiness and the divine law, now becomes the object of his hatred. Long and hard may he struggle to regain a standing on Arminian ground, or in other words, to feel a confidence in his own doings, but in vain, every struggle but removes him farther from this confidence; he is led to an

enlarged view of the law in its spirituality, sees it to be holy, just and good, and his love to it makes him loathe every thing that comes short of its righteous demands, as all his acts and thoughts do; and his confidence in his doings and exercises is therefore more and more destroyed. He finds himself at last without any standing, lying upon the absolute mercy of God, having no good prayers, repentance or reformation to hold on to, and feeling that if mercy does not hold him up he must in justice sink eternally. Hence, love and reverence for the law of God instead of making a person pleased with his own righteousness, and giving him a desire to be accepted with God on the ground of his own doings, leads him to throw aside his own doings and makes him willing to be saved as a poor sinner; just in proportion therefore an *Antinomian* opposition to the law is eradicated from his mind. Arminian confidence in creaturely performances is destroyed. Here is the mystery of the christian's path that the *vulture's eye cannot see*; no person, not taught of God, can comprehend how that love and subjection to the law of God should cause one to loathe his own righteousness, nor how a person who relies entirely on the mercy of God in Christ for salvation, can be *zealous of good works*. Yet such is the case. The same love to the law which leads a person to renounce all human works as the ground of his acceptance with God, makes him cling to and rely alone on the work of Christ for acceptance when that work in its completion is once revealed to him as having been wrought for such poor sinners as he. The reason is that the one would degrade the law whilst the other perfectly honors it. Hence he *who rejoices in Christ Jesus, has no confidence in the flesh*; {Phil.3:3} and he who with Paul can say *I delight in the law of God after the inward man*, would also with him, *not have his own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith*. Rom.7:22 & Phil.3:9.

I think from what has been shown that Brother Meredith will be satisfied that the christian's path which is *as a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day*, cannot lead him in a middle way between Antinomian opposition to the law and Arminian love of human works, but that it leaves both in the background.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, July 5th, 1839.

S. Trott.

Remarks on Genesis 4:23,24 & 6:1,2.

Brother Beebe: - I was some time since requested by letter, to give, through the Signs, my views of the above texts. In compliance therewith I will now give such as I have.

These texts contain a very concise relation of some of the few incidents which the Holy Spirit saw fit to give us, by Moses, of the history of the world previous to the flood. There is not, that I know of, any direct reference to the subjects of these texts either in the New Testament or in the prophets by which their import as being any thing other than a relation of plain matters of fact, for the instruction of after ages, can safely be inferred. But still as the genealogy of Cain's posterity is only traced to Lamech and his sons; and as this particular account of Lamech's family, and the conversation he had with his wives, {Gen.4:23,24} is the only historical incident left on record concerning Cain's posterity, excepting what reference there is to his posterity in the other text under consideration, it must be evident that the Holy Spirit saw it particularly important on some account, that these transactions should have a place in the sacred scriptures. These are also subject to the general rules, II Tim.3:16 & Rom.15:4. The text, Gen.4:23,24, reads thus, "And Lamech said unto his wives Adah and Zillah, Hear my voice ye wives of Lamech; hearken unto my speech, for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt: if Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and seven fold." There have been several translations of this text given, changing in some measure its import; but the common translation is, I consider, a natural rendering of the original, and is probably the correct one. It might without doing any violence to the original, be so rendered as to represent these murders of Lamech to be in retaliation for *wounds* and *bruises* or *hurts* that he had received.

The design, I think, in giving this particular account of Lamech, is to show the workings, even at that early period, of *that Wicked*, or the *seed of the serpent*, or if you please, the delusion of those whom God gives up to their own deceptions. Lamech is represented as laboring under the same kind of delusion which Satan's religionists in our day deceive themselves with.

Let us look at the account. 1st. Lamech's sins are recorded. He, according to the scriptural account, was the first to practice polygamy: "And Lamech took unto him two wives." Again, he confesses himself to his wives to be a murderer, - to

have slain his two. But herein his satanic delusion shows itself. Cain had killed his brother. God, as a part of his punishment, and to make him a living example of his wickedness, decrees that he shall not have his life cut short by the violent hands of another, and therefore pronounces that *sevenfold vengeance shall be taken of any who shall kill Cain*. Lamech, by a wresting of this traditional decree concerning Cain, lulls himself into security that he shall be protected in his wickedness, inferring that if *Cain should be avenged sevenfold*, that is, if sevenfold vengeance should be taken upon any who should kill Cain, then seventy and seven should be taken on any who should slay Lamech for his murders. Thus a mark is set upon Lamech with his plurality of wives, as being of the *seed of the serpent*, and the prototype of those who should afterwards *wrest the scriptures to their own destruction*.

The text, Gen.6:1&2, is thus, "And it came to pass when men began to multiply on the face of the earth and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and they took them wives of all which they chose." The expressions in this text may imply, and probably were designed to convey the idea that the sons of God committed a twofold sin, namely: in intermarrying with the daughters of men, and in following the example of Lamech in taking a plurality of wives.

What were probably the particular points of enquiry relative to this text were, first: What are we to understand by the distinctive terms *sons of God* and *daughters of men*, as here used? Secondly: Whether this distinction does not involve the doctrine of *Two Seeds*.

1st. What is the distinction intended to be marked by the respective terms *sons of God* and *daughters of men*, as here used? On this point I see no need for departing from the commonly received idea, namely: that by the sons of God are intended the male descendants of Seth, and by the daughters of men the female descendants of Cain. In justification of this distinction it must be recollected that Cain complains to God that a part of his punishment was, "And from thy face I shall be hid." {Gen.4:14.} Whether this complaint referred to the circumstance, that being doomed to be *a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth*, he would thereby be deprived of worshipping before the cherubimic representation placed at the east of the garden before which it has been supposed that Adam and his immediate descendants offered their worship unto God; or in a more general sense, to the fact of his offering's having been rejected, when Abel's was accepted; it is evident in either case, that he no longer considered himself

recognized as a true worshipper of God. On the other hand after the birth of Enos, it is said, {Gen.4:26} "Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord;" that is, in reference to the sons of Adam other than Cain and his descendants. This passage is translated by some: *then began men to be called by the name of the Lord*, as though this became then a distinctive appellation to Seth, &c. But I think the translation in our Bibles the more correct, as the verb in the original is not in a passive but active voice. However I do not understand this to indicate that then men first began to worship God. Seth, in naming his son, *Enos*, a name used in the original, frequently to denote man as *frail, weak, mortal*, &c., in distinction from *Adam* which is the name of man as he came from the hands of his Creator, thus acknowledged the fallen helpless state of man in himself considered; so in addressing God he and his posterity called upon Him not under the general name, God - *Aloheim*, by which they had heretofore called upon Him, and the name probably which Cain applied to the object of his worship; but by the name *Jehovah*, the word used in the original, as expressive of his faith in God's self-existence and all-sufficiency. If indeed, as I am inclined to believe, this has not a special reference to Seth and his posterity, under a sense of their own frailty, now beginning to call upon the promised *Seed of the woman*, by faith acknowledging Him as Jehovah the all-sufficient Saviour and the one medium of access unto God. That it was understood, by Adam and Eve that the promised *Seed of the woman* who was to bruise the *serpent's head* was no other than Jehovah, the self-existent God, is evident from the fact that when Cain was born, Eve mistaking him for this promised *Seed* said *I have gotten a man - Jehovah*, as it reads in the original, not as in the translation, *a man from the Lord*. In the two points of Seth's faith as above brought to view, is clearly manifested the substance of the faith of the children of God in all ages; man's helplessness, and a God in Christ's all-sufficiency - whilst Cain with his offering, not in faith, but of his own choosing, and Lamech with his wickedness, and his wresting the word of God, characterize the false worshippers in every age. Well therefore did Moses in writing this inspired history, denominate the one class the *sons of God* and the other class, the *daughters of men*, whether the terms be considered as referring simply to the male descendants of the one, and to the female descendants of the other, or to the worship exercised by the one as being wholly of God's appointment and producing; and that of the other being conceived in the depraved hearts of men by Satan's instigation.

We now come to the other enquiry; namely: Whether this does not involve the *Doctrine of Two Seeds*. I answer in short, that it does. But still this requires a patient investigation to come to a correct understanding of what is intended by the two seeds, the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent respectively. The distinct origin of each, that which peculiarly constitutes each such, &c., will be the subject of our enquires.

1st. I shall lay it down as a position supported by the whole tenor of divine revelation, that the human family in all the branches, diversities, and expansion thereof, are the creatures of God - were created in Adam and have proceeded from him according to those laws of nature which God established, and under the immediate control and administration of His providence. Hence says the apostle, "Seeing He giveth to all life and breath and all things: and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, &c." Acts 17:26-29. A second position equally incontrovertible, I shall lay down, is that as the *election of grace* does not run by birth or blood, is not limited to any particular families or kindreds of the earth, and none such are excluded from it; so neither is the seed of the serpent confined to any particular branches or families of the earth, nor does it constitute any blood or fleshly distinctions. That great multitude which John saw standing before the throne, &c., was out of all nations, and kindreds and people and tongues. Rev.7:9. Hence the distinction and origin of the two seeds, must be something distinct from their creation or natural birth. All are alike the creatures of God, made of one blood; all have alike fallen in Adam, have alike sinned and come short of the glory of God, {Rom.3:23,} and alike are the children of wrath. Eph.2:2.

2nd. In reference to the seed of the woman, Christ was evidently more directly intended by that seed, but as His people were in Him and one with Him as thus revealed, and are His seed, they may also be considered as embraced in that term and here to be represented by it. The origin of their distinction from others, we know: "The election hath obtained it." Rom.11:7, and see also 9:6-8. They are made manifest as this seed by being made partakers of the life that is in Christ; being born of God.

In reference to the seed of the serpent, it may be more difficult to decide with certainty the origin of their distinction as such, otherwise than as to the judicial blindness which God sends upon them. For my own part, I am satisfied that there is something peculiar in them as the production of Satan, which constitutes them his seed. This, as has been shown, cannot be

anything in their natural birth; they being born of the same blood as are the elect. Perhaps it may be thought that the fallen state of men is that which constitutes them the seed of the serpent. There is considerable plausibility for this opinion. God is not the author of their depravity. It was by the temptation of the Serpent that the woman was in the transgression. But still the scriptures do not ascribe the depravity of man to Satan or the serpent. 1st. They assure us that Adam was not deceived, {I Tim.2:14}. Of course his transgression was his own voluntary act. 2nd. They inform us that *by one man sin entered into the world; that by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; and that it was by the offence of one {man} judgment came upon all men to condemnation; the all men, who were in Adam.* Rom.5:12-18. Besides this fact that to Adam, not Satan, is ascribed the depravity of man; we must recollect that depravity does not form a mark of distinction between the elect and the seed of the serpent; unless we were to suppose that all in a state of nature are the seed of the serpent; that Christ takes of the serpent's seed to form his visible seed, that of goats He makes sheep, and of tares, wheat. Hence human depravity is not that which of itself constitutes men the seed of the serpent. Neither can the simple circumstance that they were passed by of God in election be that which of itself constitutes them the seed of the serpent, for that was an act of God's sovereignty - not Satan's. I will not say that all the non-elect will not be found among the serpent's seed; nor that they will. But this I say, that so far as they are what they are of Satan, they may be termed *his seed*, and no farther. I however think that by the *serpent's seed* is more immediately intended, an organized interest which Satan has, from the day of Cain, had in the world, opposed to the religion and kingdom of Christ. This interest is fully described in the scriptures. Its subjects are characterized as those that *sacrifice to devils*, Lev.17:7; Deut.32:17 & I Cor.10:20; as worshipping devils, Rev.9:20; by *tares*, Mt.13:25,26; by goats, a herding animal like sheep, Mt.25:32,33. This interest is called *that Wicked*, II Thes.2:8; and Anti-christ, I John 2:18, &c. It has doctrines peculiar to itself, called the *doctrines of devils*, I Tim.4:1; it has ministers of its own, called *false prophets, false teachers, Satan's ministers*, &c., Mt.7:15; II Pet.2:1; II Cor.11:13-15. It has also churches called the *synagogue of Satan*, Rev.2:9 & 3:9. Instead of the Spirit of Christ, it has its spirits called *spirits of devils*, Rev.16:14; and seducing spirits, I Tim.4:1; see also I John 4:1-3.

Under the gospel dispensation the true subjects of

Christ's kingdom, or His seed, are manifested, by *being born of God*, being the *subjects of a new creation*, by *worshipping God in the Spirit*, *rejoicing in Christ Jesus and having no confidence in the flesh*, &c. John 1:3; II Cor.5:17 & Phil.3:3. The visible kingdom or Churches of Christ are known by a conformity to the *pattern showed in the mount* or to the apostolic church, in such circumstances as, continuing steadfast in the Apostle's doctrine, in fellowship, &c., and keeping the ordinances as delivered by the Apostles. Acts 2:41; I Cor.11:2; see also II Thes.2:15 & 3:6. Where these heaven born subjects are not, this spiritual worship is not, and these external characteristics of the Churches of Christ are not, and there is a profession of religion, and worship of any kind, there are the seed of the serpent, and there, a synagogue of Satan. But as in the ages preceding the gospel dispensation, these things were taught in types and figures, national distinctions were then made to represent the distinction between the kingdom of Christ and the interest of Anti-christ, or Satan. Thus the nation of Israel was made to prefigure the kingdom of Christ, and the other nations being given up to idolatry, &c., to represent Anti-christ or Satan's kingdom. Again the Jews represent Christ's Church and the Ten Tribes, or Israel, the visible reign of Anti-christ. But then this distinction was only typical; not a real dividing between the *seed of the woman* and *the seed of the serpent*. Hence Paul says *they are not all Israel which are of Israel*. Rom.9:6,7. Hence also as teaching this truth, Israel and Judah were at times left to go into idolatry and to *sacrifice unto devils*. Deut.32:17.

So before the flood certain communications were evidently made of God to Adam and others, and handed down by tradition; also sacrifices and types were instituted to a certain extent, for the instruction of the people and to govern the true worshippers of God. And even then were Seth and his descendants, and Cain and his descendants made to represent the two great interests which should divide the world in later ages, in which Christ should have visibly *divided to Him a portion with the great*, and *He should divide the spoil with the strong*. Isa.53:12.

Israel in their typical relation were prohibited by strict laws from intermixing with the nations around, and from intercommuning with them in religion; and it seems that instruction also was to Seth and his posterity to keep themselves separate from Cain and his descendants, otherwise their intermixing would not have been a sin. Thus God began early to teach mankind to put a difference between the holy and the profane, and that He must be so sanctified as the Holy

One, by those who are His worshippers, as that the worship and service which He instituted to be paid to Him must not be exchanged for, nor intermixed with the worship of human device, or that offered to false gods. He taught this in rejecting Cain's offering as being not of His appointing, and therefore not made in faith. And with Seth He began to teach that His worshippers must so reverence Him as the only true God, as to keep themselves separate as His worshippers, from all worshippers of false gods, as well as from their forms of worship.

Surely the gospel and its worship and institutions are not less the revealed appointments of God than were the rites of worship observed by Seth or those commanded by Moses; and His word teaches us that He *will be sanctified in them that come nigh Him, and be glorified before all the people*, as much under the greater light of the gospel, as under the darker dispensations of Moses, or before the flood. If so, we are taught by those typical references that the true followers of Christ should keep themselves separate from all anti-christian worshippers and worship, or all devices of men in religion. And the consequence of thus neglecting to *sanctify the Lord of hosts Himself* by the professed disciples in this day will be no less evil than it was in the case of the *sons of God* before the flood.

For our own instruction then, as also for the consideration of those who, while they profess to love the Lord, seem to see no evil in intermingling in church relation with those who can *turn from the holy commandment* to practice the devices of men, nor in polluting themselves as worshippers of the Holy God, by *going in unto the daughters of men*, or in other words, *taking unto them of all they* choose from among the devices of men in religion; let us notice this piece of sacred history in its connection. The persons above referred to, excuse themselves for thus continuing in connection with these corruptions in religion by pretending that it is for the sake of peace, but do they not mistake? Is it not for the sake of *shunning the cross*?

In the connection we are told {Gen.6:4,} that "when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men and they bore children unto them, the same became mighty men who were of old men of renown." Has it not uniformly been so under the gospel? In the early ages of the church, when the sons of God, the professed disciples of Christ went in unto the philosophy of Greece and the rites of idolaters, that is, incorporated these things into their preaching and practice, they soon became patronized by the Imperial government of Rome, and had their

religion incorporated with it, and then were brought forth *mighty men* and men of renown in history, such as diocesan bishops, archbishops, patriarchs and Popes, men famed for their interference in the governments of this world.

And in our times the Baptists, not content with one wife, one religious society - the gospel church; for it was foretold in prophecy of the gospel church, that "as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee," Isa.62:5; the Baptists I say, not regarding the instruction of this prophecy, have looked upon the *daughters* - the devices of men - and have gone in unto them, and taken them wives of all they chose, and like Lamech have committed polygamy. Instead of marrying to the church alone *as a young man marrieth a virgin*, they have taken to them as wives a multitude of religious societies, such as mission, bible, &c., even of all that they have chosen. The result has been that these societies who are *men of renown*, men of fame in the world, they have Missionaries, they have a Carey, &c., a Judson, yea, and even a Mrs. Judson; they have D.D's.; they have Presidents, Vice Presidents, &c. And they have preachers of high standing for their human learning and popular doctrine, &c. How long before they will be mighty in their influence in the governments of the world, I know not.

How different the standing of the Baptists now as a denomination, in the eyes of the world, from what it was before they formed this connection with the daughters of men. Why they used to be accounted as a denomination, just as we Old School Baptists now are; as a weak, ignorant, superstitious and contemptible sect; as being so bigoted and stiff necked, that they would not go one step in religion, further than they had a *thus saith the Lord* for. Yea like us, they were considered the mere refuse of society. Alas how altered now!

But many will say, Is not this alteration in the Baptist denomination for the better? Is it not of great advantage to the denomination to stand on a footing with other denominations? To have learned and popular preachers among them? Yes, according to the wisdom of this world, these things are of great advantage. And no doubt the sons of Cain thought it a great acquisition to the world to have those *giants* and other *men of might and renown* born. But my brethren, that which ought to concern us as professed disciples of Christ, is not, how men view these things, but how God views them. We are informed in the verse following the one we have been considering, how God viewed those corrupting intermixings of the sons of God with the daughters of men, then; and of course how He looks upon such things in the spiritual kingdom

of Christ now. It stands recorded *for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come*, that "God saw the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Gen.6:5. What! Did God view in this awful light, that wonderful benevolent plan of bringing in the daughters of men as helps to multiply the sons of God, by there being more sons born unto them in proportion to the number of their wives; and when these sons too, were men of such *might and renown* in the world? Yes; so it is written, that God viewed these things as being wicked to a great degree. And so it remains to be, that God *views every imagination of the thoughts of his - man's - heart to be only evil continually*. How vastly *wicked* then to incorporate the fruits of these *evil imaginations* into the religion and service of the Holy God! God's judgments then followed that wicked corrupting of His religion, by *bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly*. So will suitable judgments, rest assured, follow the spiritual wickedness of these times. O that God's people would take timely warning and *come out of mystical Babylon*, before they *partake further of her sins, and receive of her plagues*.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, Sept.17, 1839.

S. Trott.

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Communion with God.

Brother Beebe: - I some time since received a letter signed S., N.Y., requesting my views on the important enquiry, How far communion with God may be expected to be enjoyed by christians in this day.

Since receiving this letter, I have had much to prevent my earlier attention to it, which must be my excuse for so long neglecting the request of my unknown friend.

From the explanation given in the letter, it appears that the enquiry therein contained, refers more directly to the idea of receiving special and manifest answers to prayer for intimations of the Divine will, to be given us as a guide in cases of difficulty, that is, whether we may look for such answers in this day.

In reference to the general enquiry, I will here briefly remark, that communion with God in this, as in every other age, depends entirely on the pleasure of God. "For the preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord." Prov.16:1. To the same effect says

the Psalmist; "Lord thou hast heard the desire of the humble; thou wilt prepare their heart; thou wilt cause thine ear to hear." Ps.10:17. It is the desire of the humble that God heareth; it is grace alone that can humble the heart, even of a believer, truly before God. - Again, John informs us that - If we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us. I John 5:14. "But the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." I Cor. 2:11. Hence if we ask anything *according to the will of God*, it must be alone by the influence and guidance of the Spirit of God, as says the Apostle again: "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." Rom.8:26, 27. Just so far therefore as the Spirit indites our petitions for us, so far will God answer our prayers. But to come to the special enquiry proposed; if my own experience in the case might be considered proper authority, I should unhesitatingly say that, in some instances, when God's children, in cases of difficulty, feeling their utter incapability to decide for themselves as to what is duty, are led to entreat of Him for some special intimation of His will as their guide in the case, He does in answer to their prayer, give them such intimations. In the early part of my life as a believer, I received in several instances, what I then considered to be, and still believe to have been special intimations as to what was duty in particular cases of difficulty; such as related to my engaging in the work of the ministry, and to some other instances of special anxiety of mind.

The method in which to receive an answer, that I was more generally led to ask for, and look to, was that I might open to some passage of Scripture which should be given to me as an answer. The idea was not, that I should take any text which I might chance to open to, as an answer - but that I might be directed to some passage which should convey to my mind a proper answer to my enquiry, and be impressed upon my mind as such. {Christians know the difference between merely reading a text, and having it applied by the Spirit of God.} I was probably first led to seek answers in this way, from having in some instances, when in deep distress concerning my salvation, on taking up the Bible, opened without any previous design, to texts which when they first met my eye, seemed to have something in them specially suited to my case, and were so applied to me as to give me instruction and comfort. I have in some instances on receiving

answers as above mentioned, been led to admire the wonderful treasury which the Scriptures contain, and have thought that they contained a text suiting every case either of anxious enquiry, or of distress to which a child of grace may be subjected.

In the several instances to which I have referred of having received answers to my supplications, not only did the texts to which I opened, in their expressions, contain appropriate answers to my enquiries, and were so impressed upon my mind, and so rested upon, that my course was shaped accordingly; but in every such instance, the events thus promised or predicted have been exactly accomplished and that in a way independent of any plans or exertions of mine, manifesting the special providence therein. So that whoever else may doubt the fact of such special intimations of the Divine will being given, I have ground for confidence in them, unless I am altogether deceived in reference to having been called to the ministry.

There have been some instances in which I expressed, by other modes than that above described, what I have received and rested upon, as special answers to my supplications for direction. But I would by no means have it supposed that my experience has led me to believe that I can command such special answers, whenever I am pleased to ask for them. On the contrary, many were the instances in my early experience, when under deep anxiety to know whether I was truly a subject of grace or not, and in other instances to know what was duty in particular cases, that I have spent hours together in some solitary place, in prayer and in turning over the Scriptures, to obtain some direct intimation from God to satisfy my doubts, and that, without receiving any answer. In other instances wherein the Lord ultimately granted an answer, it was not until my mind had been long burdened with the subject, and application had often been made for relief, that it was obtained.

I will here make a partial digression, which to some may not be uninteresting, to remark that christians, more especially in their early experience, are apt in seasons of doubts to be anxious to obtain some special intimation from God, to assure them of their interest in Christ, or of their being of the elect. But that which has been the pleasure of God to reveal in the Scriptures, is, Christ as the Saviour and complete salvation of His people under the character of lost, helpless sinners, the same He reveals in them when taught their just condemnation and helplessness. But He has not revealed that they by name or personal distinction are of the election of grace. It is

therefore I conceive vain to expect that God will give us any special intimation to assure us particularly of our having been chosen in Christ, or that He died especially for us. It is the will of God that we *should walk by faith and not by sight* - by faith in Christ as He is revealed in the Scriptures the Saviour of helpless, ruined sinners. To rest our expectations for acceptance with God, on a special revelation made to us of our election, would be to walk by sight. It is true that God is pleased at times so to reveal Christ to His people, in His fulness as suiting their case, and so apply some of the promises which are yea and amen in Christ Jesus, that they then have all the assurance they can ask for, of their interest in Christ, and of course, of their election. But this is a revelation of Christ to them - not as adapted to their election: but to their ruined, helpless case, as sinners, and their knowledge of themselves as such, and of Christ's having undertaken and finished the salvation of such, is to them through faith the evidence of their salvation and ground of their hope.

But to return to the subject, before us; I have been led to the conclusion, whether correctly or not, that it is mostly in their early experience that God grants to His children communion with Him, in this special way of their seeking and receiving these sensible indications of His will concerning them, in particular cases. This conclusion is founded, 1st. On their then lamblike state, and the peculiar tenderness which our kind Shepherd is wont to exercise towards such, as we are informed by Isa.40:11 - "He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." - Again, upon the consideration that the repeated trials of a believer's faith which he passes through, *worketh patience, and patience, experience; and experience, hope, &c.*, that is, his repeated experience of the faithfulness of God inspires him with hope, that God will grant him the guidance which he needs, if he but *commit his way unto Him*. And as Paul says in reference to salvation, "If we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it;" so in this case the believer is led to a patient waiting for the openings of providence as his guide, without seeking these special intimations from God. But then I would not infer from this, that there are no instances in which an experienced believer may be led to seek and receive such special intimations of God's will concerning him. Neither would I have it inferred that it is not the privilege and the only safe course of every believer to commit all their ways unto the Lord, to seek direction from

Him in all their changes and to submit to His guidance, in whatever way He may manifest it. As I have dwelt thus long on my own experience in this case, I will further add that I have experienced the evil of engaging in enterprises merely from the impulse or inclination of my own mind, without specially seeking direction from God therein. Such for instance was the case in my removal to the West in 1815. The disappointments I met with in my expectations, and the reflection of having left the church I had been connected with in New Jersey, in an entire destitute situation, soon made me sensible of the error I had committed in undertaking this removal without especially seeking counsel from God in the case. The reflection thus occasioned, prevented my ever feeling settled or satisfied with that removal, and therefore when an opening in providence appeared to be made for my removal back, I readily embraced it; and returned after six years absence, to the church I had left. There was however much in the dispensations of providence toward me, during those six years, calculated as I thought to keep alive the recollection of my error. This may enable some satisfactorily to account for what has perhaps appeared to them a strange move. But my unknown friend will wish some higher authority than my own experience for the answer I have given to his enquiry.

1st. Then; We are abundantly authorized from Scripture, to ask for those things which are according to God's revealed will, in such texts as these: "Ask and it shall be given you." Mt.7:7. "But in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." Phil.4:6. "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it." John 14:13,14. But then this asking, to receive, must not only be in faith in Christ, as the Mediator, but also in faith to believe that God will for Christ's sake grant the thing asked, as shown by Mt.21:22 - "And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer believing, ye shall receive" - also James 1:6; and I John 5:14,15.

2nd. The case of Gideon is one instance to the point left on record for our instruction; God condescended to grant special repeated signs to Gideon as an assurance of his being called to the work pointed out to him, and of his duty to engage therein. The Lord had shown Gideon one sign of his call of God to the work assigned him, in the consuming by fire from the rock, the flesh, of his offered kid, &c. Judges 6:18-21. Yet Gideon's doubts still prevailed of the Lord's designing him for such a work, and he entreats for further confirmation,

and specifies the sign once and again. The Lord grants it in the fleeces first being wet with dew, and then dry, verses 26 -40, same chapter. Other instances might be pointed out in the Old Testament; but I will come to the case of Thomas in the New Testament. John 20:25-29. Thomas would not believe that his Lord had actually risen from the dead, without receiving a particular sign as confirmation, notwithstanding the testimony of his brethren. The sign is granted, he is permitted to put his hand into the wounded side of his Lord, and his fingers into the print of the nails in his hands. It is true that these doubts of Thomas was made the occasion for giving to him and the other disciples, a clearer testimony than they otherwise could have had of Christ's having actually risen in the same body in which He had entered the tomb; and that without having seen corruption. But it also stands on record as a testimony of the condescension of Christ to the doubts and weakness of His children; and is an encouragement to us - not to indulge in unbelief; but to seek Him in giving to us that evidence which is necessary to enable us to believe in any case; and of course, also to understand what is duty. This subject would open a still extended field were I to undertake to draw the mark of distinction between these instances of special communion with God, which we have noticed, and those impressions which are frequently made upon our minds, often, no doubt, by Satan, and which we are apt to mistake for intimations of the Divine will; and also to notice objections which might be raised to the position I have taken. But as I have already been so lengthy on the subject, I will pass these by for this time.

I however wish to be indulged a little further, to offer a few additional remarks on the general enquiry, how far the churches of Christ are *at this day* enjoying communion with God.

On this point I shall have to differ from those who talk so much about the *present sickly state of the church*. That this is a day of rebuke to the churches of Christ I readily admit. When we look at, and judge from outward appearances, the following scriptural complaints would also appear truly applicable to our case, namely: "We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth, neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen." And we might add, our enemies are deriding us for it. But then the gracious answer of God to this complaint, stands on record for our encouragement, in the same connection. "Thy dead men shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing ye that dwell in dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs;

and the earth shall cast out her bread. Come my people enter thou into thy chambers and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself for a little moment until the indignation be overpast." &c. Isa.26:18-21. Thus is showed that notwithstanding the complaints which the church makes of herself, she is at that very time the object of the special recognition and care of her Lord; and that of which she complains is, in His gracious dealings, but the means of separating her from the multitude, against whom He has indignation, and who have shed the blood of the saints; and of preparing her to enter into the chambers He has prepared for hiding her from the storm during this indignation. And indeed I think those saints who complain so of the *sickly state of the church* take altogether a mistaken view of the subject. They think that truth is much fallen now to what it was thirty or forty years ago, and has much fewer advocates now than then. But the fact is, that truth, then, was at a much lower standard than now: scholastic divinity was then mostly the standard, and the truth as it is in Jesus was obscured by the glosses of men. Now the true churches of Christ are being led to renounce such standards of 'truth', and to take the Scriptures as their only standard; the consequence is, that with many these human glosses are stripped off and the truth and order of the gospel are preached and received by such in that plainness in which they are revealed in the Scriptures; and they are depending more on the teachings of the Holy Spirit, and less on the teachings of men. Hence carnal professors, instead now of professing love to the doctrine of the Scriptures in its plainness, come out in opposition to it, and openly advocate human teaching and human systems, contrary to that, to which the saints are led.

Again the churches, formerly through their general appearance of union, increased in worldly respectability and enjoyed more pleasant feelings. Now they experience much to mar these feelings, but have in exercise a much more conscientious and greater regard for the truth and order of the gospel, as delivered in the Scriptures, and from the glory they now discover in the simplicity of Scripture revealed, compared with the wisdom of men, they cheerfully meet reproach in their strenuous adherence to the former, and rejection of the latter.

Formerly their great increase in numbers and respectability, occasioned a manifest decrease in true spiritual strength; now the true churches of Christ are diminished in numbers, and by the religious world are considered the reverse of prosperous and respectable, but they experience much more of the sweets of spiritual union and fellowship, and

rejoice that in the Lord alone is their righteousness and strength. Formerly they were like a person increasing in corpulency, but becoming thereby gross and subject to disease; now under the management of their all skillful Physician, they are having that grossness purged from them, and though losing much of their corpulency, yet are becoming more healthy. So that whilst the churches have abundant reason to mourn their past too great conformity to the world, they have abundant reason for thankfulness, that their kind and all-wise Shepherd's care toward them has not diminished; and that although they are made to experience the pain of divisions, and much opposition and contempt; yet He is thereby separating them from that only, which was hurtful to them.

Upon the whole view therefore of the subject, I am led to the conclusion that the churches of Christ are *at this day* looking more entirely to the guidance of the Holy Spirit and receiving more of His communications in being led to clearer views of divine truth in its original purity, and to greater love to it, than for a long period before, as manifested by their preferring God's truth, with reproach; to the systems and expositions of men, with worldly applause. But still, whatever just ground some few may have to boast of their *deep experience in divine things*, and to glory over their brethren on account thereof, the great body of the saints fall, {and feel sensible of it,} far short of the apostolic church, in purity of religion, in being of one heart and one soul, and in that strength of love to Christ and His cause which would lead them to count everything else as *loss and pollution* compared with Christ, and being found in Him. There is much *traditionalism* still among us, much of an inclination to consult the flesh, and the world, and to seek *that honor which cometh from men*; but our great Immanuel is now sitting as a *Refiner and purifier of silver*, and is skillful and faithful to temper the fire so as to purge away the dross, and that only. Being thus in the crucible it is not a time for great rejoicing and lively frames, but one which calls to taking up the cross, and to the exercise of strong faith in our gracious Leader and Commander. May He increase our faith and love to Him.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, Nov. 22, 1839.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.7 {1839}

Remarks on Eph.1:3.

"Blessed be the God, and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ."

Who hath blessed us, &c., is what I wish particularly to notice. From the manner in which this text is quoted and applied by certain writers, one might infer that they considered the revelation of God to be altogether of His eternal purpose, and nothing of the accomplishment of that purpose, or that their attention is so much taken up with the purpose itself, that they can see nothing of its being carried out in the acts and events in time. These persons have certainly a right to present their own view of the subject; and this liberty I would not deprive them of. But being as confident as I am that God exists, that such a view of the subject is wrong, I will present for their consideration a different view of divine revelation, and of the text above named in particular.

Perhaps some may think that I have used too strong an expression, in saying that I am as confident of this thing, as I am that God exists. But my brethren; how can we know anything of God but by His bringing to pass the events purposed in His own eternal mind. Thus I understand God to declare beforehand in prophecy and in promise, His purpose, that the accomplishment of those events thus before declared, may be a continual witness that He alone is God. And this I understand to be the ground taken by God in His reasonings with Israel against idolatry, as in Isa.41:8-20, 21-28; also in chapter 42:9; 42:8-13, and in other places.

There appears to me, to be a divine beauty and glory reflected, from the subject when we contemplate God's eternal purpose as rolling on in the unerring accomplishment of the preordained parts thereof, in regular succession; and in beholding the successive accomplishment of each event unfolding more and more of the manifold wisdom and gracious designs of Him who sits as a Sovereign, governing all, "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;" {Isa.46:10} thus also verifying His declaration; "I will work and who shall let it." I think far more of God is seen in beholding Him bringing to pass in regular succession, His declared purpose, making every thing, even the *wrath of man* subservient thereto, than could be seen in contemplating Him merely as declared in the

purpose. Just as the planetary orbs, by their constant and regular revolutions, bringing about, in beautiful order, the successions of day and night, summer and winter, seed time and harvest, proclaim far more distinctly the existence and government of God, all-wise, all-powerful and good, than the mere excellence of those orbs divested of their motions and of the changes produced thereby, could do. It was this motion of these heavenly bodies, and the changes thereby produced, which the Psalmist calls our attention to in the 19th Psalm.

The writers of the New Testament seem to have been ever intent on bringing to our view the purpose as coupled with, and showed in, its accomplishments, and the prophecies and promises as verified in their fulfillment; the types which were but prophecy or the purpose of God declared in emblems, are also in the New Testament brought to view in connection with their anti-types.

As one instance in which the purpose and its accomplishment are brought to view in their legitimate connection by the inspired writers I will refer to II Tim.1:9. "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." Here we have God's *own purpose and grace*, given to the saints, not in themselves, but *in Christ Jesus*, their Head, *before the world began*, brought to view - not as constituting in that original gift, their actual *salvation and calling*, but as being the purpose going before, or predestinated plan *according* to which, those, of whom the Apostle then spake, were actually *saved and called*. Here therefore we have the purpose as fixed before time began, now actually accomplished as manifested in the experience of the saints, and that of *grace* and not of works, presented together as one harmonious whole, manifesting God in the beginning, and ending of it. So in the text to be considered, {Eph.1:3} I understand the Apostle not as speaking simply of the saints being blessed in purpose, or of their being chosen and predestinated to these blessings, but of their being brought into the experience of these blessings, according to God's electing and predestinating love and purpose going before. Hence the text in its connection does not read as it should have done to convey the idea of the saints having been blessed, as the Apostle speaks, *with all spiritual blessings* in the electing and predestinating purpose going before. It should in that case have read, Who blessed us with all spiritual blessings, &c., *when He chose in Him* before the foundation of the world, &c. But the Apostle here speaks not of the saints having been blessed in their

election to holiness &c., and predestination to the adoption of children, but of their having been then blessed *according to that* CHOICE and PREDESTINATION going before. See verses 4 & 5 in connection with verse 3. I therefore must understand him as calling the attention of the Ephesian brethren to the fact, of the actual accomplishment of the electing and predestinating purpose of God going before, concerning them, as manifested in their experience.

The obligation of the saints thus to unite with the Apostle in blessing God, for having brought them to realize in their experience, all those spiritual blessings to which He had chosen and predestinated them, before the *foundation of the world*, was taught under the Levitical law, in the case of the Israelite who was to bring his "basket of first fruits" unto the Lord; according to Deut.26:1-11. There is in the confession which the Israelite was to make on that occasion, something beautifully illustrative of our text, and also of the experience which the child of grace relates when he comes before the church, {as the Israelite came before the priest,} to offer also the *first fruits* of grace in his heart, namely; a thankful acknowledgment of being saved by Christ, and of subjection to Christ by submitting to the ordinance of baptism. Were it not so lengthy I would transcribe the whole passage; as it is, I will content myself with noticing some particulars therein; and request my brethren to read the passage for themselves. 1st. He was to say unto the priest, "I profess this day unto the Lord thy God that I am come unto the country which the Lord swore unto our fathers for to give us." {vs.3.} Notice the import of this confession; it was not, that God in swearing unto their fathers, Abraham, Issac and Jacob, had by that oath and promise put them then in actual possession of the good land; but it was, that now, according to that oath and promise, God had brought Israel into the possession of the land promised unto their fathers, notwithstanding all the difficulties that had intervened. It was not therefore the oath and promise that he was then to acknowledge, but the accomplishment of that promise as manifested in his actually now enjoying the fruits of the land. And yet the promise made unto their fathers and confirmed by the oath of God, as effectually secured the possession of the land to their posterity, as did the choice of the saints in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and the everlasting covenant established with Christ, secured to them, their being actually "blessed with all spiritual blessings." Again this Israelite, after the priest should take his basket of first fruits and set it down before the altar of the Lord his God, was to give a brief detail of Israel's origin, of

their bondage and oppression in Egypt, of their crying unto the Lord, and of His hearing their cry and delivering them by a strong hand out of Egypt, and His bringing them into that land which flowed with milk and honey, and that the fruits which he then had brought were those which the Lord had given him, &c. How different the idea conveyed by this whole relation from that of their having been put into actual possession of national liberty and blessings in the land of Canaan by the promise made unto Abraham! That promise secured their being put into this possession, and the confession was, that it was according to that promise, and not according to their works, that they were thus blessed.

So in the relation which spiritual Israelites give of their experience, there is a correspondence with that of the national Israelites. "A Syrian ready to perish was my father, and he went down into Egypt," &c., said one. The other says, a *deceived one*, {the import of Syrian} ready to perish was my father, and I have borne his image; and when the Lord opened my eyes to see my condition, I found myself a poor sinner lying under the just condemnation of the law, &c., and being *heavy laden* with its demands, I cried unto the Lord for mercy; He heard me and brought me from under it and to Jesus, for salvation, &c.

I recollect, if I may refer to the subject without giving offense, that in the discussion on justification, one esteemed brother said he had been taught the doctrine of eternal justification in his experience. If so, he of course found from the first discovery he had of his true situation, that he had always been actually blessed with all spiritual blessings. But although I have not the most distant idea that this brother designed to misrepresent his case; yet from his preaching as I heard him, I am confident that his experience taught him to view himself - not as a *justified one saved* - but as a *sinner saved* - not as always enjoying the *milk and honey* of Canaan; but as having groaned under the bondage and oppression of Egypt. So I think all who are taught of God, instead of viewing themselves as having been always in the blessed state of which the Apostle speaks in the text under consideration, find that they had been *living without God and without hope in the world*, and had been *aliens from the commonwealth of Israel*, &c.

In further noticing this subject, it will be proper, first to examine the import of the expressions; *In heavenly places, in Christ Jesus*. 1st. The expression, in *heavenly places*. From the use of this and like expressions, in this and other texts, I do not understand the idea intended thereby to be conveyed, as

one to be confined to that which is beyond time, either before or after; but the expression is evidently used to point out the peculiarities of the gospel dispensation and what properly belongs to it, in distinction from the legal dispensation. Thus I understand the Master, in the expressions "If I have told you earthly things and ye believed not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things," {John 3:12} to intimate to Nichodemus that he had not believed the words of the Sinai covenant in their true and full import, and therefore it was no wonder he did not comprehend and believe the testimony of Christ concerning the new birth. And this text I understand as thus corresponding with John 5:47, with the difference that Christ here claims to have Himself spoken the words from Mount Sinai. In I Cor.15:47-49, the terms *heavenly* and *earthly* refer to Christ and Adam the one as the head or father of the spiritual birth of the saints; the other of their natural birth. Thus also the *heavenly places* mentioned in Eph.1:20 & 2:6, in which Christ was seated on His resurrection from the dead, and His people with and in Him, refer I think to Christ's being thus exalted as King in Zion to administer to His people, not the regulations of the Sinai covenant, but the provisions of the *sure mercies of David*. And we are thus taught that as Christ in consequence of His union with His people was brought under the law, so by the redemption which He completed in the same oneness with His people, and His consequent resurrection from the dead, His people were thus exalted with, and in Him, and together seated in Him far above the demands of the law and above all the principalities and powers, whether angels or men that are under the law. In a similar sense in the expression used in Eph.3:10. Thus also, the *heavenly calling, heavenly gift, heavenly things, heavenly country, and heavenly Jerusalem*, Heb.3:1; 6:4; 8:5; 9:23; 11:16; 12:22, all refer to the same spiritual idea relating to the gospel church. The term heavens also in Heb.9:23, refers to the same spiritual nature of the gospel church. Hence the being blessed in *heavenly places* refers to the saints being under the *Everlasting Covenant*, and their being blessed according to the provisions of that covenant, as *ordered in all things and sure*, and not according to the conditional provisions of the Sinai covenant; they being recognized, not as bond servants under the law; but as *sons of God*.

We next enquire, what the import is, of the expression, *in Christ Jesus* as used in this connection. It is, as I understand it, designed to bring Christ to view, as the sole medium through which the blessings of God flows to any of the children of men, and shows farther the distinction between

these blessings, and those, bestowed upon national Israel.

The blessings which national Israel enjoyed were bestowed upon them as the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; and according to the promises made unto them. The saints are blessed as the seed of Christ, and according to the promises which are *yea and amen* in Christ Jesus. The natural seed of Abraham were blessed as they were recognized as such by the circumcision in the flesh. The saints are manifested as heirs of the spiritual blessings by the *circumcision that is of the heart, in the spirit*. The blessings of Canaan came to natural Israel on the ground of their own obedience; these spiritual blessings flow freely to the saints, through that perfect obedience which Christ rendered from under the law. In a word, the believer, in having Christ as his, has in Him, all spiritual blessings, secured eternally unto him; and as from time to time he is enabled to exercise faith in Christ, he is made to rejoice in the assurance that the blessing of God rests upon him, without any mixture of evil, or any deficiency for rendering him truly blessed for time and eternity. And it is only as he can exercise faith in Christ, that he can thus realize that he is blessed of God.

In specifying the *all spiritual blessings*, many name election and predestination as standing foremost in the list, but however great and glorious blessings these are, as the flowings out of the love of God to His people, yet it was not of these the Apostle here spake, for it is *according* to this electing and predestinating grace, that they are thus blessed, or in other words, the blessings which are here spoken of, are no other than what flows out of that *everlasting love* which God placed upon them in their election. As the Israelite already referred to, in bringing his basket of *first-fruits*, therein confesses unto God, not that God chose Abraham and swear unto him, to give unto his posterity the land of Canaan; but according to that purpose thus confirmed unto Abraham, he was in the possession, and actually enjoying the fruits of the land of Canaan. So the believer when brought to receive Christ by faith, is constrained to acknowledge, that in Him he finds not only all that he had conceived to be promised in the gospel, but infinitely more than it had ever entered into his heart to conceive of.

As to any attempt to count up these blessings, I consider it superfluous. I might enumerate; redemption, calling, repentance, faith, adoption, &c.; but are these all that are included in the Apostle's expressions, "Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings?" I think not. The expression *all spiritual blessings*, seem to me to embrace the idea, not only

that they had been blessed with all that they had understood to be included in the gospel report; but that all they had experienced or should experience was *blessing*; that as the curse was now removed, their sins pardoned, and they justified in their experience through the redemption they now apprehended by faith in Christ, they had peace with God, and felt that everything flowed from His goodness. The being disappointed in their attempts to make their peace with God, by their works, and the condemnation, distress and broken-heartedness which they had been made to feel, they now see were all blessings, rich blessings, to their poor guilty souls; all were but preparing them to receive and rejoice in Christ. So faith, when exercised by the operation of God in the hearts of His people, assures them that all the trials of the way, inward and outward, how much soever sense may be disposed to pronounce them evils, are all brought with blessings, rich and spiritual; all are *working together for their good*. Having Christ, they are blessed in prosperity, in adversity; in sickness, in health; in darkness, in light; in life, in death; in the sounding of the trump of the Archangel, and in eternity.

Well and feelingly therefore may the saint, when faith is in exercise, say with the Apostle: *Blessed be the God, and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; according as He hath chosen us in Him, &c.*

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, Dec.23, 1839.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.8 {1840}

The washing of feet not an ordinance of the Gospel.

Brother Beebe: - I see by the 24th number of volume 7 of the Signs, that brother A. Moore of Tennessee, wishes either your or my views of several texts and points of order, by him named. As he refers to a sentence contained in one of my communications, as the ground of his enquiries, I feel myself, more particularly, called upon to give my views on those several points of enquiry.

The first point of enquiry is whether the *washing of feet* be an ordinance of the gospel. To come to a correct conclusion on this point, it is necessary to decide as to what constitutes a gospel ordinance, or that which is appointed by Christ to be a standing order, to be observed by gospel churches. There are

many things delivered in the New Testament, by precept and otherwise, designed as instruction and guidance to the churches, and also to the saints in their various relations and in all their department, but which do not properly come under the idea of gospel ordinances, or forms of worship to be observed, in the letter of them, by the churches.

In deciding on what are to be observed as ordinances, it is necessary to take into consideration the authority, vested by the King of Zion, in the Apostles, in the case. The special authority of the Apostles to establish what belongs to gospel churches, both as to doctrine and order, is declared by the Lord in these words, "Verily, I say unto you, that ye which have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Matt.19:28. Luke has it, "I appoint unto you a kingdom as my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table, in my kingdom, and sit upon thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Luke 22:29 & 30. In the commission as thus delivered, we have clearly embraced the following points: 1st. That the Apostles were to be associated with Christ in authority and dignity, in the government of the Church, signified by their *eating and drinking at His table, in His kingdom, and sitting upon thrones*, &c. 2nd. That their authority is judicial, not legislative; they were to establish by their decisions, or by what they taught as doctrine and order in the churches, the rule of faith and practice to the churches. 3rdly. That their decisions were to be decisive and supreme, as shown by a *kingdom being appointed* them, and their being *seated on thrones* to judge, &c. 4thly. That their decisions were to be binding upon the churches of Christ, and to be the standard of gospel churches during the whole gospel dispensation, as signified by their being thus seated and judging during the time of Christ's *sitting on the throne of His glory*, as well as by their *judging the twelve tribes of Israel*, which represents the whole visible church in all its several states and ages.

This authority of the Apostles was foretold by the Prophet when he said, "Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment." Isa.32:1. Christ further shows the perpetuity, force and obligation of the Apostles' decisions upon the churches in His declaration to Peter, "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Matt.16:19. As the same declaration was again made to all the disciples, with the

exception of mentioning the keys, {Matt.18:18} it is evident that, though spoken in the first instance directly to Peter, the declaration included all the Apostles. The giving *the keys of the kingdom of heaven* was expressive of the authority which they should have over the gospel church; keys being emblematical of authority or power. See Isa.22:22 & Rev.1:18, 3:7, and other texts. The *whatsoever* they should *loose or bind*, refers not only to the rites &c., of the law, but also to what Christ had spoken in person whilst in the flesh; for several things which Christ spake to His disciples and to the multitude related only to them as being still under the law. For instance, the particular commission given to the *twelve*, {Matt.10} and to the *seventy* {Luke 10} related, in the form of it at least, only to the period which should intervene before Christ's resurrection. Hence Christ Himself, after His resurrection, alters it, commanding them now *to go into all the world*, instead of limiting them to the land of Judea, as before. Besides now, instead of preaching saying *that the kingdom of heaven is at hand*, they are to preach the gospel in all its fulness and glory. As another instance to the point, I will notice what Christ says to His disciples as well as to the multitude, Matt.23:2 & 3, "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do, &c." And we know they bade them observe all the ceremonies of the law and traditions of the elders. But the decision of the Apostles was that the disciples from among the Gentiles should be loosed from this whole yoke of bondage, excepting certain *necessary things*, such as that they were to abstain from meats offered to idols, &c. Acts 15:19-29. And Paul's decision is the same, namely: that Christ "has taken the whole handwriting of ordinances out of the way, nailing them to His cross &c." See Col.2:14.

Hence as what the Apostles loosed, as well as what they bound, while ministering in the churches on earth, were loosed or bound in heaven; that is, were established as of divine authority; and as even certain things which Christ had spoken, were by apostolic authority *loosed* from the gospel churches from among the Gentiles, my understanding of the matter is that nothing is binding upon the churches to be observed as ordinances, but what the enthroned judges - the apostles - established in the churches by their acts or writings. That is, there must be the apostolic decision, showing the proper application of the law, as well as the command of Christ, in order to establish an ordinance as binding upon the churches. Hence the *all things* which they were to teach the disciples under the gospel to *observe* {Matt.28:20} were *all things*

which He had commanded them as pertaining to the kingdom of God or the gospel dispensation.

Let us therefore, and let the churches beware that neither men nor devils fix a yoke upon us, either pertaining to doctrine or order, which we have not the apostolic decision or pattern for. Let us also beware that we neglect not what they have *bound*.

If we try what are generally received by the churches of Christ as ordinances, by the above rule, we shall find the apostolic sanction fully given, or the application of the command by them illustrated.

Thus, in reference to the command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," we have, in the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles the import of this command fully shown, in its bearing upon the churches, in all after ages. We have given, in the apostolic decision what the gospel is, and its contrast with the law and with the philosophy or wisdom of this world, the manner of preaching, also the different gifts for the ministry specified and their distinct stations in the churches designated. The ordinance of baptism is also fully shown in its subjects, mode, and the doctrine of it, by the decision of the Apostles as given in their practice and writings.

The ordinance of the supper is also thus clearly established. But try, by this rule, what Christ says to His disciples after having washed their feet, namely: "If I then your Lord and Master have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet, &c." John 13:14,15, and it will be found not to have been established as an ordinance in the churches by any act or writing of the Apostles. Paul once mentions the subject of washing feet, not as a command of Christ, or an ordinance observed in the churches; but simply as an act of hospitality, shown by a female to the saints; such as Abigail was willing to show to the servants of David. I Sam.25:41. The instance referred to, is in I Tim.5:10. Here then I have one good reason for not admitting that there is any such ordinance established by apostolic authority as the washing of feet.

A 2nd reason is this: Admitting that Christ by what He said to the disciples on that occasion, intended to command the washing of feet as an ordinance, to be observed by the churches, and not only are the Apostles in that case dethroned from their ruling in judgment, but they are also found unfaithful to the command of Christ wherein He said: "Teaching them to observe *all* things whatsoever I have commanded you;" for there is no instance in which they taught

those disciplined under their ministry, to observe the washing of feet, as an ordinance.

3rd. If we take into consideration the connection of the circumstance of Christ's washing the disciples' feet, with the eating of the Passover supper, and with the institution of the Lord's supper, we shall have more than negative proof that the Apostles did not receive that transaction, as an ordinance to be delivered to the churches to keep. Paul is very particular in describing to the church at Corinth what he had *received of the Lord and delivered unto them*, as belonging to the ordinance of the supper, yet we find the circumstance of the washing of feet equally with the parts of the passover, left entirely out of the account, of that which Paul gave this church for to keep. I Cor.11:23-26. Surely this must amount very nearly to positive proof, that Paul never received the washing of feet, as an ordinance to be delivered with the supper, to be kept by the churches.

4th. The ordinances of the gospel must like the gospel have *Christ crucified* for their substance. The preaching of the gospel, is the *preaching of Christ crucified*. In eating the supper, As oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye *do show the Lord's death till He come. Christ's death and resurrection* and our likeness thereunto in experience is represented in baptism. Rom.6:5. But what is there in the *washing of feet* which shadows forth Christ crucified? Nothing! But the enquiry may be made, What was intended to be conveyed to the disciples by the transaction of our Lord recorded in John 13:4-17? In answering this enquiry, it will be proper to notice the several parts of the account, and in doing this, we shall see that there is much in the expressions used, to show that an ordinance or positive institution is not intended thereby to be established.

In verses 4 & 5, we have simply an account of Christ's preparation and beginning to wash the disciples feet. Ver.6 & 7 - "Then cometh He to Simon Peter; and Peter saith unto Him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto Him, What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." Is it not as manifest from these words as anything can be, that Peter did not understand that his Lord was then establishing an *ordinance* of worship to be observed in His church, and that Christ did not intend for him so to understand it? Else, why the expression *Thou knowest not now?* He certainly knew the act itself that Christ was performing. There must therefore have been something, of which this act was only figurative, which He intended thereby to teach them. In ver.8,9 & 10, Christ in reply to Peter, refers to the washing

him from sin in His blood, without which Peter *could have no part in Him*. He further says, *He that is washed*, that is, in His blood, *needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit*. Can any one, on a moment's reflection, suppose that Christ intended to convey the idea that being *washed in His blood*, all that was further necessary was to have the *fleshy feet washed in water*? In cleansing the flesh from its daily pollutions, it is as necessary to wash the hands and other parts of the body, as the feet. But understand our Lord to speak figuratively here, and to refer by the term feet, to the *walk or outward deportment* of the child of grace and there is much beauty in the idea. The principal care of the child of grace, resting as he does on the *blood of Christ to cleanse him from all sin*, is to keep his walk or gospel feet clean.

The expression, ver.10, "And ye are clean, but not all," is explained in ver.11, as referring to Judas. In ver.12, Christ, after having taken His seat, says unto them, "Know ye what I have done to you?" They certainly knew the act itself; that, therefore, could not be intended; hence it was not an ordinance that Christ was teaching them. In ver.13,14 & 15, He explains; saying, "Ye call me Master and Lord and ye say well, for so I am: If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you." In this explanation, I cannot see, how much soever others may, anything that looks like instituting an ordinance of worship. In the first place, Christ lays the principal stress on the example; He being *their Lord and Master*, has set them, not on His command as King of Zion. In the second place, He does not explain it as anything which He thus taught them to do as expressive of their faith in Him, or as an act of worship or subjection to Him; but as a something that they were to do, one to the other. What then was the example He had set them? Why certainly an example of great condescension and humility, in that He their Lord and Master, had condescended to perform for them the menial service of washing their feet. They ought therefore to condescend to each others state, and circumstances, and to be ready to perform the humblest acts whereby they might minister to each other's necessities or comfort. As the Apostle taught the Philippians that, "In lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves;" and this after the example of Christ's humbling Himself. See Phil.2:3-8. Hence this doctrine of condescension as thus taught by our Lord is *confirmed unto us by them that heard Him*, in the above and other texts; but the washing of feet is not thus *confirmed*. So also is the *watching over and*

admonishing one another in love, a sentiment confirmed by the exhortations of the Apostles, by which the disciples are to wash each other's gospel feet; an idea, as I have already intimated, which I think particularly taught by this transaction of our Lord. And the closing sentence is, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." verse 17. May we thus be more attentive to the washing of our own and of our brethren's *gospel feet or walk*. I have gone thus fully into this subject, that those who differ from me, may know the grounds on which I refuse to admit the washing of feet literally, to be a gospel ordinance. Not that others' practicing it, is any bar of fellowship to me. I view their act in this thing, though I believe they have not scriptural authority for it, very differently from New School practices. Those who practice the *washing of feet* as an ordinance, do it from the persuasion that the command of Christ so requires it. But the New School folks practice their plans, knowing them to be the devises of men.

The other points of enquiry mentioned by Brother Moore, I will attend to in another communication, if the Lord permit. Yours as ever,

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, Dec.30, 1839. **S.**

Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.8 {1840}

Remarks respecting the Sabbath, &c.

Brother Beebe: - In attending further to the enquiries of Brother Moore, the perpetuity of the Sabbath comes next in order. This subject has been already two or three times discussed in the Signs. Brother Beebe has once given his views thereon, and I have once, if not twice, given mine. But Brother Moore and perhaps other readers of the Signs, may have seen neither of the communications heretofore published on this subject. I will therefore again give my opinion concerning the Sabbath, in as brief a manner as I can, consistently with the nature of the subject.

Admit the correctness of the position I took on the subject of the *washing of feet*, namely: that the Apostles, being seated on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel, are to determine, {that is, by their writings} all things pertaining to the kingdom of God, or the gospel dispensation, and this subject is decided at once. For neither the Apostles, nor their Lord, have anywhere enjoined the observance of a seventh-

day Sabbath on the disciples under the gospel. Neither have we any instance in the New Testament of Sabbath breaking that is in a literal sense, being reprov'd as a sin, excepting by the Scribes and Pharisees. When in addition to these facts, we recollect that the Apostles when sitting in council on the case of the Gentile disciples, concerning their keeping the law of Moses, decided, and that by the guidance of the Holy Ghost, that; no greater burden should be laid upon them than these necessary things; that they "abstain from meats offered unto idols," &c., {Acts 15:28,29} we certainly must conclude that the Gentile churches are *loosed* from the observance of the Sabbath, in its typical and ceremonial relation. But it is said by those who hold to the perpetuity of the obligation to observe one day in seven as the Sabbath, that the law requiring the observance of this day was included in the Ten Commandments, written on tables of stone, and therefore like the rest of the decalogue, it must be perpetual in its obligation. But it should be remembered that *the law is spiritual*, also that under the gospel, God is peculiarly revealed as a Spirit, and as requiring them that worship Him, to worship Him *in spirit and in truth*. John 4:23,24. I cannot conceive of any good reason that can be given, why the observance of one day in seven as holy time, in distinction from the other six, is not as much external and carnal, as is the holding of one place, such as Jerusalem, to be more holy than another as a place of worship. But further we find all the other commands of the decalogue, in the spirit and substance of them, recognized by Christ and His Apostles, and the observance of them enforced upon the churches, whilst the observance of the Sabbath, in the letter of it, is no where, as has been before noticed, in the New Testament required.

My understanding of the fourth command of the decalogue, is that it is ceremonial and typical in the letter of it, and moral, or perpetually obligatory, in the spirit of it. That it is ceremonial is shown from Ezek.20:12, if not by its being so completely connected with the other ceremonies of the law. In the text just referred to, God says of Israel, "I gave them my sabbaths to be a sign between me and them," &c. And it is evidently shown in Heb.4:3-11, that the seventh-day Sabbath was typical of that *rest* which Christ gives to His people when they *come to Him* or believe in Him, because He *hath ceased from His own work* - the work of redemption - as God did from His. Why then, it may be enquired, was this command inserted in the decalogue? Because there is a spirituality in it which is morally obligatory. The number seven and seventh is used typically to denote completion or fulness; hence Israel's being

required nationally, to observe the seventh day as holy time, taught the obligation of man, and his sinfulness for not complying therewith, to consider his whole existence as *holy to the Lord*, and not therefore to have served self by doing his own acts, or thinking his own thoughts. In this sense the obligation of this command is recognized by the Apostles in the New Testament. The strictness also of the Levitical law in enforcing the observance of the typical Sabbath upon Israel, and upon Israel alone, teaching the awful penalty which stands against those who professing to rest by faith in Christ, are doing their own works for acceptance with God, and thus polluting the gospel Sabbath.

There are others who hold to the perpetuity of the command to observe the seventh-day Sabbath, who yet observe the first day instead of the seventh; pretending that the day has been changed by divine appointment. This they infer from the fact of the disciples meeting together on the first day of the week to *break bread*, &c. But this is altogether human assumption; for the scriptures nowhere declare God's having authorized the change of the first day for the seventh, in the keeping of the fourth command. So long therefore as we walk in obedience to the scriptures, as our only rule of faith and practice in religion, and reject the traditions of men as a rule, we must reject this idea of the first day's being the legal Sabbath. But we have also very pointed proof, to show that the writers of the New Testament did not understand this more modern doctrine of the substitution of the first day, for the seventh, as the Sabbath of the law; for they uniformly, not only before the resurrection of Christ, but throughout the New Testament, make use of the term Sabbath to denote the seventh-day, the day which the Jews observed as such. Thus; Matt.28:1, "In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn towards the first of the week," or *first day of the week*, "came Mary, &c." See also Luke 23:56; 24:1, in connection as being more full. We read also throughout the Acts of the Apostles, of Paul's going into the Jewish Synagogues on the sabbath days. These were the days on which the Jews were assembled therein, and of course their Sabbaths. On the other hand whenever the day is named on which the disciples met together, it is always said to be, not on the Sabbath, but on the *first day of the week*. See John 20:19; Acts 20:7; I Cor.16:2. Is there not then a manifest line of distinction kept up throughout the New Testament, between the *first day of the week*, that on which the disciples met together to *break bread*, and the Sabbath of the scriptures? Who then since the Apostles had sealed up their decisions, has had any authority

to take away this line of demarkation, or "remove this ancient landmark"?

It may then be asked, Do you esteem every day alike? In point of holiness I do. I do not conceive that we have a right to sin against God one day or hour, more than another, but that we should at all times: "Glorify God with our bodies and our spirits which are His." As the Apostles appear to have established among the churches the practice of meeting together on the first day of the week for worship, I esteem it an apostolic pattern set for the churches in all after ages. And I care not how particular any are, in setting apart this day as a day of worship, when circumstances will so admit, providing they do it on gospel principles; that is as a voluntary setting it apart for the observance of the institutions of the gospel, such as the church's meeting together for worship, and in grateful remembrance of the resurrection of Christ as the Head and Representative of His people, having finished the work of redemption in their behalf, from under the law. But the observance of this day as the Sabbath, and in obedience to the law, savors too much of legality for such as have become "Dead to the law by the body of Christ." I know that judaizing teachers may bewitch the children of God into legal observances as they did the Galatians; but, as said the Apostle on that occasion, so I would say to these: "Tell me ye that desire to be under the law do ye not hear the law," &c. Gal.4:21-31; see also Col.2:16-23.

The next subject of enquiry is Acts 15:29. "That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well," &c. Here we have the decision direct of the Lord's *enthroned judges*, on these points, binding the observance of these several prohibitions upon the disciples from among the Gentiles. It must extend therefore to us.

I would here remark that the obligation to abstain from the fourth item in this catalogue, namely: fornication, is so generally admitted and so fully enforced by the Apostles in their epistles that I need not say any more. And in reference to the first item, the *abstaining from meats offered unto idols*, the Apostle in writing unto the churches, owing to their being so much intermixed among idolaters, had occasion to enlarge so much on this prohibition, that I might with propriety pass it by, were it not that it gives me occasion to remark that the anti-christian idolatry of our day may well be considered as embraced, in substance, in the same prohibition. Hence, those brethren who, trusting to their knowledge, think they can stay with safety in connection with churches where the worship of

Mammon, or the potency of moneyed institutions to further religion, is maintained, and thinking that they can take the good and leave the bad, or join in the worship of God without participating in the moneyed plans, may with propriety consider the Apostle as addressing them when he says, "If any see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols?" Or in other words to participate in the idolatrous schemes there practiced? "And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died." That is, dwindle away and become useless to the body, the church or be cast away from it. "But when ye sin so against the brethren and wound their weak consciences, ye sin against Christ." I Cor.8:10-12.

The parts of this verse which Brother Moore, I presume, had more immediately in view, are, the *abstaining from blood and from things strangled*. These two points amount to nearly the same. One refers to eating the blood drawn from animals killed, the other to eating animals killed without being bled, which is mostly done by strangling. There are, I am inclined to think, many who profess to receive the scriptures as their guide, who yet pay no kind regard to this apostolic prohibition. They probably have adopted the idea that the obligation to *abstain from blood* was imposed only by the Levitical law, was on a footing with the prohibition to eat swine's flesh, and like that abrogated under the gospel, or rather, never binding upon the Gentiles. But it is not so. If it had been, I cannot think it would have seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to the Apostles to have decreed this restraint to be put upon the disciples at Antioch. The fact is, the eating of the blood of animals was prohibited to Noah, when the license was first given to man to eat animal food. Gen.9:3-6. The license and prohibition thus go together. "Every moving thing shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things. *But the flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.* And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it." &c. As this restriction was laid upon Noah as the Progenitor of the post-deluvian world, it must be binding upon the whole human family, Gentiles as well as Jews; all being his posterity. Hence the original and universality of this prohibition of the eating of blood, shows the propriety of the Apostles' thus establishing its force upon the Gentile disciples. It is an acknowledgment which God thus early required man, in allowing him the use of meats, to make, that He alone was the giver of life, and Creator of all things; and that man in taking it, is taking what

God alone can give. And I see no good reason why, under the full light and liberty of the gospel; whilst still enjoying the privilege of the use of animal food, we should not be under as strong obligation to acknowledge God as the giver thereof and the alone Author of all life, as were those in the earlier ages of the world.

As for myself, although I frequently see the blood of animals designed for food, shed without being duly impressed with the idea, that the act of pouring out the blood thus upon the ground was designed of God as an expression of returning the life of the animal to Him as the alone giver of it, and as an acknowledgment of Him as the Creator of all things, and Author of all our mercies; yet I have for years been so convinced of the divine authority of the apostolic restriction in this case, that I object in my family, to the life even of fowls designed for food, being taken without its being done by the shedding of their blood; and also to the practice of snaring game designed for food, it being a species of strangling.

As the apostolic injunction requiring the abstaining from things strangled and from blood, was intimately connected with that requiring the abstaining from meats offered to idols, the direction which Paul gives in reference to eating at another's table; to whatsoever is purchased in market; concerning meat, offered to idols, will I presume hold equally good in this other case, namely: "Whatsoever is sold in the shambles {or butcher's stall}, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake: For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof. If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake, &c." I Cor.10:25-34.

The other subjects embraced in Brother Moore's enquiries I will leave for another communication. I remain as hitherto, Yours to serve in the gospel,

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, Jan.6, 1840.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.8 {1840}

Remarks on James 5:14 & 15.

Brother Beebe: - The apostolic direction contained in James 5:14 & 15, is another subject of enquiry by Brother Moore. The text reads thus: "Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith

shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." Until within a few months past my views of this passage had been that it related only to that period in which special gifts of the Spirit were conferred on the churches; and that it was through the exercise of these gifts that this healing was to be expected. But four or five months since in reading the passage I was led to a very different view of it, and the subject seemed to open to my mind so much light and clearness that I then thought I would embrace the first opportunity to write out my views for the Signs. When however such opportunity arrived, the liveliness of those views was somewhat gone, and dreading the charges being repeated that I was trying to bring forward things singular and new, in order to become a leader, I therefore let it pass. If a desire to see our Old School brethren laying aside the traditions of men, both ancient and modern, and seeking to be closely conformed in all things to the only standard of truth in religion - the New Testament, and this desire prompting me to action in bringing things to the test of that one standard, regardless of the generally received opinions of men, justly subjects me to the above charge, so be it. As Brother Moore has requested my views on this text, I will now endeavor to give them; only aiming to bring forward what I believe designed by the text under consideration. If any consider my views wrong, let them show them to be such by the scriptures, in a becoming spirit, and a kindness will be done both to me and others. If not, and they are not satisfied with my views, it is not for me to dictate their course.

But to come to the subject in hand. I will in the first place remark that the form of the direction here given does not correspond with the idea that the intention was to recommend the sick to those on whom was conferred the *gift of healing*, as one of those special gifts conferred by the Spirit in the first age of the church. For, according to Paul's account, this, like every other special gift, was conferred only on particular individuals; hence he says, "Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing?" &c. I Cor.12:8-10,29,30. It must therefore be manifest that the direction would have been, if those gifts had been designed, to send for those who had the *gift of healing*; instead of this direction to *send for the elders of the church*, simply in their official relation, without any specification concerning gifts. Again, the direction given as to how the elders shall proceed does not comport with the view given of the exercise of the gift of healing. As in the instance of the healing of the *lame man*, by Peter's saying, "In the name of

Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk," he was healed, {Acts 3:6} so also in the case of Eneas, {Acts 9:33 & 34} Paul's healing the father of Publius and others, appears to have been different from the direction here given. See Acts 28:8,9. If then this passage does not relate wholly to the exercise of the extraordinary gifts which were in the churches in the apostolic age, as I think will appear evident to those who will candidly examine this point, it must be considered as an apostolic direction to the saints at large, and therefore to extend to all after ages. In fact, from the circumstances of the Apostle's having written this epistle near the close of the Apostolic age, or the period which preceded the destruction of Jerusalem, it appears to me reasonable to suppose that this direction was designed by the Holy Ghost to meet the necessities of the saints after the gift of healing and other extraordinary gifts should have ceased; they having answered their purpose for the confirmation of the gospel, in its first *publication in all the world for a witness unto all nations.*

The direction here given, as I understand its import, is for the sick to commit their case directly to the Lord Jesus Christ, and in this prescribed form, by which faith in His sovereign power to heal is fully and publicly expressed, as also an acknowledgment of His authority in the case.

The faith that is necessarily required to perform this act acceptably to God, {I speak not here of the *prayer of faith* which I shall again notice} is no other than the faith which the centurion expressed when he said, "Lord I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof; but speak the word only and my servant shall be healed; for I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me; and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it." Matt.8:8,9. The centurion by this form of expression showed that he had faith to believe that the Lord Jesus had the same control over diseases, to send and recall them at His pleasure, as he had over his soldiers and servants which were under him. Although the Master declared this to be greater faith than He had found in Israel, yet methinks an Old School Baptist ought surely to have as great faith in his Lord.

I will now notice the direction in its several parts. 1st. "Is any sick among you, let him call for the elders of the church." It is then to be the voluntary act of the sick, by which he shall thus manifest his confidence in the Lord Jesus and subjection to His appointments. It is also thus made the duty of the elder or elders sent for to attend. 2nd. "And let them pray over him anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord."

Olive or sweet oil is evidently intended, as that is the common oil of the scriptures. As pouring oil on the heads of persons appointed to office, was expressive of the communication of the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit qualifying the person for the office, and as anointing the head was also an expression of cheerfulness, thankfulness, &c., the ceremony on this occasion of *anointing with oil in the name of the Lord*, may be designed as expressing a cheerful hope that the grace of the Lord may be extended to the healing of the sick, as well as a cheerful submission to His will; or its application to the diseased parts, perhaps for its medical qualities; like Isaiah's applying figs for a plaster upon the boils of Hezekiah. Isa.38:21.

3rd. "And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up." I do not understand by this that in all cases where this direction is observed that the sick will be raised up to health or that in any case through the observance of this institution the saints will live beyond their appointed time. By the *prayer of faith* I understand that prayer which is specially indited by the Holy Spirit and therefore according to the will of God. See Rom.8:26,27. When the Spirit thus *helpeth our infirmities*, there is faith given us to believe that God hath heard our prayer, and hence a cheerful resting on Him for the accomplishment of the thing desired, in His own time and way. This *prayer of faith* is therefore a pledge to the sick, that the Lord hath rebuked his disease, and will again *raise him up*. It is the duty of the elders on this as in officiating on other occasions to lead in public prayer unto God, but on this, as much as on other occasions, are they dependent on the special influence of the Holy Spirit to enable them to offer the *prayer of faith*; and as much so as are private members. Further we have reason to believe that where there is a submission to this institution in faith, even when the prayer of faith shall not be offered, and therefore the disease not removed, there will nevertheless be a blessing attend it, in giving to the sick a calm, resignation to the will of God, and a peaceful waiting for Him. A very different state this from that frequent distress of body, and anxiety of mind consequent upon submitting to, and waiting upon the doctor's prescriptions.

4thly. "And if he have committed sins they shall be forgiven him." This sentence, to me, conveys the idea that sickness is sometimes sent upon the saints as chastisement for their having indulged in sin. It also gives the assurance, that when this is the case, and the Lord is thus sought unto in the way of His appointment, the sin shall be forgiven and he healed. Isaiah 33:24, seems also to support this idea: "And

the inhabitant shall not say I am sick" {why? because} "the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity." Thus also the case of the Corinthian Church. I Cor.11:30,31.

When this subject was first presented to my mind, as applicable to the saints in all ages, I was particularly led to admire the care which the Lord had thus manifested for His people to relieve them from the necessity of being dependent on the learned professions of the world, and thereby of being subject to be oppressed by them. Of what the world denominates the learned professions, the *priesthood* is undoubtedly the worst and the oppression which they exercise upon the consciences and persons of those subjected to them, under the pretense that they alone are by their learning capable of expounding the scriptures and declaring the will of God unto the people, is the most galling and cruel. But the professions of law and medicine, from the consideration that a special course of learning is the essential prerequisite to the practice thereof, but more particularly from the fact of exclusive laws being enacted even in our free country for their benefit, may properly be considered as monopolies. Hence peculiar advantages are possessed by the practitioners in each of these professions to oppress those who are brought to depend on them. I would not be understood as intimating that there are not many honest and honorable men in each of these last two named professions, men who will be faithful to the trust reposed in them. Neither will I here assert that there are any of an opposite character; it being not necessary for my argument. It is enough to know that these monopolies give to each class great advantages to oppress if disposed to use them. The one practitioner by protracting the course of law and by extravagant charges, may fleece his client almost at his pleasure; the other, by charges of a similar character and by procrastinating the perfect recovery of his patient, may take large sums from him. But worse still the practitioner of medicine may with impunity from the law, trifle with both the constitution and life of his patient in trying experiments on his case, if rascal enough to do it. There is therefore great danger in putting ourselves on a general scale into the hands of men having such power, unless when we have the fullest confidence both in their skill and in their uprightness. But when we reflect that *not many wise men after the flesh*, and therefore not many of the learned of this world *are called*, by grace; and consider further that by a determination to *live godly in Christ Jesus*, the believer draws upon him the opposition and even the persecution of the world, how important for the protection of the saints under such circumstances, that they should not

have to seek help for the preservation of their rights and their health from persons having such power to oppress them. Brethren, we have in our generation been in a great measure freed from the persecutions which others have suffered, and having gone along so smoothly with the world, we do not feel the full weight of the gracious provision made in our text for the saints, and also in the text: Matt.10:18-20. "And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak, for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the spirit of your Father which is in heaven." But let times come, such as some of the younger of us may live to see, and then we shall prize such gracious provisions as are made in these texts for the saints. More might be said to show the guards which the New Testament gives to the saints against being brought under the power of these several professions; but enough has been said to lead my brethren I think to reflect on the subject.

Perhaps Brother Moore may be desirous to know whether I have ever acted in obedience to this apostolic direction. I answer that I have not. In the first place, I have no idea that it would be proper to *call for the elders of the church* on every slight attack of cold or disease, for which simple remedies are at hand, and within the knowledge of almost every family, any more than it is prudent to send for a physician in all such cases. 2nd. I should not consider it proper to insist on this course in reference to any member of my family, especially of any age, unless by their choice. In case of sickness myself, I now think, if my *faith fail not*, that I should obey the apostolic direction, if elders be within reach, who would be willing to attend the call. At any rate, I would prefer committing my case to the Lord to seeking to physicians as did Asa, as in II Chron.16:12. If called to attend the sick in obedience to this apostolic direction, and I believed that the sick had faith in the appointment, as being of divine authority, I should not hesitate to officiate.

One thing more remains to be considered in reference to this subject, namely: The objection which will be made against my views, that *miracles have ceased*, and that this apparently implies a miracle, seeing that healing is anticipated without the use of adequate secondary means. But is it a fact that miracles have ceased, that is, that no events take place which are not brought about by the regular operation of certain fixed laws of nature? I admit that the gift of tongues, the gift of healing, &c., are not now in the churches, as in the apostolic ages, and

that men are not now empowered to work miracles, as were the prophets and apostles. But I cannot believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has either laid aside, or suspended, His power to accomplish His own purposes, concerning either the work of salvation or the government of the world, independent of the regular operation of any natural laws. In the affairs of the world many events take place which can be consistently accounted for on no principle, but that of the special providential government of God, or rather, more properly of Christ, as Mediator, to whom is given *all power* in heaven and in earth. As to the great work of salvation, which is continually going on; it is from first to last a continued series of miracles. No power of man, no natural cause, or law of nature, can give efficacy to the gospel of Christ, so as to minister consolation to the child of grace, nothing short of the immediate power of God the Holy Ghost, can open the heart of the unregenerate to receive the truth as it is in Jesus. The gifts which alone can constitute even a child of grace a true minister of the gospel of Christ, cannot be derived from the schools, they must be communicated direct from Christ, who alone has *received gifts for men*. But to come to the point in hand; Is there a natural and necessary connection between the skill and medicine of the physician, and the recovery of health to the sick? A Predestinarian Baptist, who admits that *affliction cometh not forth of the dust*, at least, whatever others may think, will not believe that the skill of man, who is but dust, can control affliction, or that God is dependent on the exertion of the doctor's skill, for the removal of affliction. There are instances of frequent occurrence, when the physician acknowledges he has exhausted his skill, and can do no more, and yet the sick person after all recovers. Many other instances, I will venture the assertion, there are, in which physicians, if they would state the truth, have exhausted their skill, yet they continue to prescribe more to keep up the appearance of trying to do, or by way of experiment, more from any hopes of their patient's recovering. Now if under such circumstances, you will content that the doctor's prescriptions had any hand in bringing about the recovery; you must admit that it was not big skill which directed the result. What was it then? Was it chance, or an overruling Providence that directed to the remedy? If then, whether it be miracle, or not miracle, God does thus interpose and restore health where the physicians skill has failed, why may we not hope that without the aid of the doctor, God will recall the affliction, when the sick, turning from every other helper, looks by faith to Him alone, and that according to the direction of His word? Will any still say that God has appointed

the skill and medicine of the doctor as the alone means through the use of which we have a right to expect healing, as seeding and cultivating the ground, is that alone through which we have a right to expect the earth to produce bread? Let them establish this fact and we submit. But one of two things must be proved in order to establish it. They must either show that there is a fixed law of nature by which healing is the natural result of the application of the doctor's skill and medicine, as the pointing of the needle to the polar star is the effect of magnetism or as the falling of heavy bodies let loose, to the earth, is according to the fixed law of gravitation. Or they must show where God has revealed the appointment to such connection between the doctor's art of healing, and the removal of disease, as He has declared the appointment that in the *sweat of man's face shall he eat bread, until he return unto the ground*. Neither of which can they show, and therefore to divine appointment for a dependence on the doctor's skill for health, can be proved. Thus much for this subject.

The last text proposed as matter of enquiry by Brother Moore, is Gen.4:7. The difficulty I apprehend, apparent in this text, arises from supposing *sin* to be the subject spoken of in the latter part of the verse. I formerly so apprehended it, and the import of the text, was incomprehensible to me. In order to a correct understanding of this text, it is necessary to consider that Cain was the elder brother, and therefore considered himself entitled to the preeminence, hence his anger against Abel, considering the acceptance of Abel's offering and rejection of his own, as a preferring of Abel before him. The Lord is therefore in this text reasoning with him on this ground, showing him that if his offering was not accepted, *sin*, and not a preference to Abel, was the cause of it. That *if he did not well, sin lieth at the door*, and thus separated between him and the divine favor. God appears to him to say; *If he did well, should not he be accepted*, and after showing the cause of his rejection, namely: in sins *lying at the door*, {that sentence being parenthetical} goes on to assure him, that if he did thus well, *Abel's desire should be unto him, and he should rule over him*. The form of expression here used is the same as that used in Gen.3:16, in reference to Eve's subjection to her husband. The expression; *Thy desire shall be to thy husband*, I cannot conceive was designed to import that her affections should be to him, for that could not be considered a punishment or an effect of sin, but the import I conceive to be, is, that she should feel herself dependent on him as her head. So in the other case; *And unto thee shall be*

his desire, was designed to show that Abel should acknowledge his dependence on Cain and subjection to him. Thus the false religionists of our day quarrel with the saints and with the doctrine of election, &c., as though that was the cause of their religious services being rejected; whereas the sinfulness of their own self devised performances, and their not worshipping in faith, is the ground of their being rejected as *reprobate silver*. I remain yours, &c.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, Jan.10, 1840.

S. Trott.

From: *SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.8 {1840}*

Apostolic direction for dealing with heretics &c.

Brother Beebe: - I a short time since received by letter a request to give, through the Signs, my views on Titus 3:10: "A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject." As the request was that I should give the exposition as soon as convenient, I send these remarks on, with a request, that you will publish them as soon as you can find room without crowding out other communications.

The direction contained in this text was given directly to Titus; but as Paul had left him in Crete, *that he should set in order the things that were wanting, &c., as he had appointed him, {1:5}*; this injunction must be considered as a part of that *order* which Titus under Apostolic authority was to establish in the churches. The term *reject* might have been considered here as confined to the idea of *refusing* such characters when offering for membership, or for the eldership or ministry, were it not that this rejection is presented as the closing part of a course of discipline; being preceded by a "first and second admonition," by which it is evident the person was, previously to his rejection, not only under the watch care of the church, but also under its discipline. Hence this must be considered as an apostolic injunction to reject or exclude from the communion of the church, persons who retained their heretical sentiments after having been twice admonished to renounce their error.

The expression, *a man that is an heretic*, appears rather discriminating, as though females were not so likely to become heretical, or that their being heretics was not so likely to disturb the peace of the church as in the case of the males.

But it is to be remembered that the parallel direction in Rom.16:17, makes no such distinction; but requires *all who cause divisions*, whether male or female, to be *avoided*.

This rule evidently includes the idea of rejecting from the privilege of preaching to the church all that bring and persist in heretical doctrines. The provision in this rule requiring a *first* and *second* admonition before rejection or exclusion, is designed to lead the church to make the attempt to reclaim the heretic before excluding him, as well as to prevent a too hasty decision, by which a person might be made an offender for a word, or be rejected when the error was perhaps only in expression, not in sentiment; or had been fallen into through ignorance, not from determinate choice. But when after being once and again admonished of his error, a member persists in it, the church should act decisively in rejecting him, "Knowing," as the Apostle says {verse 11} that he that is such is subverted and sinneth, being condemned of himself.

This rule has been undoubtedly entirely too much neglected by the Baptist churches. The enormities practiced by the Catholics under the pretense of dealing with heretics, has probably had considerable effect in bringing the idea of disciplining heretics, as such, into disrepute. Another reason for this neglect may be traced to the error the churches themselves had fallen into, of consulting human creeds and human authors as standards; and as these varied it became difficult to fix the charge of heresy on any but a very fragrant corruption. Owing to the continued prevalence of this error among the churches, it is a particular difficulty in obeying this injunction, to decide on what constitutes a *man an heretic*. But this point at the request of my correspondent I will try to illustrate.

If we look at the etymology of the original words rendered *heresy* and *heretic*; we find them to import the idea of sentiments of men's own choice, being from a verb which signifies to *choose, elect, pick out*, &c. Hence that man is a heretic who chooses, or picks out his doctrine or system of doctrine of himself, and to suit his own notions. The heretic is thus manifestly distinguished from one who receives the doctrine of Christ as taught of God; for the latter has been brought to desire, not to be left to choose his doctrine for himself, nor to pick out a system, to suit reason or popular opinion. What God reveals to his mind as truth, that he receives as such, and because God has revealed it, without stopping to enquire whether human reason can comprehend why it should be so, or whether it be popular, or not. His

prepossessions fall before the truth, when thus received, as dagon fell before the ark.

Again, if we look at the use of these words in the Scriptures, we shall find they involve the idea of division, or of forming a sect or party. Thus, we find the word used in Acts 24:14; and in Acts 28:22, the translators have rendered this word by the term *sect*. In I Cor. 11:19, it evidently, from the connection, has the same leading idea. Heresy therefore in the scriptural use of the term, is not only something of human device and choice, but it relates to a leading sentiment, such as will so affect the faith, or practice, or both, as to form a dividing point in the faith professed, or in the order and practices. Thus Peter speaks of the *damnable heresies* which some should bring in, as being "even a denial of the Lord that bought them." II Pet.2:1-3. Most religionists calling themselves christians, profess to believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has bought or redeemed them. Connected however with this very profession, many of our day, deny Him, as *Lord*; for it is not enough to say Lord, Lord, to be exempted from this charge, whilst they "Do not the will of His Father which is in heaven." See Mt.7:21. Some by their systems deny His essential Godhead, some the divine perfection of the work of redemption, some, His divine sovereignty in ordering the work of salvation, and others deny Him as Lord, in denying His sovereign authority as King of Zion. These *damnable heresies*, the Apostle foretells, they shall *bring in privily*; not openly avowing them at once, but disseminating them by degrees, and under a profession by the saints, having their corruptions wrapped up as to conceal their bearing towards a denial of the Lord. With feigned words of great zeal for the cause of Christ, great love to souls and great pretended affection for the saints, they will gain multitudes of followers, and on this account wax bold and revile the truth and those that adhere to it; others again will charge their absurdities, and the divisions occasioned thereby among professors, to the cause of truth, and thus the *way of truth* comes to be evil spoken of. They will through their covetousness, make merchandise for a while even of the churches of Christ. But I need not enlarge upon this prophecy, for the last thirty years affords a full comment upon it, in the manner in which corrupt systems have been introduced among the Baptists, and the plans for gaining money, &c., which have been so fully manifested. The consequence to themselves will yet be as fully verified as has been their heresies.

The standard by which we are to test the truth, or heresy of any sentiment, next demands attention. On this

point, I cannot admit the right of churches to set up any human composition such as expositions, creeds, confessions of faith, &c., as an unalterable standard by which to test the correctness or incorrectness of doctrine or practice; although I admit the propriety of churches making declarations, and giving summaries of what they consider to be the doctrine and practice taught in the scriptures, yet, instead of establishing these as fixed standards of truth, they ought ever to hold them subject to correction by any additional light they may, through any medium, receive on the scriptures. The proper objects of such declarations of faith, are first, for cultivating an acquaintance and correspondence with brethren abroad, by thus making ourselves known in our religious character; secondly, for a testimony towards those that are without. In objecting to declarations, &c., being set up as standards, I would not be understood as admitting that all points of doctrine are mere matters of opinion; that there are no fixed principles which all the children of God are taught in their experience, and of which they have received the inward assurance, that they are infallible truths. But the fact is, that we are liable to connect with these truths, as parts, and perhaps as inseparable parts of the system of salvation, certain ideas, which we have received, as inferences, connecting points, explanations, &c., and as there will be differences of opinion on these points, whilst we believe them true, we are likely to be very tenacious of them, and to have them set forth in our declarations of faith; when after all, if we should be graciously led to enquire into the correctness of them, we shall find we had no higher authority for them, than that certain men whom we esteemed sound in the faith, had in their writings, preaching or conversation held them forth as parts of the doctrine of Christ; and that we had received them as Joshua and Israel did the declarations of the Gibeonites, without asking *counsel at the mouth of the Lord*. Josh.9:1-15.

As a test of truth and error, the Holy Spirit has given to the children of God an infallible standard, a more sure word of prophecy sustained by a twofold testimony, to which, as Peter has said, *we do well that we take heed*. "To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word it is because there is no light in them," is the unalterable rule given by the Holy Spirit. Everything else must stand or fall as it is found genuine or reprobate, when tried by this standard. The letter of the scriptures, alone can be applied to, as a rule bearing upon the unregenerate. And although to them, much that is contained even in the New Testament, *is done in parables*, yet there is a sufficiency of the plain declarations of

Jehovah to leave them without excuse, in bringing in their *will-worship*, their vain ceremonies, vain hopes, and false systems. To you, says Christ to His disciples, "It is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of heaven;" and says Paul, {I Cor.2:15}"But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man." This then is it, the inward teachings of the Spirit of God affords to the child of grace a ready test, if he will attend to it, by which to detect heresy. But then this inward teaching, is not to him a safe standard, until he has "tried the spirits whether they be of God." If the teaching be from the Spirit of God, he will find it so written in the scriptures; and the one as his understanding is now opened to understand it, is found to be an exact duplicate of the other. Hence he has a twofold testimony for the truth of what he receives. And when he hears the same things affirmed in the preaching of the gospel, it is with him that in the *mouth of two or three witnesses every word is established*. Having this standard at hand as he would not *grieve the Holy Spirit of God*, it becomes him to consult it, instead of going to the creeds and expositions of men as a standard. And whatever application of the scriptures, inferences drawn from them, or professed preaching of the gospel, which contradicts his experience as thus confirmed by the word, he should reject as false and heretical. Hence it is to this internal standard that the Apostle refers the saints as that by which to test heresies, as in Rom.16:17 - "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." Here the standard set up, is not the doctrine which they have read or heard, but *which they have learned*, of course from the teachings of the Holy Spirit. Again in Gal.1:8,9, he says: "But though we or an angel from heaven preach any other doctrine unto you than that which we have preached, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say we again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that *ye have received* let him be accursed." This is a high stand which he points out to the Galatians; yet high as it is, the *gospel which they have received*, is in the conclusion the ground on which they are to take this stand. I trust I am writing for those who understand the difference between a *receiving* of the gospel and a mere hearing of it.

In conclusion, whenever the saints can be generally brought back to primitive simplicity, and to view the scriptures as the wise man describes them, when he says: "They are plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge." {Prov.8:8} instead of viewing their meaning as so closed from the unlearned of this world, that none but a set of

priestly beings, or men having a certain grade of the human learning can unlock them and bring that meaning forth; when, instead of going to the writings of any man as a standard by which to understand and test the doctrine and order of the scriptures, they will go to the scriptures for themselves, to try the doctrines of men, depending on the key which they carry in their own breasts, *the teachings of the Holy Spirit*, as that which best can unlock the scriptures to them, then we shall find the saints, *all speaking the same things, and being of one mind*, on every essential point in doctrine and practice. And not till then, will this desirable period arrive, for so long as the writings of men are consulted as standards, the opinions of the saints will be as various as are the writings which they set up as standards; and not only so, but the children of God, many of them, have too high a sense of christian liberty to suffer their minds to be trampled down by any creed or confession of human composition, how much soever sanctified it may be, by age or by the estimation of the many, so as not to think and enquire for themselves. As the Spirit of God teaches the same things and dwells in all the saints, so far as His teaching alone is consulted, so far there will be uniformity of sentiment among the saints. May the period soon arrive when this will be the case with all the saints; then it will be no great difficulty for the churches to detect the *man that is an heretic* and to unite in rejecting him. Then also will they experience the truth of the Master's promise, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:32.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, Jan.31, 1840.

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Three-Oneness of God.

The Scriptural doctrine of God's existing as One and Three, presented for the consideration of brethren.

That God is ONE appears manifest from every page of God's revelation; but I shall here content myself with quoting some of the those texts in which He has more positively taught that He is to be acknowledged and worshipped as *one* and only as *one God*. The 1st command in the Decalogue is in point. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Ex.20:3. Thus Moses on another occasion: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." Deut.6:4. Hear God also by the prophet saying, "Is

there a god besides me? yea there is no god, I know not any." Isa.44:8. Again, Isa.45:22 - "For I am God and there is none else." In Isa.46:9, He says: "For I am God and there is none else; I am God and there is none like me." When we pass to the New Testament, we find Jesus teaching the same thing as taught by Moses, with His declaration prefixed that *it is the first of all the commandments*, "And Jesus answered him, the first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God is one Lord." Mark 12:29. Paul's testimony is, I Cor.8:6 - "But to us there is but one God, &c."

Here in conclusion of my proofs on the point of God's unity, I would remark that although the doctrine of God's existing as *three* is, as I shall show, fully revealed in the Scriptures, yet there is nothing like the positive declarations which we find on this point, found on the other. Surely, as the Master says; the first of all the commandments is this; so it is carried out through, the law, the prophets and the New Testament. And certainly it cannot be without a special design. What then are we to learn from it but this, that the point of the first importance in the doctrine of God, is His unity? Hence the system which implies directly or indirectly God's existing as three beings or gods, or parts of God, is a greater departure from the scriptural doctrine of God, than is that which obscures or denies His essential existence as *Three in One*.

That God exists in plurality, and that His plurality is limited to *three*, I will now show from several texts of scripture.

1st. That He has revealed Himself in plurality. The first name by which God declared Himself {as in Gen.1:1, "In the beginning God created, &c."} is in the original plural, *Elohim*, but in this, as in most instances, it is connected with a verb singular, though there are exceptions to this, thus showing that this plurality exists in unity. In ver.26 of this same chapter, God says, "Let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness;" and in verse 27, it is said, "So God created man in *His own* image, in the image of God created *He* him, &c." Thus we have God again presented to view both in *plurality* and in *unity*. In Gen.3:22, "The Lord God said, Behold man is become as *one of us*." In Gen.11:7, God says: "Go to let *us* go down and there confound their language." Isaiah says: "Also I heard the voice of the Lord God saying whom shall *I* send and who shall go for *us*." {Isa.6:8} *Unity* and *plurality* again united. In Dan.4:17, we read: This matter is by decree of the *Watchers* and the demand by the word of the *Holy Ones*. These Watchers cannot be angels, for it is not for them to *decree* concerning the affairs of kings and men. Christ in the figure of

Wisdom says, "By me kings reign," &c. Prov.8:15. Hear Daniel also further in that same verse, "To the intent that the living may know, that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men."

2nd. I will now show this plurality to be declared in the scriptures to be *Three*. In Isaiah, chapter 48, we hear Him who in verse 12 and 13 says, "I am He, I am the first, I also am the last. Mine hand hath also laid the foundations of the earth," &c., in verse 16, saying, "Come ye near to me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret *from the beginning*; from the time that it was, *there am I*; and now *the Lord God and His Spirit hath sent me*." Who can this be that declareth all these things of Himself, but He whom He declares Himself to be, in verse 17, *The Lord thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel - the Lord thy God*. And yet this glorious One says, "Now the Lord God and His Spirit hath sent me." Here then are *Three* clearly brought to view acting distinct parts in accomplishing the work of redemption. The Lord God, as Father, and His Spirit, the Holy Ghost, as uniting in sending the Redeemer; and the Lord thy Redeemer, as being sent, and who in equality with the Father declares, *I am the Lord thy God*, which teacheth, &c. Passing on to the New Testament, at the baptism of Jesus, the Saviour, we have the same *Three* presented to view as sustaining their respective stations in the great plan of redemption. We see Him, *who was made of a woman, and made under the law, to redeem*, &c.; and who was therefore the LORD THY REDEEMER, being baptized; and the Spirit, whose office it is to *testify of Christ* {John 15:26} so designating, by a visible appearance, Jesus, as the Messiah, that John could unhesitatingly bear witness of Him as being the *Son of God*. {See John 1:33,34.} "And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon Him." And also the Father was manifest as approving of the work the Son was engaging in, "And, lo, a voice from heaven saying, this is my *beloved Son* in whom I am well pleased." Mt.3:16 & 17. Again the *Three* are declared as equal in authority, and equally objects of the believer's trust, in the instituted form of baptism: Baptizing them in the name - not names - of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Mt.28:19. They are also revealed as being equally the object of worship, and the source of blessing; in the form of blessing. II Cor.13:14. {"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all."} Again the *Three* are declared as sustaining their several stations in the plan of salvation, in Eph.2:18 {"For through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father."}; in effect, in II Thes.2:13 {"But we are bound to give

thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."}; and fully in I Pet.1:2. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." And in the text which has been so often referred to in this controversy, I John 5:7. Three are declared by distinct names, and as bearing testimony in heaven, not that they bear one testimony; but *there are Three that bear record*, it is therefore a threefold testimony, though the *Three* are declared to be ONE. There are many other texts in which each of the Three is declared by one or other of His peculiar names, and as sustaining His peculiar relation and performing His peculiar part in the plan of salvation; and there are other texts also in which the Three are presented to view at once, each at the same time sustaining a distinct relation as in John 14:26 - "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, &c.," says Christ to His disciples. So that the *Three* must be something more than merely three names or three manifestations which He has made of Himself. God must be so Three that He can be distinctly manifested as Father, Son and Spirit, in the peculiar relations and stations of each, in the plan of salvation, at the same time. See also John 15:26, where the order is somewhat reversed.

I now pass to show from the scriptures, that whilst, as has been shown, God has so revealed Himself as *three*, as that He is manifested as sustaining three distinct relations, &c., at the same time, that on the other hand, He is so revealed to be One, that when spoken of as God, even in reference to the distinct relations He sustains as *three*, He speaks and is spoken of as absolutely God, as the one Lord God, as He *whose name alone is Jehovah*. I here declare, and *who will make me a liar*, on this point, that God is no where spoken of in the scriptures in a way to justify expressions like this, God in the first person, God in the second person, &c., or God in the person of the Father, God in the person of the Son, &c., or that which such expressions imply, namely: God in the first order or relation, and God in the second order or relation, &c. Expressions calculated to present God to view thus in different grades, are evidently the offsprings of an overheated zeal to support a system. And as God said to Job, so it may be said to such zealots: "Who is this that darkeneth counsel with words without knowledge?" I shall on this head confine myself to proofs to show that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, each in His distinct relation, is declared absolutely and equally as God,

the one God, &c. Referring to the text before quoted, I Cor.8:6, Paul says: "But to us there is but one God, the Father." - The Father then as distinct from the Lord Jesus Christ, is absolutely the one God. {See the whole text.} But Thomas addressed Christ as *His Lord and his God*, and no doubt Thomas had then true faith in exercise. John 20:28. And Paul says of Christ: "Who is over all God blessed forever. Amen" {Rom.9:5}. If Christ is *over all God* blessed, then He must be the Most High God. And therefore the only God.

When we look into the Old Testament, we find many instances in which God is declared by one or another of His names, as, God Almighty, LORD or Jehovah, &c., &c., in which it might be presumption in us to undertake to decide whether it is as the Father, as the Son, or as the Holy Spirit, He is therein declared. It is evidently enough for us in such cases, to know that it is God, our God, the God of the Scriptures who is revealed as therein speaking or acting. In other instances by a reference to the clearer light of the New Testament, we may clearly discover, whether as Father, or as Son, or as Holy Ghost, it is that God speaks, or is declared. Thus we know from the New Testament that Christ *is the Lord that hath shown us light, for He came a light into the world, &c., and this is the true light.* &c. We are told, Ps.118:27, that, "God is the Lord, which hath shewed us light." God then is Christ. And so John bears testimony, John 1:1-4. We know from the New Testament that Christ Jesus is the only Saviour, - "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12. We know also that *we have redemption through His blood*, {Eph.1:7, Col.1:14} and therefore that He is the *Redeemer of Israel*. And the disciples were not deceived, when they *trusted that Jesus of Nazareth had been He which should have redeemed Israel*. Luke 24:19-23. But on turning to Isa. 47:4, we read: "As for our Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts {*Jehovah Sabaoth*, in the original} is His name, the Holy One of Israel." Hence the name *Jehovah Sabaoth*, or Lord of Host is here clearly given to the Redeemer as such. He "whose name alone is JEHOVAH is the Most High over all the earth." Ps.83:18. Is not then Christ in His distinct relation as Redeemer, the Most High and He whose name alone is Jehovah, and therefore distinctly the one Lord God? As to the name, Holy One of Israel, it as peculiarly belongs to Christ as the Messiah, as does the name Redeemer, and so I understand it wherever found. All the holiness of national Israel and of their multiplied rites, &c., was centered in Christ, as He was shadowed forth in them. And all the holiness of spiritual Israel

is found in Him, as *made unto them sanctification*, holiness, &c. I Cor.1:30. - That the Father also in His distinct relation, as *calling Christ, upholding Him, giving Him for a covenant of the people*, &c., is He *whose name alone is Jehovah*, I will now show from one text. After declaring Himself as He that created the heavens, &c., and then saying to Him whose office it is to be a light to the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners, I the Lord {*Jehovah*} have called thee, &c. He then goes on to say, "I am the Lord {*Jehovah*} *that is my name* and my glory will I not give to another nor my praise to graven images." Isa.42:5-8. Now looking to Isaiah chapter 43, we shall see that He who addresses Israel and says thou *art mine, I have redeemed thee*, I have called thee by thy name, and repeatedly in the same connection declares Himself their Saviour, their Holy One, their King, &c. {see verses 3-14, 15} as confidently and absolutely declares, as did the Father in the preceding chapter, that He is Jehovah. He says verse 3: "I am the Lord thy God," and in verse 11: "I am the Lord and besides me there is no Saviour." In both of these instances, instead of Lord it is in the original *Jehovah*. And in verse 12, he says to His Israel, "Therefore ye are my witnesses saith the Lord that I am God." And will not His people with Thomas bear witness, that He is the *Lord their God*? And can any doubt from these scriptures, as thus compared, that the Father and the Son whilst distinct, as manifested in their separate relations in the economy of salvation, are each absolutely the one Jehovah, the one self-existent, independent God in all His divine attributes? It will be discovered by those who examine the scriptures, that I have selected but few among the many proofs in point.

As to the Holy Ghost's being in His distinct relation absolutely God, we have also proofs in point. Thus by comparing II Pet.1:21, with II Tim.3:16; and Acts, chapter 5, verse 3 with verse 4, we shall find that He who in the one instance in each verse is said to be the Holy Ghost is in the parallel text declared absolutely to be God. Christ informs us, John 6:63, that *it is the Spirit that quickeneth*, yet Paul tells the Ephesian brethren, that, "God who is rich in mercy, &c. hath quickened us together with Christ." - Eph.2:4,5. In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established, we are told. Hence the above establish the fact that the Holy Ghost is God, the One God. I would suggest for the consideration of brethren, whether, from the declaration of Peter, "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of men, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost,"{II Pet.1:21} we are not authorized to

understand, when the prophets speak of God speaking to them, that the Holy Ghost, in His distinct office is intended? Thus when Isaiah says, "the Lord spake to me with a strong hand and instructed me," are we not to understand that the Holy Ghost was He who thus spake to him with a strong hand, or in him, as he speaks to the saints in the these ways and instructs them? For, I presume God spake not audibly to the prophets. And whether, among many other texts, we are not to understand, in the text Amos 6:8, which is rather a remarkable one, the Lord, the God of Hosts, *which saith*, The Lord God hath sworn by Himself, is the Holy Ghost in His distinct office.

What, then, is the sum of this scripture testimony, concerning God as being one and three? It is, as I receive it, this:

1st. That the Lord our God is ONE Lord. ONE JEHOVAH - that besides Him we are to have no other as the object of our worship and trust.

2nd. That this one Jehovah, exists as THREE, and so exists as THREE, that in all His divine majesty and perfections, He as the Father remains the invisible God, high seated on His throne, rolling on His eternal purpose, maintaining the honors of His throne, demanding and accepting satisfaction for His transgressed law, &c. At the same time the Son, as appointed heir of all things, be made a High Priest, offer Himself in sacrifice, and having purged away the sins of His people, enter into glory as their Intercessor and Forerunner. And, also at the same time, as the Holy Ghost be a distinct Witness, through the Apostles and in the hearts of God's children, of the completion and perfection of the work of Christ and of the acceptance of His offering and intercession for His people by the Father.

And 3rd. That whilst He is thus three, these three are so absolutely ONE, that each is the one Jehovah, acting in His distinct relation, in all the fulness of the Godhead; so that whether it is the Father, predestinating, and loving; the Son, redeeming, interceding and governing, or the Holy Ghost, quickening, comforting and guiding, whatever part or point of the believer's salvation we contemplate, we are constrained to say it is God's act, and God's perfection is in it.

Should I be asked what I mean by God's existing as three; I answer, my meaning is that He as absolutely, eternally, and essentially exists as *three*, as He exists as God. I feel authorized so to understand it, first: from this consideration, God has manifested Himself in the scriptures as *three* and I cannot conceive that in making a revelation of

Himself, He would declare Himself as existing as *three* and *one unless He so existed*; so I must believe He eternally existed, as essentially *three*, as one. Secondly: I am confirmed in this, by His declaring Himself to be, I AM THAT I AM, - not I Am, what I eternally was not. How He exists as ONE, or how He exists as *three*, He has not told me. I can no more comprehend how He eternally exists of Himself, that I can how He exists as *three* or as *three* and *one*. It is enough for me to know that He so exists, and therefore that every part of salvation is His work, and bears His mark of perfection. But I will add, that I can no more believe that God in order to exist as *three*, was under the necessity of begetting and breathing Himself into existence as such, that I can, that He begat or breathed His essence into being.

Again, should I be asked: Are the Three, *three persons*? I answer, not in a proper sense, and I think to use a word in an *indefinite* and *improper* sense, tends to confuse and darken counsel. An undefined term can be of no use, it may do hurt.

I am authorized to speak of the Father as a person, not only because He is God, but also because as God, the scriptures speak of His *person*, in Heb.1:3, the Son is said to be *the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person*. But I understand the term *person* here, not to have reference to the Father in His distinct relation, as such in the Godhead, as the attachment to a system has led some to represent it; but to Him as the invisible God, it being evidently a parallel passage with Col.1:15, where Christ is said to be *the image of the invisible God*. I am also authorized to speak of the Son as a person, because He is God, and also because He stands in personal relation to His church as Her Husband, Head and King. And in speaking of Him as a person, I am led to contemplate Him as having some things peculiar embraced in His person, which do not belong to the Father or Holy Spirit as such. For He is revealed as God and man, and having in Him that *life which is the light of men*, all in one person. In like manner the Holy Ghost is declared to be God and as exercising the attributes of a person as in I Cor.12:11 - "But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will." That is, I am authorized to speak of each, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, individually as manifested, and as acting, as God and therefore as a person. But I am thereby no more warranted to say they are *three persons*, that I am to say they are three Gods. That I may not however appear to make a greater difference, than what really exists, between what I understand to be the scriptural view of the subject, and the system of men. I will add further; that

what many mean by the terms *three persons*, namely: that the relations and distinctions, which the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost sustain each toward the other, are of a personal nature, I believe to be a scriptural idea, revealed by the use of the personal pronouns distinctly applied to each, and in other scriptural declarations. And for this I contend in opposition to the notion that the *Three* are only three offices or manifestations of God. And when persons in using these terms, are careful to explain that they do not use them in the full import of the terms I do not feel so much opposition to their using them, though for reasons before assigned, I do not use them. - But when without any reserve or explanation persons say absolutely that there are three persons in the Godhead, or like Elder Osbourn say there are *three proper and distinct persons*, my mind revolts at it as absurd in itself, and as calculated to beguile the inexperienced into a notion of three gods or something like it. And when Eld. O. or others assume to prescribe to us that we must conform to them in the use of these terms, or be denounced as heretics, I certainly shall resist it, as being, so far as it goes, the very *spirit of popery*; the terms not being sanctioned by scripture authority.

I now appeal to my brethren, Does not the revelation which infinite Wisdom and Love has given us of God in the scriptures, possess in and of itself a godlike glory, beauty, simplicity, and adaptation to our cases, which the explanations and sophistry of the schools with their undefined, but consecrated forms of expression only tend to mar and confuse? Such as their explaining God's existence as *three*, by their *first, second, and third persons, one begetting, another begotten, and the third breathed forth*, and the Godhead of the Son as begotten, thus, that He is *very God of very God, begotten - not created, begotten, unbegotten*, &c. Whoever may undertake to study the system of men on this subject, with the idea of comprehending the being of God within a human system, will find such study producing a very different feeling from a suitable reverence of the greatness of God, they will find it to be a leaning to their own understandings, and producing disappointed feelings, at the incapacity of their reasoning powers to grasp and arrange the subject without confusion, and a consequent bitterness of feeling, toward those who discover the weakness of their system and reject it.

On the other hand when we go as little children, to the scriptures to receive the revelation which God has been pleased to give of Himself, and to receive it just as He has given it, we are filled with reverence and awe at the greatness,

the glorious majesty, and incomprehensibility of Him whom *the Son has declared*; and are humble before Him under a sense of how little we know or can know of God. Should reason under these circumstances attempt to approach the subject, she is confounded at once, driven back abashed, and gives place to faith whose province alone it is to apprehend the revelation of God. And she as she takes hold of this subject, is *still* knowing that it is the being of God, she is embracing in her arms, the great I AM THAT I AM. Yet faith apprehends all in the revelation that we need to know, to inspire us with fear, reverence and love of God; with unreserved and childlike trust and confidence in Him, and with boldness of approach to Him, and pleading with Him in all our straits. This revelation corresponds with our experience. Our experience taught us nothing of *first, second and third persons* in God, of *eternal generation* of a *begotten or breathed forth* God; nor of the *pre-existent soul* of Christ, &c. But when our hearts were opened to understand the law, we felt that it was the law of God our Creator, which we had transgressed, that against Him and Him only we had sinned. When the plan of salvation was revealed to our souls, it appeared all of God; God in the riches of His love, and in His wisdom and power to save, was manifested to us; and with confidence we trusted in His salvation. In our after experience, when a promise has been peculiarly applied to our case or a scripture has been opened by the Holy Ghost to our understanding, we have been ready to say with Isaiah: "The Lord spoke thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me." Isa.8:11.

There remains one point more to be shown, namely: what I understand to be the scriptural doctrine concerning the sonship of Christ, that brethren may know the whole amount of error, which it has been insinuated that myself, and perhaps, Brother Beebe and others hold.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, July 28, 1840.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.8 {1840}

On the Sonship of Christ.

Brother Beebe; - This subject, the sonship of Christ, is one of no trifling importance, in our rightly understanding the great doctrine of salvation. Could we be led to a clear apprehension and reception of the scripture revelation on this point, without blending anything of human wisdom therewith, it would be a

precious privilege.

I would here entreat my Old School brethren not to be alarmed though in presenting what appears to me clearly the testimony of scripture on this point, I should give some views not generally received by the professing world, until they have calmly examined the proofs presented, and compared them with such as may be suggested as supporting different views. If after such examination, they find that in this, and in the preceding communication relating to the *existence of God*, as *three* and *one*, I have mistaken the voice of scripture, they will do well to show the mistake.

When we look into the scriptures in reference to this subject, we find the sonship of Christ therein presented to view as threefold; as the Son of man, the Son of David, and the Son of God. Each of these demand some attention, in a careful enquiry on this subject. But the examination of the two former, I intend shall be brief, and indeed of the third also, so far as the importance of the subject will justify.

1st. - *What is implied in Christ's being called the Son of man?* The term, *son of man*, we find repeatedly used in the Old Testament. Sometimes in reference to mankind at large, as denoting their *vanity, vileness, mortality, &c.* See Num.23:19, Job 25:6; Ps.146:3, among other texts. It is a term particularly appropriated to Ezekiel as a prophet. It is said he is so called about eighty-nine times in his prophecy, and Christ about eighty times in the four gospels. I have however not counted for myself. Why Ezekiel is so peculiarly designated, I know not; unless it was to point him out particularly, as typical of Christ, as the Son of man; in its being his lot to prophecy about and in the time of the captivity of his people for their transgressions, and his having representively to bear some of those punishments he was directed to denounce. See chap's. 4, 5 and 12:1-7. Christ is twice, if not thrice, designated by this term in the Old Testament. Ps.80:17 & Dan.7:13. In most instances in which the term is used in the New Testament, the Lord, I think uses it Himself, of Himself. But the enquiry is, why does He so denominate Himself? It is evidently not to designate Him as literally the posterity, or as having come into Adam's place or anything of that kind. For in regard to His assumption of humanity, the scriptures are particular in guarding against the idea of His being literally the son of man. In this point of view He is revealed as the *seed of the woman*. Gen.3:15. Isaiah also prophesied: "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Chap.7:14. And the angel in answer to the enquiry of Mary on this point describes

His production thus: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee." He adds, "therefore also that Holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God." Luke 1:34,35. Here His humanity in distinction from being the son or offspring of man, is declared to the *Son of God*. But the term *Son of God* here I do not understand as denoting the same as His being the *Begotten of the Father*, &c. The term here I think corresponds with the same term as applied to Adam, {Luke 3:38,} and is designed to denote that His manhood was, as was Adam's, produced by the immediate creating power of God, without the intervention of secondary causes. Hence His not participating in human depravity. Perhaps Christ's being called the Son of man may be designed in part to denote Him as the *heir of the world*, for as Abraham's seed, He is *the heir of the world*. See Rom.4:13; compared with Gal.3:16. In thus contemplating Him, we must view Him as in connection with His body the Church; and in this point of view, we shall see Him to be the only heir of creation; He in His church being the whole substance and object of creation and that for which the world stands. Hence all things were *made for Him*, as well as *by Him*. Col.1:16. But in a more particular sense, the Lord's *portion is His people*, and *Jacob is the lot of His inheritance*. Deut.32:9. That however which I think is more directly intended by Christ's being revealed as the Son of man, and what constitutes Him more manifestly the Antitype of Ezekiel, was His inheriting, in consequence of inheriting Jacob, their *law standing, their sins, infirmities, sorrows, death, and curse*. "For as much as the children," {the *children God had given Him*, but who were the natural heirs, the begotten sons of man,} "were partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death," &c. Heb.2:14. Herein was He most astonishingly manifested as the Son of man, in being *made under the law, made sin, made a man of sorrows, made a curse*, &c., &c. Hence it is, that whilst He is so repeatedly called the Son of man in the Evangelists, He is no where, that I recollect, so called in any other part of the New Testament.

2nd: Christ's *sonship as the Son of David* is the next subject of our enquiries.

We find Him repeatedly addressed as the Son of David. But Christ indirectly, though clearly, rejects the idea of being the Son of David, on one occasion, that is, of being so in the sense in which the Jews understand the Messiah would be David's son, namely: in a natural sense. Mt.22:42-45; Mark 12:35-37. Hence it cannot be that it was as being a *natural*

descendant of David, that He is called the Son of David. It is true that this name, as does the name Son of man, relates to His being manifested, in the flesh, and to His being of the *seed of David*; that is, as the Apostle explains it, being "made of the seed of David according to the flesh." Rom.1:3. But I think a due consideration of the scriptures which I will shortly refer to will satisfy the candid enquirer that the sonship of Christ as the Son of David related particularly to His exaltation in human nature as the King of Zion, of Israel; and as the Covenanted Heir of the throne of Israel, as being that seed of David more particularly intended in the covenant God established with Him as mentioned. II Sam.7:4-16; 23:5; Ps.89:19-37. It was necessary that He should be "made of the seed of David," and be born in Bethlehem, the town of David's nativity, that He might be visibly manifested as this Covenanted seed of David, as that "Righteous Branch whom the Lord should raise unto David." Jer.23:5. But that Christ's sonship as the son of David consisted in His being the King of Zion, having His dominion established in the earth, and over the nations of the earth, is evident from the fact, that all those prophesies which speak of Him as the offspring of David thus describe particularly His reign. See Ps.72; Isa.9:6,7 & chap. 11; Jer.33:15-17, &c.; as also from the manner in which He is spoken of, and addressed in the New Testament. The angel Gabriel says unto Mary concerning her son: "The Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of his father David, and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end." Luke 1:32,33. Thus also His entry into Jerusalem as the "King of the daughter of Zion," as foretold, Zech.9:9, as the SON OF DAVID, as He "that cometh in the name of the Lord," &c., according to Luke 19:38, as "the King that cometh," &c., and according to John 12:13, as the "King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord," &c. {Denoting the different modes of expression by which Christ as the Son of David is described - each pointing to His kingly office.} Hence these several terms, KING, KING OF ISRAEL, &c., are by the Holy Ghost used to denote Christ as the Son of David. Hence His being the King of Israel and being the Son of David is one and the same thing.

3rdly. We now come to a consideration of the sonship of Christ as the Son of God.

Here we at once meet with a peculiar distinction of this sonship from the other two. This is a begotten sonship. He is revealed as the only begotten Son of God. The others are not begotten sonships; they relate to His humanity. He became a Son in those respects, in consequence of His union with His people; as in this respect, as it will be shown, His people are

sons of God in consequence of their union with Him. Christ is then truly the Son of God. But what does His sonship in this respect consist in? In His Godhead? In His humanity? Or in something else? 1st: That it does not consist IN HIS GODHEAD, or in His personal distinction in the Godhead, which is the doctrine of the Nicene Creed; I should think has already been clearly shown in treating on God's existence as THREE AND ONE, by the proof produced establishing the fact that Christ in the distinct relation which He sustains in the Godhead, is revealed as the one God, the Jehovah, and therefore as being absolutely self-existent and independent, in His being, as in the Father. 2nd: The idea that His sonship, as the Son of God, consists of His being born of Mary, I should think would be given up on reflecting that His other sonships related to His humanity and were therefore not begotten sonships, whereas in this sonship He is begotten of God. But in the further prosecution of this enquiry other considerations will present themselves in opposition to this idea.

In examining the New Testament on this subject, it will, I think, appear very manifest. 1st: That Christ, as the Son of God, sustains a subordinate relation to the Father. Let us look at some of the principle texts relative to Christ's superior glory as the Son of God. In John 3:16-18, whilst Christ is declared to be God's only begotten Son, the testimony is that *God gave His only begotten Son*, &c., consequently the Son as such was subject to the Father. Turning to John 5:17, 30, we find the Son declaring His superior authority as such, over the SABBATH and to EXECUTE JUDGMENT, &c.; yet throughout the passage He acknowledgeth His subordination to the Father. His language is, "The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do." {John 5:19} "For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself," &c. See also John 10:16 - 18. Passing to John chap.17, and we behold the Son praying to the Father to be glorified with that glory which He had with the Father before the world was, verse 5, thus acknowledging a dependence on the Father *before the world was*. Hence He must have been a Son before He was made flesh. In I Cor.15:27, 28, Paul having spoken {vs.24} of Christ's *delivering up the kingdom to God, even the Father*, saith, "For He hath put all things under His feet. But when He saith, all things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted, which did put all things under Him. And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all." Here again the subordination of the Son, as such, to the Father, is declared in language as plain as

can be expressed. In Col.1:12-20, the greatness, the glory, and vast superiority of Christ, as God's dear Son, over every created thing in heaven, and in earth, is declared; and yet all this was by the Father's pleasure; not of His own independent will. "For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell," &c. vs.19. Again in Heb. chap. 1, the great superiority of the Son over angels is shown; and yet all this glory, is by the Father's pleasure. He *appointed Him heir over all things*; He said unto Him, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. And again, I will be to Him a Father, and He shall be to me a Son." vs.5. {See Ps.2:7-11; II Sam.7:14} - "And when He bringeth His first begotten into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him." vs.6. Can anything be more explicit than this chapter to show the subordination of the Son to the Father, as well as to show His great superiority as the Son, over the angels? I have selected these texts in which the highest authority, exaltation, &c., of the Son as such is declared, and have shown that as thus presented to view in His exaltation, His subordination to the Father is manifested; so that it cannot with any show of candor be said, that this subordination belonged only to His humiliation, as the Son. Still I know men have said, and will say that it is only as the Mediator, the Redeemer, that He is spoken of in these and the like passages. I will only say in return, that when they can convince me, the Holy Ghost has been mistaken in the terms He authorized to be used, I may admit their right to substitute other terms, conveying other ideas, for those He has employed; but I think not before. Let us however examine one or two of the passages already referred to. Take I Cor.15:28. And we shall find that instead of the Holy Ghost's intimating that the Son, only in His Meditorial office, shall thus be subject to the Father, it is expressly affirmed, that the Son also *Himself*, shall be subject, &c., thus confirming the fact by an empathic expression, that it is of the Son *Himself*, the affirmation is made. And in Heb.1:5, instead of its reading, *Thou art my appointed Mediator, and I will be the one God and thou shalt be the one Mediator*, the affirmation is: "Thou art my Son," &c. "And I will be to Him a Father," &c. Thus the idea which I contended for in some of the preceding communications, namely: that a *begotten existence*, implied a derivative, and as therefore a dependent existence, is sustained by the whole revelation of Christ as the Son of God, by His subordination to the Father, therein manifested. And such subordination in a son is sanctioned by the voice of nature, of reason, and of God. God says, "Honour thy father and thy mother." &c. Ex.20:12. And Christ says, "I honour my

Father, and ye do dishonour me." John 8:49. Hence it is evident, that the revelation made of Christ as the only begotten Son of God, is not a revelation of the *modus* of His existence as Jehovah, as the Father's *fellow* or equal. His sonship therefore must relate to something other than to His essential existence as God.

But the Athanasians say that God in begetting a Son, must have begotten one in His own nature, and must therefore have begotten Him God, &c. This reasoning would be correct if God in begetting His Son was subject to the law of generation, by which man is governed. But the subjection of God to such a law, I think they would hardly contend for. The expression as used in reference to God, is evidently designed to denote the putting forth His producing power, in a way distinct from the act of creation, but peculiar to Himself, further than this we cannot say. But still there is in the person of the Son of God, a conformity to the law of generation, by which everything produces its like. For in His person, whilst He is the begotten Son of God, He possesses also the fulness of the Godhead, is the Jehovah equally with the Father, not as the product of the Father's begetting, but essentially so, of Himself as God. He therefore in His person possesses every quality and lineament of the Son of God, is the *brightness of God's glory and the express image of His person*. Hence whilst as the Son, He with propriety saith, "My Father is greater than I," &c., {John 14:28,} with equal truth He saith, "I and my Father are ONE." John 10:30. So also, the Father could with truth, on the one hand, address Him, the Son, thus: "Thy throne O God is forever and ever," &c., and on the other hand, say to Him, "God even thy God hath anointed thee," &c. Heb.1:8,9.

This subject being too lengthy for one communication, I will continue in another.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, July 28, 1840.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.8 {1840}

On the Sonship of Christ – Concluded.

Brother Beebe: - Having in the preceding Number shown satisfactorily as I trust, from the testimony of the scriptures concerning Christ, that His sonship as the Son of God does not consist in His essential existence as God; because in that He is self-existent and independent, equally with the Father; nor in His assumption of humanity, for in that, He was *made under*

the law, and took the *form of a servant*, {Gal.4:4; Phil.2:7;} and therefore, surely He has a higher sonship than this; it remains to be shown in what other character He is revealed, in which His sonship as the Son of God may consist. He is certainly revealed as the Head of His church and people, and as so existing before the foundation of the world. He *was set up from everlasting*, and *brought forth when there were no depths*, &c. Pv.8:23-27. As God, He could not be *set up*, as man, He was not *brought forth* until the fulness of time. "He who was to be Ruler in Israel, had His goings forth from of old, from everlasting." Mi.5:2. Christ as the Head and His church as His *body* must ever have existed together; for neither can the head exist without the body, nor the body without the head. "The eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again the head to the feet I have no need of you," I Cor.12:21; compared with vs.12. His people as His posterity existed in Him their Head "before the foundation of the world;" for they were then *chosen in Him*, and "predestinated by Him to the adoption of children." Eph.1:4,5. If it was as they were predestinated to the adoption, they were *chosen in Him*, He must as their Head have been, a son also. Thus is it made manifest how Adam was made in the *image of God*, that is, in the image of the Son, who is God, and by "whom all things were made," and how he was the "figure of Him that was to come;" that is in that Adam was made *male and female*, as well as made with his posterity in him. See Gen.1:27; Rom.5:14. The Apostle contrasts the two Heads of their respective posterity's in this way, "The first man is of the earth, earthly: the second man is the Lord from heaven." I Cor.15:47. If the first man in being made of the earth was made a *servant*, then as contrasted with him, He who was the Lord from heaven, was not a servant, but a Son - and so is the contrast between Moses and Him. Heb.3:5,6. Herein, then, as the Head of His church, and of His seed, and as contrasted with Adam as the *earthly* head, who was made a servant, do I understand the sonship of Christ as the Son of God to consist. I am confirmed in this by the testimony of the following texts which I will notice. 1st: In immediate connection with the text just quoted {I Cor.15:47} we read: "As is the earthy such are they also that are earthy, and as is the heavenly such are they also that are heavenly." Now we do know that the posterity of Adam are born, servants under the law, and that when the posterity of Christ are born, that is when any are *born again*, they are no more servants, but sons, sons of God. See Gal.4:7; John 1:12,13 & Rom.8:14. If then, in the former class; their being born servants, was in likeness to their head

the *earthly*, then, in the other class their being born *sons of God*, must be in likeness of their Head, the *heavenly*. If so, I ask, is not the conclusion irresistible that He as the heavenly Head is the Son of God? The testimony of Rom.8:29 is "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." It is then in the *image* of the Son of God, that His people are born sons; but they bear of course the image of their head; it must be as their Head then, that He is the Son of God. But further, if He is the "first-born among many brethren," and He of course was born a Son, then He and they must have been born of the same seed, the same parentage, and be sons together. And how could this be, but as they were begotten and brought forth? And therefore He was the *only begotten* and *first-born* of the Father, with a seed, a posterity in Him. In accordance with this idea of a common parentage, He says to Mary: "But go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God and your God." John 20:17. Again, wherein His people are spoken of as "many sons to be brought to glory," it is said: "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," &c. Immediately after it is added: "Behold I and the children which God hath given me," &c. Heb.2:10-13. Hence Christ recognizes these *many sons* both as *His brethren* and as *His children*. In this is fully carried out the parallel, between Christ as a Son and Head and His seed, as sons with Him, and Adam and his posterity, with him. The posterity of Adam are all the creatures of God, but God finished the work of creation in six days {Gen.2:1-3,} hence the human family are all but that one creation which God made when He "formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life," &c. Gen.2:7. As Adam and his posterity were thus all of one lump, of one foundation, so Christ and His people are here all represented as being *of one*, are of one begetting, one brotherhood, all brought forth in Him, in that life which was in Him, the Word, and which *sanctifies* them, sets them apart, or manifests them as the children of God. As Adam and his posterity are alike the creatures of God, so Christ is not ashamed to *call* His people Brethren. Again as the human family are the children of Adam, being born of that life of which he was the head, that is in their distinct manifestation; so the people of God, in their being manifested as such, are the children of Christ, {not mediately, but directly, He being distinguished from Adam in this, that He is the Everlasting Father,} in that they are born of that life

which was in Him, the Word, are made partakers of His spirit. John 1:4, Rom.8:9 & Gal.4:6. And indeed Christ is their life. Col.3:3,4. Is it not then manifest that as Adam in being created a human being, was created the head of the human family; so Christ in being the *only begotten* of the Father, was begotten as the Head of the sons of God? I might pursue this subject and show that throughout the New Testament, His people, in that life which He is to them, are connected with His sonship as the Son of God. Thus; Does their heirship rest on their being the children of God? They are as such "joint heirs with Him." Is He spoken of in His superior glory as the Son of God? He has "His fellows," and is the Head of His body the church, though Himself in "all things having the preeminence." See Rom.8:17; Heb.1:9 & Col.1:18. But proof sufficient has been brought to establish the point, and here I might close, were it not for the objections against this position arising, from other considerations than want of proof to the point. These it seems proper to notice. 1st: There seems to be among many, very vague and indeterminate ideas as to what constitutes the bond of union between Christ and His people, and consequently wherein His headship consists; some would seem to represent it as merely nominal. From this source therefore objections will arise to the idea I have given of the sonship of Christ. This subject must on this account receive some attention. Whilst regenerating, or quickening is in the scripture ascribed, to each, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and believers are called children and sons of God, I think all consistent Old School Baptists, and I mean by such, those who have searched the scriptures in dependence on the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in order to derive their ideas concerning all parts of religion from thence, instead of taking them second handed from Doct. Gill or any other author; I say such will readily admit that Christ Jesus, the Son distinctively, is revealed as standing in a peculiar relation to His people, such as is not affirmed of the Father and the Holy Ghost. Not only in that they are said to be His as the gift of the Father; redeemed by Him, &c., but they are collectively, that is as His church, declared to be His bride, His body, and even the "fulness of Him that filleth all in all." Eph.1:23. Here the oneness of Christ and His church as she is distinctively manifested, is far more full than that of the type, Adam and Eve. Eve was a rib taken from Adam's side, but the church is His Body itself, the *fulness* of Him, is Himself, is the *Abraham's seed* which He is. See Gal.3:16-29. He must therefore be the living and abiding Head of His church. Again, His people are spoken of as His posterity, He calls them His children as has been noticed. Heb.2:13;

Isa.8:18. They are called His *seed*. Ps.22:30, Isa.53:10; Ps.89:29-36. And they are declared to be *members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones*. Eph.5:30. And He is their *life* and therefore the Head or fountain of it. Col.3:4. On the other hand the testimony of scripture is full to the point that the believer has an existence distinct from that which he derived from Adam. He is said to be *born again*, in a birth as distinct from his natural one, as *spirit* is distinct from *flesh*. John 3:3-6. To be *quickened* in a sense in which he was before *dead*. John 5:25; Eph.2:1-5. To be a *new creature*. II Cor.5:17. And to have been *created*, not in Adam, in this sense, but *in Christ Jesus*. Eph.2:10. Now *that*, of which all these affirmations are true, must be a *living principle*, real existence. It is declared to be of *incorruptible seed*, and to be *everlasting life*. I Pet.1:23; John 3:36. The union therefore of Christ and His people must be a real living union, and He a real head of this union. Of the existence of this new principle the believer is sensible not, by external observation, but by its effects, as we know that the wind bloweth. John 3:8.

Now the point of enquiry is, what is this new life, or existence? It is not the essential nature of God, every believer knows; for as he discovers its existence in Him, he finds it far from possessing the essential attributes of the Godhead, such as self-existence, independence, omnipotency, &c., it is spirituality, holiness, and love, in these things the *new man is after the image of Him who created Him*. Col.3:10. But some have inferred from what Peter says, that the believer has, in his new birth implanted in him, the *divine nature*. But what is Peter's statement? "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature." To whom were these promises given? To the believer, - *that by these*, by these promises, he *might be a partaker of the divine nature*, not that he *certainly was* a partaker of it in regeneration. And truly God has so given Himself to His people in His promises, that when by faith they can take hold of those promises, they apprehend God in all His attributes, as their help, their wisdom, power, defense, &c. But certainly brethren, we are not gods. The believer is, in his experience much farther from it; than before he believed.

Others suppose that Christ's being made flesh was what constituted the union of Him and His people. But this would rather make them the head, for it was in consequence of *their being partakers of flesh and blood, that He took part of the same*. But they were *His children* before He partook of this nature. Heb.2:13,14. It would make the woman the head, for in His being made flesh, He was manifested as the *Seed of the*

woman. Besides the believer knows that his human nature was derived, not from Him who was the Lord from heaven, but from him who *was made of the earth, earthy*. He has all the evidence he wants of this, from the earthiness and depravity of his nature.

Some may suppose the preexistent soul of Christ to be that which constitutes the bond of union of Him and His people. If so, why does it not constitute Him the head of all who have souls? But brethren, had you not souls before you were regenerated? And did they not betray their origin as being of the earthy Adam, by their being depraved? Our western brethren, however if I understand them, do not make the preexistent soul of Christ, the bond of union, but the repository of that which constitutes the union. But the scriptures I think reveal a far safer repository for the believer's life than any created being could be, even God Himself, as I shall notice. It must then be that the *new man* of the believer, that by which he is manifested as the seed of Christ, is distinct both from the Godhead and from humanity. It is not *earthly* like humanity, but spiritual and heavenly. It is not independent in its powers of action like the Godhead. *To will is present* with the believer, *but how to perform that which is good he finds not*. But some one will hastily say, why, to represent Christ as the Head of such a distinct life, would be to represent Him as possessing a third nature distinct from His Godhead and humanity. And does this alarm you, my brother? Though you may not have thought of it in this form, yet have you not in substance believed it. Do you feel that you are as young gods? Or do you believe with the Arminian that regeneration is nothing but giving a new bias to the old nature? If so, it will be of no use to argue this point with you. But if you believe a new principle, a living principle of *holiness, righteousness and love* is imparted in regeneration, and that this was derived from Christ as the Head, do you not believe that it had a previous existence in Him, and that you therefore existed in Him, in this life, before the foundation of the world? Or what was the existence you then had in Him? But to the law and to the testimony on the point. Let us come to the 1st of John. "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." This Word then who, whilst He is declared as distinct from one who is also God, is declared to be God, and the Maker of all things, must have been essentially life itself. When therefore it is affirmed in vs.4 that, "In Him was life," it must refer to a life in Him, distinct from His

essential existence. "And the life was the light of men." Can there be any mistake then in understanding this life as being the life which is communicated in regeneration, and which *delivers from the power of darkness*? But this was in Him distinct from His essential existence as God. It is also distinct from His humanity; for it is afterwards, vs.14, affirmed of Him that He *was made flesh*. Need I bring any further proof to the point? We have it in vs.14, compared with vs.16, and with II Tim.1:9, as well as in other texts. That which was His *glory*, as the *only begotten of the Father*, was His *fulness of grace and truth*, of which *all believers have received*. And truly the life they derive from Christ is *grace and truth* compared with their life in Adam.

One point more. Does this view of the Sonship of Christ derogate from His divine and essential glory as God? Not in the least. His person is more exalted in this view of the subject, for whilst He is the Son of God, He is absolutely Jehovah, equally with the Father. This life which is the begotten of God exists in the Word or Son, as God, - it never has, nor ever will exist separate from the Godhead, either in the Son or in His people. *In Him was life*. And of His people He says unto His Father: "I in them and thou in me." John 17:23. As the *only begotten Son* He is said to be *in the bosom of the Father*. John 1:18. As Christ He is *hid in God*, for the life of His people are hid *with Him* in God. Col.3:3. This life does not exist in His people without God. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you." I Cor.3:16. See also I John 4:12-15,16; and John 14:15,16. Although believers are conscious of a principle distinct from nature being in them, from the holy and heavenly desires they have, and from the warfare within, which could not exist were there not two opposite principles within; yet this new principle has no independent powers of action. The believer cannot of himself exercise faith on a single promise, nor bring into exercise a single holy affection to the suppression of those which are unholy. And so we are told, "It is God that worketh in you both to *will and to do*, of His good pleasure." Phil.2:13. Christ says, "without me ye can do *nothing*." John 15:5. Herein perhaps is where some have confounded the Holy Ghost, which is God, with the spirit of Christ or the spirit of God's Son which the believer has, Rom.8:9; Gal.4:6, because the Holy Ghost dwells with such.

From a review of this whole subject, well may we exclaim with the beloved disciple, "Behold what *manner of love* the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God," &c. I John 3:1. Brethren what an exalted

religion doth the believer stand in to God, as having from everlasting been one with His only begotten and well beloved Son. Beloved as He was, begotten in Him, hid in Him, and living in His life. The union does not stop in heaven, they were sons of Adam, of condemnation and death, He became the Son of man, sunk below them under the curse, and raised them when He arose, and made them sharers of His dominion as the Son of David. "Fear not little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom," are His words. Sharers they are in His justification from the law, in His triumphs over death, over the grave, over the curse, and in His exalted glory. John 17:22, compared with vs.5.

Here then I have given a view of my sentiments on this important subject. Are they supported by scripture and experience, or are they not? Brethren examine candidly before you join in the cry of heretic which has been attempted to be raised against me on account thereof. And may God lead you to a righteous judgment in the case.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, Sept.2, 1840.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.8 {1840}

Laborers together with God.

Brother Beebe: - I have been requested by a distant brother to give an exposition of I Cor.3:9, through the Signs. I have once had occasion to give my views on this text through your paper within the past three or four years, but that exposition may not be in the possession of many of the present readers of the Signs, and hence my giving them again may not be unacceptable to some others beside the brother requesting them.

My opinion is that the translators entirely mistook the import of this text and also of II Cor.6:1, which occasioned their giving them the turn they have in the translation; and it is something surprising they should have thus mistaken, as the context, as I propose shortly to show, so clearly fixes the import. They evidently understand the compound word, *sunergoi*, which they have rendered *laborers together* as designed to represent Paul and Apollos as being associated with God in their labors; whereas the Apostle clearly used it to denote the equality of him and Apollos, being associated together as fellow-laborers in God's service. Hence *Theos*, God

in the translation, stands in the same relation to *sunergoi*, as it does respectively to the words rendered *husbandry* and *building*; it being *Theou*, in the genitive or possessive case, in each instance; and therefore required to be rendered *God's laborers together*, instead of *Laborers together with God*, just as the next clause was correctly rendered, *ye are God's husbandry*, instead of *ye are the husbandry with God*. There is a difficulty in conveying the precise idea intended to be conveyed in this connection by the word *sunergoi*, in our language without a circumlocution of words. It might be rendered *helpers, servants, or fellow-laborers*. But *helpers* or *servants*, would express in this relation, the one a wrong idea and the other not the full idea. That which comes nearest to the true translation of this passage is this: We are God's associate-laborers, {that is *laborers associated together in God's service*} ye are God's husbandry, God's building. In II Cor.6:1, there is no excuse for the translators making it read as it does, excepting the making it correspond with their translation of this other text. It stands in the translation thus: "We then as workers together *with Him* beseech you," &c. The words *with Him* being printed in *italics* showing that there is nothing in the original answering to them. Why not then read it and understand it as the Apostle wrote it, "We then as workers together, {or *fellow-laborers*} beseech you," &c.

On noticing the context in I Cor., chapter 3, we shall find it fully supporting the import of the 9th verse as conveyed in the translation I have given above. In reprovng the Corinthian brethren for their division, as in the first four verses, Paul represents them as accounting too highly of him and Apollos &c., hence his language in the 5th verse. But what is it? Does he say: Would you know who Paul and Apollos are, they are God's helpers, laborers together with Him in working out your salvation? No, very different! It is this: "Who then is Paul and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom you believed, even as the Lord gave to every man." In verse 6, he brings himself and Apollos to view as fellow-laborers, "I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase;" and in verse 7, "So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God, that giveth the increase." Thus he shows that God was all in all, in their salvation, whilst he and Apollos were nothing but God's servants by whom they believed. In verses 8 & 9 he reproves the Corinthians still further, as holding him and Apollos as different leaders, by one saying, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, and therefore he shows himself and Apollos, to be *but one*, but *fellow-laborers* not in their own, but God's *husbandry*. Whilst therefore this 9th verse as it

stands in the common translation clashes in import with the preceding verses, in the construction I have given to it, there is a harmony in the import of the whole.

A few remarks in reference to the system of the missionaries. They bring these texts to sustain them in their notion of being *co-workers with God*, yea, they go so far as to say that God *cannot save sinners without the aid of preachers*. Admitting this to be the fact, and the conclusion is irresistible, that God has never in earnest purposed the salvation of sinners, notwithstanding His having given His Son, to save them, but that He looks on it with an entire indifference, whether they get to heaven or sink to hell. Let us just take one heathen, in a land where the gospel is not now preached, and count some of the leading contingencies that stand in the way of his salvation, according to the missionaries notions. A missionary must be sent to him, to obtain this, to go, back no further: 1st, a young man must consent to become religious: 2nd, he must devote himself to the ministry: 3rd, schools must be established where he can obtain the necessary qualifications: 4th, he being a poor pious young man; beggars must go forth and succeed in obtaining money to defray the expenses of his education, and the ladies must become sufficiently interested in his education to furnish him with clothing: 5th, when all this is done, he must decide on going to the heathen, instead of seeking a call in some other field: 6th, he must find a wife willing to go with him: 7th, on application to the Board he must be judged to be of the right stamp: 8th, the public must be induced to contribute money enough to sustain the other establishments, &c., and to enable the Board to furnish him his outfit, &c.: 9th, the winds and waves and skill of the mariners must contribute to waft him in safety to his intended port: 10th, he must not get sick of his undertaking, and therefore invent an excuse to return, as some have: 11, after this, if the natives neither conclude to eat him, being cannibals, nor drive him from them, he may become settled as a missionary among them: 12, if he lives long enough he may acquire a knowledge of the language so as to write and circulate tracts among them, and preach, &c. Now to the individual heathen whose salvation we started for, and 13, he must not have died during this long space whilst the missionary was being prepared: 14, he must fall in with the missionaries' tracts or preaching: 15th, he must be convinced by the missionaries' arguments of the truth of the christian religion: 16th, he must have resolution sufficient to profess that religion and then, 17th, if he hold out in his profession, he will, according to the mission notion of

conversion, get to heaven. Here then are 17 contingencies, besides chains of others connected with each, standing between this man and heaven, should any one of them fail to take place, all would fail, and neither the zeal of the missionary, nor the labors of the theological professors, nor the money collected and expended, nor the shed-blood of Christ would save this individual from the quenchless fire of hell. Can any man whose judgment is not perverted by religious frenzy, believe that a God infinite in knowledge, wisdom and power, could will the salvation of sinners and yet leave their salvation to depend on the uncertain issue of such a mass of contingencies? Can anything more absurd be found ascribed by the heathen to their gods, than the missionaries thus ascribe to their god, in representing Him as willing, and attempting the salvation of sinners through the sacrifice of His own Son, and yet leaving their salvation to depend altogether on such a combination of human contingencies? Well do the missionaries term their god, the *God of missions*, and not ascribe to Him the title claimed for our God, namely: THE GOD OF OUR SALVATION.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, Jan.7, 1841.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.9 {1841}

Expository Remarks on I John 5:6-8.

Brother Beebe: - As you have proposed it to me, I will give for publication, my views of the portion of scripture embraced in the inquiry of your correspondent, brother Fulliloye. This arrangement however may not meet his wishes so well as to have your exposition of the passage, though if you have time, and my exposition does not suit you, your own in addition would not be amiss.

The scripture reads thus: "This is He that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one."

Verse 6. *This is He that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.*

We will first notice that which speaks of Christ's coming by *water and blood*. The coming of Christ here intended, that is, as the Christ and the Saviour, may be considered in three branches: His coming in the types, &c. of the Old Testament; His being manifested in the flesh; and His coming in regeneration, or experimental salvation to His people. Christ is spoken of in the scriptures as *coming* in other senses than these, but the above is what I understand intended in this text. There is a manifest correspondence between these branches of His coming, as between the type and the antitype.

In the coming of Christ through the types, as all conversant with the Old Testament know, there was a coming both by water and blood, that is, both were frequently employed to shadow forth the nature and effect of the atonement. The instances in which the Israelites were required to wash their clothes and flesh in water, in connection with the offering of sacrifices and the sprinkling of blood, are numerous. I will call attention to two or three instances illustrative of this subject. In Heb.9:19, we are told that Moses *took the blood of calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people*. As there is no mention of water in the ceremony of sprinkling the book of the law as recorded in Exodus 24:6-8, the sacred writer may in this passage have included different ceremonies; or water may have been used in that case, though not mentioned in Exodus.

In the preparation and use of the ashes of an heifer for purifying, mentioned also, Heb.9:13, and particularly stated in Num.19, the typical use of water is abundantly enjoined. The preparation was made by the burning of a red heifer wholly, without the camp, it having been slain and the blood sprinkled seven times before the tabernacle. Cedar wood, hyssop and scarlet were also cast into the burning. These ashes were to be kept, in a clean place, without the camp, for a *water of separation for sin*. It was used for purifying anyone that had contracted uncleanness by touching a dead body, &c. It was used by taking some of it and putting running water upon it, and sprinkling the water upon the unclean. The priest who attended to the burning of the heifer, and he that burned it, as also he that gathered up the ashes, and he who should afterwards be called to sprinkle the water of separation, made therefrom, upon the unclean, each thereby contracted uncleanness, and was required to wash his clothes and flesh in water before he could come into the camp.

Another special case of the use of water, in connection with blood, is found in the law concerning the cleansing of the

leper and leprous house, after being healed. Lev.14. According to this law, the priest was to command to be brought, *two birds, live and clean; and cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop*. One of the birds was to be *killed in an earthen vessel over running water*; and the priest was to dip the living bird, cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop, all in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water, and to sprinkle upon him that was to be cleansed seven times, and pronounce him clean; and was to let the living bird loose in the open air. He that was thus cleansed must also wash his clothes and bathe his flesh in water, and might then come into the camp; but after seven days, must again wash his clothes and flesh in water, and then offer his sin, and trespass offerings, &c. In the cleansing of a house from leprosy, the same ceremony relative to the birds, is described as in the other case, with this addition that the living bird, cedar wood, &c., were to be dipped both in the blood of the killed bird and in *running water*, and the house sprinkled seven times, &c. In reviewing these types, we have; first, the shedding of the blood of victims in sacrifice, typifying Christ's enduring the penalty of the law, death, as the substitute of His people. Secondly, the sprinkling of the blood of the sacrifice, upon the person for whom it was offered, clearly pointed out the necessity that the blood of Christ, or in other words a manifestation of the atonement made by Him, should be actually and personally applied to the sensible sinner before he could be experimentally cleansed from sin, that is, delivered from a sense of the guilt and condemnation thereof. Thirdly, the living bird, in the case of the leper, like the scapegoat on the great day of atonement, being let go alive, pointed out in the most striking manner the glorious truth that though Christ died under the wrath due to the sins of His people, yet that such was the full satisfaction thereby made to divine justice, that in the same relation to His people in which He died, as their Representative, He arose without seeing corruption, free from the demands of law and justice, as the living bird went free. Thus the Old Testament foretold what is plainly declared in the New, that Christ *was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification*. And the living bird and scapegoat not being let go until after their fellows had been killed, and the blood sprinkled, &c., shows, I should think, clearly, the relation between the death of Christ and His justification as the Head and Representative of His people, and their justification in Him, namely: that this justification is the result, and only the result of that satisfaction which Christ made to divine justice.

Fourthly, the *cedar wood*. This from its nature was under

the legal dispensation repeatedly used to shadow forth incorruptibility, as in the making of the vessels of the tabernacle. The same idea is evidently intended to be conveyed by its use in these types, namely; that the atonement of Christ is incorruptible, that is, ever remaining unimpaired or as expressed in Heb.10:14, "By one offering He hath *perfected forever* them that are sanctified."

Fifthly, the *scarlet*, or as called in Heb.9:19, *scarlet wool*. It is generally admitted by lexicographers, that the original word rendered scarlet ought to have been rendered *purple*, as denoting a blood color. The scarlet wool then means wool dyed a blood color. And the use of this in these types, must of course show that the people of God, are so covered over with the atonement of Christ, or according to the figure, dyed in His blood, that the law can never look upon them without meeting, in bright colors, the efficacy of that blood, as completely sheltering them from its demands.

Sixthly, *hyssop*. This is a plant of so positive and penetrating a flavor, that whatever meat it is cooked with, will partake of it, and that it cannot be eaten without being discerned. So, the atonement of Christ is not applied, without its effects being decidedly manifested, in giving pardon, and peace, and removing the sense of wrath, &c.

Water also, as has been showed, was repeatedly used in these types, and must of course have its typical relation to the Messiah and His salvation. We find water used in washing the unclean, and we know its nature to cleanse away natural pollution when thus applied. Running water was also referred to, and we know the nature of this to cleanse itself. What can this teach other than that in connection with bringing redemption to His people from under the law, He would bring to them holiness of heart and life; that as water cleanses what is washed in it, so his religion would cleanse the true subjects of it, from the love and practice of sin; that as running water cleanses itself, so the gospel when applied by the Holy Spirit, needs no penal threats to give it a cleansing power, no thunders of Sinai, to drive its subjects to uprightness of life; but it will lead them by its love-constraining influence to purity of life and of desires. And as the unclean might not come into the camp until his clothes and flesh were washed in water; so the sinner, whatever pretensions he may make to an application of pardoning blood, should not be admitted into the gospel church, whilst the life, and so far as manifested, the heart is not cleansed from the love and practice of sin. As on the other hand, no cleansing of life will suffice to give title to the privileges of a gospel church, where faith alone in the

atoning blood of Christ for pardon and acceptance with God, is not evinced.

II. *The coming of Christ in the flesh.* His coming thus fully answered to the typical representation of *the water and the blood* under the former dispensation. He came to bring in a new dispensation, to establish a new covenant, in which - not condemnation - but salvation from the penalties of the law by His blood was secured; and which was fully manifested by His death on the cross, and subsequent resurrection. But whilst He came to deliver His people from the bondage of the law, He does not leave them in bondage under sin; He came to *save them from their sins*. This, His doctrine, His precepts, and His examples, fully bear witness to.

Some have thought that John in the text under consideration, had reference to his own record; that when the side of Christ was pierced by a soldier, *forthwith came there out blood and water*. John 19:34,35. To this opinion I am not prepared to give in; but the manner in which John bears record to that fact, leads me to the conclusion that something more was indicated by the flowing of *blood* and *water* from His side, than simply, that death had done its office. Hence, I accord with the sentiment expressed by Watts thus

"My Saviour's pierced side,
Poured out a double flood,
By water we are purified,
And pardoned by His blood."
And it is expressed by Beddome, thus:

Look, saints, into His opening side;
The breach, how large! How deep! How wide!
Thence issues forth a double flood,
Of cleansing water, pard'ning blood."

III. The coming of Christ in regeneration, or experimental salvation to His people. This coming of Christ is that which brings His people to the knowledge of Him as coming, both by *water and blood*. From the implantation of spiritual life in the heart, which is also a principle of holiness, the capacity for receiving the knowledge of divine truth, and love to it is imparted; this produces a corresponding abhorrence of sin, and leads to desire and seeking deliverance from it. Hence a deliverance from the love of sin is accomplished, and a godly sorrow for having been under its power, and for its continued prevalency in our nature is produced. The blood of Christ and that alone, washes away the sense of guilt and wrath

occasioned by sin, and raises the soul from its despondency under the weight thereof, to rejoice in pardon and hope of final deliverance from the being of sin, and of acceptance with God.

Hence it is that I understand the declaration of the Master, "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," {John 3:5,} as being a description both of the source and the effect, or manifestation, of the spiritual birth. Brother Forshee, I see still retains the idea that the work of grace upon the heart comprises two distinct births. That the work of grace comprises two distinct parts, I readily admit; first, a quickening or implantation of spiritual life; which is the immediate and sovereign work of the Holy Ghost; there being no more tendency in the powers of the human mind, and the preached gospel conjointly, to produce faith in Christ, in the absence of this second implantation of the Holy Ghost, than there is in the productive powers of the earth, and the rays of the sun, to produce a crop of wheat, in the absence of the implanted seed. This work I would understand to be regeneration. Secondly; a being brought into the liberty of the gospel, or a being distinctly manifested as a believer in Christ, a child of God. This is what I consider to be properly the new birth. There is evidently a travail of soul both of the individual, and of the church acquainted with his exercise, until this is accomplished. This is through the knowledge of divine truth communicated to the mind, and applied by the Holy Spirit; whether the instrumentality of the preaching of the word, is distinctly manifested in the communication of this knowledge, or not. This distinction between the quickening, and the bringing to the birth of faith in Christ, by which alone the person becomes individually manifested as a saved one, brother F. seems to overlook; and yet it is founded in the very nature of the figure used by divine wisdom. We do not expect according to the laws of nature, that either vegetable or animal life will spring into distinct and new existences, excepting where the principle of that life has been previously implanted. So I am taught by experience and the scriptures to understand the production of the *new man*. But to return to our text, the substance of it, I understand to be this, that the salvation of Christ, not only like washing a garment, cleanses the life from open sins, but also implants a principle of holiness in the heart, which like a fountain of living or running water continues to cleanse the heart from the love of sin, and the life from an indulgence in the corruptions of nature, and from the corrupting influence of the world. Hence the declaration in the preceding verse: "And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Faith is the stream flowing from the fountain of living water springing up in the hearts of the regenerate.

But here is the particular point which the Apostle designed to establish in the text, namely; that Christ came not by *water* only, but by *water and blood*. That is, that Christ came not merely to produce, in heart and life, a greater conformity to the law, in His subjects, leaving them still to toil upon its principles, and under the weight of its demands; but also by His death, in fulfillment of its demands, to *deliver them from the law, that they should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter*. See Rom.7:4-6. So the inspired writer seems to have understood the doctrine of the types of the Old Testament, when he says, "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God." Heb.9:13,14.

In continuing my exposition of this portion of scripture, the latter part of verse 6, comes first in order, "And it is the Spirit that beareth witness; because the Spirit is truth." From what the Master informed His disciples of the office work of the Holy Ghost, {John 14,15 & 16} I understand Him here intended, by the term Spirit: He dwells in the children of God; and the *witness* here intended, is that revelation which He from time to time makes to their minds leading them into the knowledge of the truth. The particular declaration, that *It is the Spirit that beareth witness, &c.*, is designed to point out the precious fact, that God has not left the faith of His people to rest upon the fluctuating opinions of men, nor the uncertainty of human testimony; but gives them for its authority the infallible testimony of the Holy Ghost. And that faith which *overcometh the world*, is that which receives, and rests upon no authority, short of a revelation made to the mind by the Holy Ghost. This is exemplified in the first exercise of faith in Christ; as well as in the after receiving and rejoicing in the truth as contained in various texts of scripture, when they are opened, and applied to the mind, by the Holy Spirit. The testimony of all the men in the world, could not give us the comfortable and firm assurance we have in these instances. Hence Paul knowing these things, preferred the faith of his hearers *standing in the power of God, and not in the wisdom of men*, and therefore resorted to none of the skill of human learning to constrain a belief. Hence also, it is an

ignorance of the authority and power in which the believer's faith stands, that leads men to suppose he can be reasoned, or scoffed and ridiculed out of it.

Verse 7, reads thus: "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one." The testimony which this text bears to the truth of God's existing as *three* and yet being one, I need not dwell upon, after what I have before written on this subject. I will however, in passing, remark, in accordance with what I have before written, that the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, are here, as in other texts, presented to view as so distinctly three, that their testimony is that of three witnesses; and yet the *three are one*. The difference of my views on this subject, from those of other Trinitarians, is that I hold that as these three witnesses are declared to be *three*, and *one* absolutely, so we ought to receive the declaration, without putting any limitations or qualifications of our own to it; whilst the others contend that the *three* must be understood as meaning *three persons*, and the *one* as meaning *one God*. Their authority for this addition I feel bound to dispute, seeing the Holy Ghost has not so declared it. They may talk about there being three subsistences in one divine essence, and say that this essence is God and these substances are Persons; and yet I may venture the assertion, that they know no more about it than I do; because nothing can be known of God, beyond what He has been pleased to declare of Himself. He has declared Himself as Father, Word and Holy Ghost, *three*, and that whilst He is thus *three*, He is absolutely *one*, this declaration let us receive, and with it, as made, let us be satisfied.

In an attempt further to explain this verse, the place where the three bear record, and the distinct record or testimony of each, demand particular notice.

1st. The place where they bare record, namely; *in heaven*. I have formerly thought that the expression in *heaven*, as contrasted with the term *in earth*, relative with the other three witnesses, was intended to convey the idea of the sovereign and immediate testimony which the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost have each borne of the Son. But this idea would be more correctly expressed by the term *from heaven*, than by the one used: *in heaven*.

Again, the idea may present itself to some, that the two expressions *in heaven* and *in earth* designate the two dispensations, the gospel, and the Jewish. That under the gospel dispensation, God has more distinctly declared Himself as three, as Father, as Word, and as Holy Ghost, than under

the former dispensation, is clear; and He has borne a clearer and more distinct testimony concerning His Son, in the gospel, than through the types and ceremonies of the legal dispensation. But on the other hand, whilst the ceremonial *water* and *blood*, under the law, shadowed forth the work of redemption to be accomplished by the Son of God, &c. Yet the *spirit*, in the sense here intended by that expression, was, I conceive under that dispensation, hid in the *letter* of external rites and legal requisition. Not but that the Holy Ghost spake by the prophets and in the hearts of the children of God formerly, but the spirit in verse 8, I understand to be distinct from the Spirit and Holy Ghost of the preceding verses.

I understand therefore by the expression *heaven* in this text, the gospel church. Not the church, however, in its outward form, as expressed by the term *kingdom of heaven*; but in reference to that internal and spiritual communion, that privilege of sonship, which the saints have with God through the institutions of the gospel; and which was typified under the law, by the sanctuary or holy place of the temple and tabernacle, into which the priests only entered *accomplishing the service of God*. This view of the subject keeps up the connection between this 7th and the preceding verse. *And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, &c. For there are three that bear record, &c.* We thus have in this, a particularly revealed testimony concerning the distinct relation and office of the Spirit, or Holy Ghost, from the Father and the Word; for whilst it is affirmed that it is the Spirit that beareth witness, we are also informed that He is distinctively one of *three* who *bear record*, and who are *one*. Hence instead of the Holy Spirit's being only an emanation from, or a power put forth by the Father, He is Himself a distinct witness, and on an equality with the Father and Word. Again, the distinct witness of the Spirit, that Christ or the Son has come, both by *water and blood*, is in the experience and hearts of God's children; the record of the three is of course in the same place, that is, in their heart communion with God. And is not this, in distinction from the bondage under the law, and from the christian's intercourse with the world, a heaven to his soul, a secret place of the Most High, which others know nothing about? Hence *he that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself.*" verse 10.

2nd. The testimony or record borne by the three. This and the witness of the three in earth, is jointly said {verse 9}, to be *the witness of God which He hath testified of His Son*. Again, verse 11, it is said, "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life: and this life is in His Son." Here I

might enlarge upon the testimony which this whole connection gives in favor of the views which I have before published concerning the Son of God as such. I will, however, but briefly remark upon it. First, that the record borne by the Word as well as that of the Father and the Holy Ghost, is the *testimony of God concerning His Son*. Secondly, the nature, or subject of this testimony. It is not of His essential existence as God; nor of His being born of the virgin Mary; but it is, that *God hath given to us eternal life*, and that, *this life is in His Son*. If then, such is the witness which God hath testified of His Son, are we wrong in understanding that His being the Son of God, and that eternal life which God hath given to His people being in Him, is one and the same; or in other words, that the sonship of Christ consists in the same with that which constitutes the sonship of His people in Him, namely: in that eternal life which was given them in Him?

3rd. I will now notice the distinction of the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, in bearing this record. 1st. Of the Father. Like the distinct office relation of each, such is His distinct record. The distinct office relation of the Father, consists in His exercising the supreme sovereignty of the divine throne. Among other acts belonging to the throne, is that of bestowing pardons, hearing and answering prayer, receiving to His fatherly smiles those redeemed by the Son, and born of the Spirit, &c. Those who have been brought helpless and self-condemned to the footstool of mercy, know that they were conscious of then standing before God, even the sovereign Majesty of heaven and earth. And when pardon was brought to them, they were no less conscious of its having come from God, even the Father; and it was so brought and applied to them, as to bear record to their souls of the Son of God, of His having borne the curse of the law in their stead, and of pardon coming to them through His atoning blood. Not only so, but this faith given them in Jesus Christ, was accompanied with the hope of eternal life, and an assurance that this life was in the Son, yea they felt that it was itself the spirit of sonship, in that God now was manifested as a Father unto them, and they with child-like confidence, were enabled to approach Him and confide in Him. All this, they were confident for the time being, was the revelation or testimony of God, even the Father, to their souls; and it was a testimony that Jesus was the Son of God, and that eternal life was the gift of God in Him. Thus also, as John says, verse 10, they *had the witness in themselves*. So also in all the instances in their after experience, of receiving manifestations of pardon for their wanderings, or of answers to prayer, &c., all such

manifestations have led them to a stronger and more lively faith in the Son of God, as the medium through, or in whom, these favors came to their souls. And with equal strength was the spirit of sonship revived in their breasts, in the exercise of confidence in God as their Father, and a sense of His loving kindness to their souls.

2nd. Of the Word. The peculiar office relation of the Word, is that of Redeemer. As such He was manifested in the flesh; and in this manifestation, He gave full testimony in His doctrine and work that He came - not like Moses the servant, to establish upon His disciples a yoke of bondage, in a legal covenant - but as the Son of God, to establish a dispensation of sonship, to redeem His people from under the law, that they might be brought experimentally, in Him, into the liberty of sons of God. He still bears the same testimony through the preached gospel; but we in a state of nature, and even until fully slain by the law, had no will to receive His testimony. If we attended to religious service at all, it was as true sons of the bond woman, doing all upon legal or conditional grounds. It is only His testimony *in heaven* that is rejoiced in. But this record or manifestation of Himself, He does, from time to time, through the gospel and its ordinances, or through the more secret witnessing of the Holy Ghost, made to His people. In every such manifestation, however made as to externals, the children of God are led to fresh, and often, enlarged views of Him as the Son of God, and of His religion in being a dispensation of love, of emancipation from bondage, of salvation from sin, and of sonship; they see the proofs of it, in the whole scripture testimony, they have the *witness in themselves*, that God hath given them eternal life, and that this life is in His Son - not in Moses, or the law. What seasons, therefore, of hope, of anticipation and rejoicing, are these transient moments in which the Son of God manifests Himself to the tempest-tost, and sin and Satan buffeted christian!

3rd. Of the Holy Ghost. The distinct office relation of the Holy Ghost, is that of *quickening*, or testifying of Christ, of *guiding* the disciples *into all truth*, and of *receiving of Christ's* and *showing it unto them*, &c. The manner of the Holy Ghost's bearing record, is different from the Father and Word's bearing it. These, as has been noticed, are manifested to the believer in bearing their record. But the testimony of the Holy Spirit is like the blowing of the wind; the testimony comes with power, and is received and rejoiced in with confidence as being of divine authority, yet *whence it cometh and whither it goeth* he sees not: that is, there is no *manifestation* of the Holy Spirit in it, but in the nature of the revelation made, or light imparted.

His testimonies all tend to guide the disciples into the knowledge of the Son of God. If He applies the law in its killing power, it is that the individual may find his life in Christ. If the believer is guided, by Him, into any branch of doctrine, even that of the sovereignty of God in election, predestination, &c., the Son of God is therein manifested as its centre, and as the medium through which the electing love, &c. of God flowed to his soul. So far as the Holy Ghost opens up and applies any portion of scripture, the believer will discover Christ couched therein, and will find that from Genesis to Revelation, the Son of God in His person and work, His offices, or His body, is the ultimate subject of all divine revelation, that all is designed to set Him forth, by direct declaration or illustration, by type, or by contrast. Hence, if in our meditations on scripture, Christ is not unfolded to our view in some fresh beauty and excellency, we have reason to conclude that the Holy Ghost is not then guiding our minds in such meditations. This is what I understand to be the import of that text, John 16:15 - "All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that He shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you."

I now pass to verse 8. "And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one." I have already noticed a contrast between the place where these three bear witness, and that in which the *three who are one* bear record. As by the phrase, *in heaven*, we are to understand the gospel church in its spiritual worship or internal communion with God, so by the expression *in earth* in this verse I understand the external or visible form of worship, in the same church; that which was appointed as a witness to those who are without, and which was represented by the *outward court* service of the tabernacle and temple. So understanding the phrase *in earth*, I am of course led to consider by the *three bearing witness in earth*, the public testimony borne through the preaching and ordinances of the gospel.

1st. *The spirit*. The gospel as preached by the Apostles, under the new dispensation, is by Paul expressly called the spirit. See II Cor.3:6-9. By this expression Paul evidently contrasted the gospel with the former dispensation. Under that dispensation, the gospel was preached through the shadows of legal rites, called by Paul, *the letter*, that is the letter of the Sinai covenant, but under the dispensation of the kingdom of heaven, that gospel is preached in its spirituality, as the substance of all those rites, and divested of the commands and consequent condemnation of the law. The gospel thus preached bears full and unequivocal testimony to the coming,

character and work of the Son of God, and that God *hath given His people eternal life, and this life is in His Son.*

2nd. *The water.* By this the ordinance of baptism is rightly represented. The testimony of this ordinance is emphatically, that we are *dead* to the law, and have risen to newness of life through faith in the Son of God. But in addition to the representation of a burial and resurrection, or of death and life, there seems by the element used, as by the water under the former dispensation, a representation of the cleansing nature of faith in the Son of God. Hence Paul's statement of what Ananias said to him: "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling upon the name of the Lord." {Acts 22:16}. Not that baptism itself is a putting away of the filth of the flesh, but is a witness to the power of faith in Christ, to cleanse both the conscience and life from sin.

3rd. *The blood.* This is truly expressive of what is represented in the supper. This, says the Master, in reference to the wine, *is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sin.* These who rightly partake of this supper, thus bear through it a plain testimony that their hope of life and salvation, is through, and alone, through the death of the Son of God. Thus *these three agree in one;* in bearing a united testimony to the Son of God, as the Alpha and Omega of salvation. But who, in this day, of the thousands who externally partake of these ordinances, *have believed their report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* Alas, to but few.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, April 26, 1841.

S. Trott.

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On Church Fellowship & Communion at the Lord's Supper.

Brother Beebe: - I have been requested by a brother, to give my views on the above points. The term *fellowship* as used at this day among our churches, has a more extended meaning, than as used in the scriptures. In the scriptures it appears to designate only the external act of mutual participation in the privileges of church relation, &c. But, as now used, the term *christian fellowship*, conveys the idea of that brotherly affection consequent upon our being convinced that a person is truly made a partaker of the faith of the gospel, as well as the welcoming to a mutual participation in the privileges of the

church, &c. In a word, it embraces the idea expressed by love or charity in the scriptures, as well as the outward expressions thereof, according to the order of the gospel. This outward expression of brotherly love, in a mutual participation in the ordinances and privileges of the church, is often designated by the expression *church fellowship*. The term *communion*, in the heading of this, I have adopted in the special sense of reference to the emblems of the body and blood of Christ as used by the Apostle, I Cor.10:16. As the Apostle exhorts to *let love be without dissimulation*, {Rom.12:9} we ought always to be careful that church fellowship is founded on heart fellowship; that is, that the privilege of the ordinances of the gospel and church relation should be extended only so far as evidence is given of the persons' being truly believers, and a consequent love is produced in our hearts toward them as brethren in Christ. The production, and the continuance of this heart fellowship, I will just glance at. The exercise of true heart fellowship towards any one, can only be produced in the breast of a christian, {and others are ignorant of it,} by a discovery of his having been slain by the law, and made alive to God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, either from a direct relation of his experience, or from incidental intercourse and conversation with him. Secondly; knowing as the christian does, that a true gospel obedience, and a consistent orderly walk in accordance with the *gospel of the grace of God*, and also knowing his liability to be deceived, in himself, as also in others, by not being able to search their hearts, the mere first relation of what may be esteemed a gospel experience, will be found insufficient to preserve in his breast the continued exercise of heart fellowship toward anyone, without seeing his faith producing corresponding works. For instance, if he afterwards discovers in one toward whom his heart had been drawn out in fellowship, a direct opposition to the doctrine of the gospel in its consistent whole, or a disposition to treat with neglect the ordinances of the gospel, and to go after other lords besides Christ, or a disposition to indulge in a spirit or a walk not consistent with the gospel; he will find the affections of his heart withdrawing from that person, and his confidence in him as a brother in Christ destroyed.

To go into a full illustration of this subject in all its parts would occupy too large a field for me in the Signs, prolix as I am; yet some points demand a little particular attention, these I will notice without regard to any special order.

First, from the fact already noticed, that our feelings are liable to take the lead of our judgment, we should be very cautious of extending the tokens of fellowship and especially of

receiving to church fellowship, any, without our judgment being convinced, so far as we are capable of judging, that they have become *dead to the law*, and that Christ has been revealed to them by the Spirit as *the way, the truth, and the life*. Herein our Baptist churches have formerly greatly erred, in suffering their feelings too much to govern in the reception of members. Hence the mass of corruption that had obtained footing among them. On the other hand, we are also liable to be swayed by our feelings to suffer our brotherly love to be too easily alienated from brethren, and to withdraw from them, that is, as individuals, the expressions of our fellowship. They go astray perhaps in cases in which we have not been so much tempted, or they do something which touches our interest, our pride, or the like, and we suffer our prejudices to wax strong against them, without weighing the case candidly, and in the light of the gospel, and not considering our own liability to be tempted and to err. Instead of heeding the Apostle's direction, II Thes.3:15 - *To admonish them as brethren, we account them enemies*. By attention to this text in its connection, we find there are cases in which our regard to truth and order, requires us to bear decided testimony against the sin or error of a brother, by having no company with him, and yet we are *not to account him an enemy*, &c. Here again are two extremes into which even christians may go. One is, that when brethren go astray they are at once set down as false professors, and no attempts are made to reclaim them. I would further remark on this point, that we are abundantly exhorted to keep in lively exercise a heart fellowship to our brethren, in the exhortations, *to love one another, to love the brotherhood, to love as brethren*, &c.

The other extreme on this point, is frequently seen in the excuse made by many for going with, and thus bidding *God speed* to that preaching, and those measures which they acknowledge are not according to the standard of the scriptures; because, say they, we believe there are many good brethren in those churches and engaged in those measures, and we cannot be so uncharitable as to throw them away. So they, it seems, prefer turning their backs upon Christ in His doctrine and order, to withdrawing from the company of certain professors, known to be in error.

I will mention particularly, some of those cases which scripturally, justify an entire withdrawal of fellowship, both in heart fellowship, and in the external tokens thereof. John says of some, "They went out from us, but they were not of us," I John 2:19. Some go out from the church into the world in such a way as to give full evidence that they feel more at home in

the world, than they did in the church. Whether such went in the first instance into the corruptions of the world, or being disciplined by the church thus go into them, we can account them as being only of the world. Again, there are those who go out from the church of Christ in reference to doctrine. They once professed the doctrine held by the Old Baptists, and which is *according to godliness* and christian experience, but have since made *shipwreck of faith*, and are floated off upon some of the systems of conditional salvation and human effort, in which of course the work and doctrine of Christ is made to stand in the plan of salvation, like a cipher in arithmetic, that is, to stand for nothing, without some creaturely exertion is placed at the left side of it. These John plainly declares are *without God*. His language is: "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God." And in the following verse he says, "If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed." II John 9,10. This direction must embrace all those who once professing the doctrine of Christ have since made shipwreck of it; as well as that whole class of modern professors who have never pretended to love or receive that doctrine; for they of course do not bring it. There may be some caviling as to what is the *doctrine of Christ*. But the true believer, if he will but look into his own experience, and reflect on the light in which Christ was revealed to his soul, as the whole of a poor sinner's salvation, will have no hesitancy as to what is the *doctrine of Christ*. The classes of professors thus designated, can be viewed in no other light than as belonging to the fellowship of a disciple of Christ. There are other special cases which might be noticed, but I will forbear now. I will however remark further on a point before touched; that is, that there are cases in which we cannot say the persons have actually transgressed the doctrine of Christ, but they so disregard the apostolic direction, not to *bid God speed to those who bring not the doctrine of Christ*, that we are required to withdraw ourselves from them, and therefore to withdraw from them the tokens of fellowship, though we are not to account them as enemies. The direction is positive, "Now we command you brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly and not after the tradition which he received of us." And the *not bidding God speed* to those characters is one tradition of the Apostles. II Thes.3:6; II John, verse 10.

I will now notice the particular act of fellowship, expressed in the communion of the supper. On this point there is, I conceive, much error among our brethren. I will therefore

endeavor to examine the subject in the light of the New Testament. The Lord Jesus Christ gave the ordinance of the supper to His disciples, to be observed in *remembrance of Him*. It is a setting forth the broken body and shed blood, or in other words, the death of Christ under the curse of the law, as the alone ground of our hope of life and salvation, and is an ordinance to be observed by the church in their united capacity; and is therefore spoken as the *communion of the body and blood of Christ*, as expressive of a mutual participation in the one common hope, and all resting upon the same one ground of hope of salvation, the crucifixion of Christ in the law place of His people.

It being thus an ordinance to be observed by the church, in church relation, the privilege and duty of partaking of this ordinance rests on the same footing with that of any other privilege belonging to church fellowship, or membership. It is subject to the same prerequisites with any other church privilege, and no other. The Apostle mentions at least, only this in special reference to the Lord's supper, namely: that the *church be come together, in one place*, I Cor.11:20-33. There is nothing in the New Testament to justify the idea that the privilege of participating in the supper is any more sacred than any other privilege belonging to the church relation; nor that a refusal to partake with the church in this ordinance, by a member thereof, is any less a contempt of the church, and of the privileges thereof, than to refuse to meet and act with the church on any other occasion. A member may be under the dealings of the church, and while in that case a becoming humility would require him neither to partake of the supper, nor to be active in the business of the church. It may be said that a member is directed to examine himself with a special reference to partaking of this ordinance. True, this important direction is given. See I Cor.11:28. This ordinance, no more than any other part of divine worship should be engaged in, with negligence or as a mere form. The Corinthians, it seems, partook of it as merely designed to gratify their carnal appetites, and were therefore reprov'd. In engaging in prayer, or even in acting in the church in a case of order or discipline, we ought certainly not to act inconsiderately, but with due reflection and self-examination, so as to act understandingly and in sincerity, &c. So in the supper; it is a setting forth a crucified Jesus as the whole and only ground of our hope of salvation. Is it not then highly proper that we should examine ourselves before partaking, whether this is in truth our case, or whether there is not something of our own, that our hope takes hold of? The frequent partaking of this ordinance, in this

manner, would be much for our comfort, and tend to strengthen us against the attacks of unbelief; whilst a careless participation tends to produce sickness. But persons frequently take wrong grounds in their examination.

1st. In examining themselves, instead of enquiring whether their reliance is alone on the work of Christ for salvation, they enquire after something in themselves to render them worthy, or fit to partake of this ordinance, and finding nothing but unworthiness, they are induced to stay back from it, though the Lord is saying to them, that is, they being believers, "Do this in *remembrance of me*" - *not of your own unworthiness*. To such I would say that the Saviour in appointing bread and wine as emblems in this ordinance of His broken body and shed blood, teaches that as food and drink are the entire support of the animal life, and as bread and wine are the most nourishing of these, so His having borne the curse of the law in the place of His people, is that alone through which spiritual life comes to them, and by which they are secured in its enjoyment. Hence He says, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you; whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life," &c. John 6:53,54. Now if you have never found yourself perishing as with hunger, and so straitened that everything within your reach, and with which you would fain satisfy your cravings, you found to be nothing but husks, until Christ's obedience and death being applied to your case, you found that to be food to your soul, just such as your hungering or perishing state craved, and which satisfied it, such as you could live on, such as stimulated, invigorated and cheered your soul; I say, if you have never had such an experience as this, of the fact, that *the flesh of the Son of Man is meat indeed, and His blood is drink indeed*, then you ought not only to refrain from partaking of the Lord's supper, but if you have professed His name, you ought to recall such profession as having been made in ignorance. On the other hand, if such has ever been your perishing case, and nothing but the flesh and blood of Christ could save you, and in that you have found life and joy, then such is still your case, and having complied with the prerequisites of being baptized and having given yourself to the church, you may with confidence make the declaration implied in partaking of the supper, as well as cheerfully yielding obedience to the injunction of your Lord, *Do this in remembrance of me*.

2nd. Others, instead of examining *themselves*, examine the other members of the church, and if they find any, against whom they have any prejudice, or who have injured them, or

whose walk they think is not correct, they stay back from the communion of the body and blood of Christ. This is no other, {and I do not wish to give offense in speaking thus plain,} than a device of Satan, by which we may let the church, and the brother with whom we are hurt, know that our fellowship towards him is broken, without the trouble of attending to the regular order of gospel discipline as prescribed in the New Testament. It is a kind of *lynch law* in religion by which we take upon ourselves individually to exclude whom we please thus far from our fellowship, without first allowing them the right of an investigation before the church. If the right of trial by jury, before condemnation, be held so sacred under civilized governments, is it not a right which every member of a gospel church may demand at the hand of his brethren, that all charges which may be preferred against him, should be investigated by the church, according to the order of discipline prescribed by the King of Zion, before he is condemned? The individual who dispenses with the regular order of discipline, and thus summarily excludes his brother from his fellowship, by refusing to commune with him, is himself a proper subject of church discipline; for in refusing to commune with the church in the supper because a certain member communes, he thus far treats with contempt the church, as well as sets aside, the regular order of discipline, &c. My brethren, let us, whoever else may do wrong, be governed strictly by the laws of Zion's King. If a brother trespass against us, let us observe toward him the rule laid down in the 18th of Matthew {verses 15 - 17}, and wait until he refuses to *hear the church* before we treat him as an *heathen man and a publican* by refusing to commune with him. If we believe him, to have transgressed against the doctrine, order or practice becoming the gospel, let the charges be regularly brought before the church, and investigated, and let the exclusion from fellowship be by the church, and not by us as individuals.

If after thus faithfully discharging our duty towards the offending brother and the church, the brother is not reclaimed, and the church refuses to exclude him from the privileges of the church, so that we can no longer walk in fellowship with him and the church, without being conscious of thereby countenancing corruption in doctrine or practice, as well as in discipline, the proper course I conceive is, to separate ourselves at once from the church, to *come out from among them*. But before we act in the first or final step, let us examine the subject carefully in the light of scripture, to see that we have just ground for acting; and while we continue with the church, let us be found walking in all the

commandments and ordinances of our Lord blameless.

One remark more. There is an utter inconsistency in standing back from the communion of the body and blood of Christ, on account of dis-satisfaction towards the church, or a member thereof, whilst we unite with the church and the brother in other acts of worship, and sit and act with them in the transaction of business. It clearly implies that we hold different grades of church fellowship. One grade, that consists in walking in union and fellowship with the church, as a church of Christ, in all cases, excepting in the ordinance of the supper. A higher grade that consists in participating with the church in that ordinance. My brethren, can you find any such distinction of grades in church fellowship, pointed out in the New Testament? If you can, please to show it.

These remarks I offer believing they will hold generally good, and I entreat those brethren who have indulged in standing back from the communion, particularly in the church of which they are members, to weigh the subject carefully and candidly.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, May 10, 1841.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.9 {1841}

Views on Exodus 10:1.

Brother Beebe: - My views through the Signs, on Exodus 10:1, have been requested. The text is this: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh; for I have hardened his heart and the heart of his servants, that I might show these my signs before them."

The particular point, I presume, on which my views are desired, is that of the Lord's hardening the heart of Pharaoh and of his servants. The difficulty of this passage, though esteemed quite a difficult one, does not consist of any obscurity of language, for the declaration is plain, that the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, &c., but it, I apprehend, in a great measure, arises from the opposition of our hearts to bowing with becoming reverence to the absolute sovereignty of God. There is a rebellious perverseness in our nature which prevents our feeling, at least but seldom, anything like that holy submission, that stillness of soul which should pervade us in view of the sovereign right of God to do *what He will with His own*; and of the fact that we are *the thing formed*, and that God *formed us*; that to Him belongs the right absolutely, to

make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor. The Apostle in Romans, chapter 9, places the arrogance of man in replying against God upon the sole ground of God's sovereign right as the Maker of all things to dispense His mercy as He please; and on this ground alone the awful presumption of men is manifest in arraigning Him at the bar of human reason, and finding fault with those dispensations which we can never scan, never see the *end from the beginning*. But God in being manifested as the Creator, is made known to be as wise as He is absolute, as good as He is powerful, as gracious as He is high, and as merciful as He is just: a consideration of God's being such, and a sense of what we are as creatures, and more especially as fallen creatures, constitutes as abundant reason why we should lay our hand upon our mouth and *be still, knowing that He is God*, how much soever the acts of His government are above our comprehension.

Another difficulty to acknowledging the sovereign right of God to deal thus with Pharaoh and others consists in our utter incapability to understand how God accomplishes His own independent and determinate counsel, in, with, and by man, without infringing upon that freedom of voluntary action which is necessary to him as an accountable creature. Yet God does so control man and all his acts, whilst man at the same time is acting out his own inclinations and is therefore justly accountable for his acts. Such is evidently the case in reference to Pharaoh. God explicitly declares beforehand what should be, and that He so controlled Pharaoh or hardened his heart as to bring it about. He says, Exod.3:19 & 20: "And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no not by a mighty hand. And I will stretch out my hand upon Egypt," &c. In chap.4:21, He tells Moses: "But I will harden his heart that he shall not let the people go." Again, in chap.7:3-5 - "And I will harden Pharaoh's heart and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you," &c. Again, God sends Moses with this message to him, chap.9:14-16 - "For I will at this time send all my plagues upon thine heart, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people, that thou mayest know that there is none like me in all the earth. For now I will stretch out my hand that I may smite thee, and thy people with pestilence; and thou shalt be cut off from the earth. And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power, and that my name may be declared in all the earth." On the other hand it is equally evident that God in all this dealt with Pharaoh as a rational and accountable creature, and though it was of God his heart was hardened, it was only that he was led on, and permitted to

persist in his rebellious determination to resist the demand of God for the release of Israel, until God should have inflicted upon him and his people all those plagues with which He had determined in justice to visit them for their oppression of His people. Hence in the very connection of the last quotation, Exod.9:17, Moses is directed to address Pharaoh thus, "As yet exaltest thou thyself against my people that thou wilt not let them go?" And Pharaoh acknowledges once and again that it was his own wicked act in not letting Israel go. In Exod.9:17, he says, "I have sinned this time: the Lord is righteous and I and my people are wicked." And in chap.10:16, he says unto Moses: "I have sinned against the Lord your God and against you." And he is said to have hardened his own heart, as in Exod.8:15 - "But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite he hardened his heart and hearkened not unto them, as the Lord had said." Again, the same in verse 32; and in verse 29, Moses reasons with him as its being his own act. He says, "But let not Pharaoh deal deceitfully any more in not letting the people go." Thus we see that whilst God makes use of Pharaoh, works in him, and with him, to accomplish His own sovereign purpose, *raised him up to show in him His power and to declare His name throughout all the earth*, Pharaoh, in refusing to let Israel go, acts with that self-determination which fully proved it to have been his own voluntary act; that he *acted as a free agent*, according to the sense in which some use the term, and which the term properly imports, that is one who acts voluntarily or from choice. An *independent agent* or *doer* cannot exist short of the independent God. Thus all rational creatures whilst they act completely under the government and control of God, being made to accomplish His purpose even in their wicked opposition to Him, act voluntarily, consulting and acting out the inclination of their own hearts. Neither is it necessary that God should infuse, in any way, any hardness or rebellion of heart to His government, into men in order to induce them to act wickedly or contrary to the demands of His law; this hardness already exists there as the consequence of man's original apostasy. Hence I do not understand that in hardening Pharaoh's heart, God added anything to the native enmity or wickedness of his heart, but only that, in that {to us} incomprehensible way already spoken of, He so directed and brought into action this native enmity, as thereby to accomplish His own sovereign purpose, whilst in all this opposition to letting Israel go, Pharaoh was completely acting out himself. Most probably God exerted this control over Pharaoh to bring out his wickedness, in a providential way, that is, by placing him in his exalted position,

or in scripture language *raising him up*, and surrounding him with his magicians, and other circumstances, such as leading him to engage in his ambitious projects for which he was employing Israel in his brick yards, &c., being led thus resolutely to resist the release of God's people. Thus it would appear that in some instances the magicians imitating the miracles of Moses was the occasion of Pharaoh's heart being hardened. See Exod.7:12, 13-22. And God undoubtedly knew that the magicians would imitate those miracles before He directed Moses to perform them.

I have already intimated that God designed by thus hardening the heart of Pharaoh and his servants to bring His judgments upon them for their cruel and murderous oppression of Israel. See Exod.3:19-22; 6:5,6 & 7:3-5. But in addition to this, and to making Himself known to Israel, He purposed to show *in Pharaoh His power and that His name might be declared in all the earth*. Exod.9:16. By this I understand that His name is declared as exercising the same power *in all the earth* and over all flesh that He showed in Pharaoh. Thus Paul viewed it when he quoted Exod.9:16, to support his position, that God *hath mercy on whom He will have mercy and whom He will, He hardeneth*. Rom.9:16-18.

What then is the conclusion of this matter? It is nothing less than this, that God raised Pharaoh up for the very purpose of showing in him that power which He exercises in, and over men, in all the earth, making even their depravity and wickedness subservient to His predetermined purpose, and causing in spite of all the enmity and rebellion of men and devils, His counsel to stand, and often making men, by giving them up to their own wicked propensities, to become the punishers of their own crimes. Thus, as has been noticed, the Egyptians were punished for their oppressions of Israel. Thus the nations of Canaan, their iniquity being full, "It was of the Lord to harden their hearts that they should come against Israel in battle, that He might destroy them utterly, and that they might have no favor, but that He might destroy them as the Lord commanded Moses." Josh.11:20. Thus also the Apostle says of those who are involved in the corruptions and punishment of that *Wicked, the man of sin*; "For this cause God shall send them strong delusions that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." II Thes.2:11,12. And further that God not only controls the actions, but also the volitions of men, that is, as I understand it, by providentially placing them in such circumstances, leaving them exposed to the operation of such temptations, &c., as will operate upon

their depravity and dispose them to those acts which God hath purposed.

It is sometimes said that God's predestinating decree concerning wicked actions is a decree of permission, and I have myself so said. And I still believe it is the truth, so far as it distinguishes the predestination of God, from the notion that such predestination is a constraint upon man to act without his having a choice in the case. Contrary to this notion of direct compulsion, God, as we have seen, dealt with Pharaoh, as a rational being, sending messages and threatenings to him, and directing Moses to show signs unto him, to lead him, if he had any disposition to do it, to obey the just demand of God that he should let Israel go, &c. But if the idea of permission is carried to the extent to imply an uncertainty whether the individual will choose to perform the act predestinated, or not, it is not correct, according as God showed in Pharaoh, His *power and name*. So far from there being any uncertainty as to Pharaoh's willingness to resist the demand of God by Moses, God said to Moses beforehand, "And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand." Exod.3:19. So God says concerning Assyria, or the king thereof, "I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge to take the spoil," &c. And yet He says, "When the Lord hath performed His whole work upon mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria," &c. And why? Because, though the king of Assyria performed God's charge or what God had purposed concerning Jerusalem, yet it was not from the principle of obedience to God that he acted, but from his own bloodthirsty, ambitious desires to *cut off nations not a few*, &c. See Isa.10:5-16. Thus God *doeth according to His will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest thou?* And with an unerring and sovereign hand is He moving on every prophecy to its perfect fulfillment, however much it may involve the wickedness of men, and the rise and fall of nations; and yet nations and people in doing the very things which God by the prophets had said they should do, are drawing upon themselves the just judgments of God for so doing, that is, for acting out the wicked inclinations of their own hearts; as for instance in persecuting the church of Christ.

Whether my remarks on this passage will meet the wishes of the enquirer or not, I cannot say. Perhaps he may have wished the force of the text explained away. But there is, at this day, too much of this explaining away of scripture, it is

time for us to come to the plain declarations of scripture, and to let them stand as originally written, as the declarations of God. With my kind respects to the enquirer, Yours, &c.,

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, July 13th, 1841.

S. Trott.

From: *SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol. 9 {1841}*

Preaching and Baptism.

Brother Beebe: - Feeling my mind led to offer some remarks, through the Signs, on a subject noticed in your number for June 1st., I must beg your indulgence in saying a few things by way of apology for again occupying, occasionally, your columns.

The subject on which I feel inclined to offer my views is *the commission as given to the apostles, to baptize*, as embraced in the 1st. query of brother David Clark, Signs, vol.11, no.11, page 85. It is, to use a worldly phrase, unfortunate for me, that at the very first of my reappearance, I should be led to review a subject which has been noticed by brother Beebe, as it will again subject me to some of those charges heretofore made against me. But, so be it.

The subject is an important one, and the enquiry concerning it is the more important, on the ground of our Old School profession of requiring direct scriptural authority for what we believe and practice in religion, as also on account of this commission's being so much abused. I do not, brother Beebe, attempt this review, because I discover error in what you have written on the subject, but simply because you have not given it that full answer which the importance of the subject seemed to me to call for. In a word, meaning no offense, your answer bespeaks to me that hurry, which we know, on account of associations, &c., you must then have been in.

I propose to notice 1st. *The apostolic authority we have for baptism being administered by others than the apostles.* 2nd. *The perpetuity of the commission given to the apostles; and on whom it rests as their successors.* On the first of these points, brother Beebe offers some proofs. But those which he draws from John and from Apollos, {Acts 18:24 & 25,} whilst showing that others than the apostles baptized, yet were I antagonistic to him on the subject, I should dispute their proper application to the case in hand, because that John officiated under a distinct command from what the apostles did

after Christ's resurrection. Hence the baptism administered by John and his disciples, was called distinctively *John's baptism*. Not but that the act itself of baptism was the same when administered by John as when by the apostles. Baptism means *baptism* and not *rantism*, in both cases. The difference between the two baptisms may be briefly included in these points: John's was *introductory* to the kingdom of heaven, while that administered by the apostles after Christ's ascension is an *ordinance* of the kingdom of heaven as come. John's was under a commission given to him directly from heaven: the other is under the authority of Christ as King of Zion. The faith required in the subjects of the two baptisms differed. John's required faith in a Messiah to *come*, the other requires faith in Christ *as come*.

But preaching and baptism, as brother Beebe justly notices, have ever gone together. They are so closely combined in the command: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them, &c.," that I cannot see how any person can question the authority of others than the apostles to baptize, without equally disputing their authority to *teach or preach*. But for direct authority from apostolic example in the case. The first we have is that of Philip, at Samaria, Acts 8:12, and again in baptizing the Eunuch, verses 26-28, same chapter. That this Philip was not one of the apostles, but one of the seven named, Acts 6, is manifest not only from the fact of his history being thus connected with that of Stephen, but also from what is said in verses 14-17 of chapter 8; namely: that "when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John, who when they were come down prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost, &c." If Philip had been an apostle why are the apostles thus distinguished from him, and why must Peter and John be sent that those baptized Samaritans might receive the Holy Ghost *through the laying on of the apostles' hands*? This Philip is evidently the same mentioned in Acts 21:8, compared with 8:40. Another example is that of Ananias' baptizing Saul of Tarsus, compare Acts 9:17 & 18 with verse 27 and with 22:16. Again we read, Acts 11:20-22, "And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus; and the hand of the Lord was with them; and a great number believed and turned unto the Lord. Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem and they sent forth Barnabas that he should go as far as Antioch." We learn from this that the church was first planted in Antioch by men of

Cyprus and Cyrene, of course not by the apostles. It is true it is not said that this *great number* was baptized, but they *believed* and *turned to the Lord*. Christ commanded the apostles *to teach them* {that is they who were taught and baptized,} *to observe all things whatsoever He had commanded them*. He certainly commanded them to baptize. Did those men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who were scattered from the church at Jerusalem by the persecution of Stephen, observe *all things* which Christ commanded the apostles, unless they baptized those that believed? And did those who believed own the Lord's authority in *turning to Him* unless they were baptized? Once more we read, {Acts 18:1 onwards,} of Paul's coming to Corinth, and that when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia Paul was pressed in spirit &c., and in verse 8 that Crispus the chief ruler of the synagogue believed on the Lord, with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed and were baptized. Paul thanks God that he baptized none of the Corinthians but Crispus and Gaius and also the household of Stephanus. I Cor.1:14-16. Who then baptized the many of the church at Corinth unless Silas and Timotheus did it? They were baptized; Paul did not baptize them; other of the apostles were not there. We thus have abundant direct proof that others than the apostles baptized under the commission given to the apostles. Indeed Paul says, "Christ sent me not to *baptize*, but to *preach* the gospel &c.," thus showing that baptizing did not peculiarly belong to the apostolic office, and that preaching the gospel was more particularly their province than baptizing, the latter being, probably, done by those whom they had as their ministers. I will now pass to the 2nd point proposed, namely: *The perpetuity of the commission given to the apostles, and on whom it rests*. If we admit from the general tenor of the New Testament that gospel churches were to continue to the end of the world and believers be gathered in, then the authority to teach or preach and baptize, must be admitted in like manner to be continued beyond the apostles. And so our Lord clearly indicates, in giving the commission; for He says, "Lo I am with you always even unto the end of the world." Certainly not with the apostles personally; but with them and those represented then in them, on to the *end of the world*. But the great difficulty is in dividing among so much trash as has been held forth on this point, in whom a succession to the twelve apostles is found, for that the apostles represented a succession has already been shown from the promise of our Lord, "Lo, I am with you always unto the end of the world." Indeed, to deny such a succession to the apostles under the

commission, Mt.28:18-20, is to deny the existence of any legitimate gospel churches, or any authority from Christ to preach or baptize since the apostles' days. Such succession does not imply that the gifts peculiar to the apostles, or that peculiar office and authority conferred on them in their being ordained as apostles, descends to their successors. The diversity of opinion relative to this succession to the apostles is great. Some hold it to be found in the popes; others, in diocesan bishops; others, in ecclesiastical courts composed mostly of their clergy. It is a very popular notion among New School Baptists that every minister, however so constituted, whether of God or of men, is in fact, a successor to the apostles under the commission. Hence that he has individual authority to preach and to baptize regardless of the approval of the church. Some of the missionists carry this notion so far as to teach that every professor, if not every person under gospel light, is so far individually a successor to the apostles, that he is bound either to teach or preach religiously, or to hire a substitute, with his money, to do it for him. But if we turn from all this jargon of men, to the New Testament, we shall find a very different succession to the apostles, pointed out from all this. We find, it is true, certain individuals, as Timothy and Titus, whom Paul deputed and sent to certain places as evangelists to set things in order in the churches, and in this relation exercising individual authority, under the apostle, in ordaining bishops or elders, and deacons in the churches. But, with this exception, we find no intimation of any authority transmitted from the apostles to individuals to exercise a control or dominion over the churches. Nay, Peter cautions the elders among the churches to whom he wrote, in taking the oversight of the flock, against assuming *to be lords over God's heritage*. The word here rendered *lord*, signifies the exercising of authority like that of the master of a family, or of a husband, as Sarah acknowledges in Abraham, I Pet.3:6, so that Peter here cuts off all claim from the elders to rule over the churches. See I Pet.5:1-3.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, July 13, 1843.

S. Trott.

PART 2.

A continuation of remarks on the perpetuity of the commission given to the twelve to teach and baptize, and on whom the commission rests as successors of the Apostles under it.

The fact is, however much it has been overlooked, that whilst the twelve had been ordained by our Lord to the apostolic office, they also were constituted the first gospel church; and to them exclusively from others called disciples, was the Lord's supper first administered as our Lord's family, and with the declaration, "This is my body which is given *for you*. This do in remembrance of me." And, "This cup is the New Testament in my blood which is shed *for you*." Luke 22:19,20. Do these words, *for you*, show that Christ's body was given and His blood shed alone for these twelve? or does it not rather show that they, in reviewing the institution of this ordinance, were made to represent the whole gospel church as their successors in all after ages? Hear what Paul says to the church at Corinth: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion" {fellowship or mutual participation} "of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread and one body; for we are partakers of that one bread." I Cor.10:16,17. See what he further says on this point, I Cor.11:26. Is it not then evident that our Lord in saying *for you*, thus spoke to them, as then and there representing the whole one body of Christ, or the whole gospel church in all ages? If so, then they stood in the same relation, and so represented the gospel church on to the end of the world, in receiving the commission: "Go ye and teach all nations," &c., and so the Acts and Epistles of the Apostles show them to have understood it. Thus Peter and the eleven commenced preaching the gospel on the day of Pentecost, and "They that gladly received the word were baptized, and the same day there were added unto them" {unto whom? the eleven before noticed?} "about three thousand souls." "And they continued steadfast in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship," &c. And if in the *Apostles' fellowship*, then as one body with them. See Acts 2:14 & 41,42. Thus we find the churches as recognized and acting in fellowship with the Apostles as the same one body: for as we read that when tidings came to the Apostles that Samaria had received the word of God, *they sent* unto them Peter and John. {And these disciples also received the gifts of the Holy Ghost.} But when they at Antioch believed, &c., we read that tidings of these things came to the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem; and they sent forth Barnabas, &c. Here the church is placed in the same relation to the gospel abroad, as in the other case were the Apostles. See Acts 8:14 & 11:22. Again; we find Paul and Barnabas acknowledging the fellowship and authority of the church from whence they went out, in the preaching of the gospel abroad,

by gathering the church together and rehearsing all that God had done with them, &c. Acts 14:27. Again; when Paul and Barnabas were sent of the church at Antioch to the Apostles at Jerusalem in reference to the difficulty about circumcision, the whole church was connected with the Apostles in receiving them, and in sending chosen men of their own company back to Antioch with the decision, &c. Acts 15:4. And when the seven were to be appointed in the church at Jerusalem, they were chosen of the whole multitude, {Acts 6:1-6,} and in conformity with this, we find most of the epistles addressed to the churches, and to them as such, the directions given in all cases of discipline and order, and in relation to the support of the ministry, the collections for poor saints, &c.

The same thing I understand to be evidently taught by the type. If Israel after the flesh were nationally typical of the gospel church, then in their being reckoned in twelve tribes, after the twelve sons of Jacob, they must in this thing also have been typical of the church under the gospel. And where will this conformity to the type be found but in the church's being reckoned as the descendants of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb. Thus the New Jerusalem, whilst on its gates are the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, has in its twelve foundations the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb, as though the city arose from the twelve Apostles, as the twelve tribes sprang from the twelve sons of Jacob. Rev.21:12-14. If then, when the term Israel is used in relation to the gospel, we understand Israel spiritually, why should we not, when the twelve tribes are spoken of in the same relation, understand the gospel Israel in its different branches, and several ages of the world, and under its different circumstances, intended? For instance when James writes, "James a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting. My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations, knowing that the trying of your faith worketh patience," &c., and again when he writes, "My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory with respect to persons," can we understand him as addressing any others than believers in Christ? See James 1:1-3 & 2:1. I know it has been common to understand James as intending by the term twelve tribes to designate Jewish believers, in distinction from believers among the Gentiles, as though the same national distinction between Jews and Gentiles existed in the gospel church as in the world - an absurdity. But if we were to suppose that James intended addressing Jewish believers exclusively, and these under the gospel, how could he make such a mistake as to write his

address so as that, instead of suiting the state of the Jews in that day, it was applicable to national Israel only as it anciently existed in its twelve tribes? Upon the same principle, and from the same mistaken views as to who composed the Jewish nation, &c., has the sealing of the hundred and forty and four thousand, twelve thousand out of each of the twelve tribes, {Rev.7} been represented as relating to the Jews nationally, and also to the period before the destruction of Jerusalem. Yet this is evidently given in prophecy as an event that was to come after the opening of the sixth seal, and that seal, according to the order of the prophecy, and as illustrated by its fulfillment according to history, related to the destruction of the Roman empire by the Goths and Vandals, &c. But where were the twelve tribes nationally when this prophecy was delivered or fulfilled, and when James wrote his epistle? We know where the tribes of Judah, and Benjamin, and a part of the tribe of Levi were, for they constituted the Jewish nation. But of the other ten tribes we only know that God had cast them out of His sight and given them up to be carried away out of their own land to Assyria, seven hundred years before James and John wrote, nearly: that is, a hundred years before the Babylonish captivity. See II Kings 17:18-23. And we also know that they did not return to Judea with the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, because those who returned according to their genealogy, were those whom Nebuchadnezzar carried from Judea and Jerusalem to Babylon. See Ezra 2:1 & Neh.7:6. Now these being Biblical facts, I should suppose that it must be apparent that James and John, in the instances above, referred not to the twelve tribes nationally, but to the anti-types thereof in the different ages and under the varied circumstances of the gospel church. Thus as the succession under the covenant made with Abraham and confirmed to Jacob for a law, was in national Israel perpetually, {I Chron.16:17,} so the new covenant doctrine and order as confirmed in the ministry of the Apostles, succeeds as a law and an everlasting covenant upon the gospel church in all after ages. Thus the succession to the Apostles is pointed out, and their successors are reckoned by thousands; and thus according to the blessing of Moses, {Num.10:36,} antitypically, the true ark of testimony rests with the many *thousands of Israel* spiritually, and to them the Lord *returns*.

But if it be asked, How are the churches to preach and baptize? The answer is at hand: "He gave some Apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ," &c.

Eph.4:11,12. It is not said He gave some the Apostolic gift, &c., as though it were a bestowing of gifts on individuals, but He gave some Apostles, &c., thus showing that the gifts were made to the churches, to be sent forth to the work of the ministry by them, and in their fellowship: and we find the ancient order was to ordain elders in all the churches, and they were such as were apt to teach, and who labored in word and doctrine. These of course were the organs of the church, to act by the voice of the church as members of the body. See Acts 14:23; I Tim.3:2 & 5:17. Thus the churches sustain the characteristics of being the pillar and ground {or stay} of the truth, and of being the candlesticks, to bear up the light of the gospel.

It will probably be thought that I am as much too lengthy on this subject, brother Beebe, as you were too brief. But I have for some time thought it a subject calling for a more full examination than has been generally given to it. I have thus given my views of it. If I am wrong, let others again do as I have done - review it. Yours, &c.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, July 14, 1843.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.11 {1843}

Objections to Benedict's History of the Baptists.

Brother Beebe: - I received, in March and April, 1843, two numbers of Elder D. Benedict's Historical Correspondent. On receiving the first I concluded on writing to him, and showing the necessity of more impartiality as a historian, than he appeared disposed to show towards the Old School Baptists, if he would do justice; afterwards however I determined on giving my objections either through the Signs or Advocate to our brethren's furnishing him with the materials of our history on the ground of the stand he has already assumed against us; but starting about that time on a four weeks tour from home, by the time I returned I found that he was being sufficiently noticed by others, and I therefore let it pass. Had Elder Benedict in his proposition to publish a history of all who practice immersion, asked each order of Baptists to furnish a sketch of their distinct views of doctrine and order, and such statistics of their churches, &c., as they thought proper; that he simply as a historian might record the same; I think likely that I thoughtlessly should have advocated his being furnished

by some of our brethren with proper information. But the great Head, who knows how to preserve His flock, as a separate people, kindly ordered that the temptation should not be presented to the Old School Baptists, thus to sanction by their own act, their being placed side by side with missionists, Campbellites, &c., as only a distinct branch of the general mass of those called Baptists. Elder Benedict on the very onset has showed that his work is to be the sectarian work of a Mission Baptist, that he is not disposed to extend to the Old School Baptists that candor which might be expected even from a moderate sectarian. After the garb of a historian is thus thrown off, and the adversary stands forth to open view, surely Old School Baptists would be *casting pearls before swine*, to furnish matter for him to distort. As there seems, however, from the tenor of several communications both in the Advocate and Signs, to be a hankering in some of our brethren to be like others around, in seeking notoriety through the pages of human history, I wish to present some objections to the Old School Baptists writing a history of themselves, and to let those objections stand for what they will fetch.

My first objection is, that God whose providence governs all and orders every event with a special reference to His purpose concerning His church, has seen fit, in no past age, to raise up any special historian of the gospel church, nor to order that any statistical accounts of her waxings and wanings should be transmitted down. When innovations upon the Baptist simplicity began to creep in, preparatory to the raising up of the image of the beast, such as the formation of Associations, putting forth articles of faith, establishing schools and colleges for educating persons in reference to the ministry, &c., as a consequence of these, Baptist histories came to be written. Not only has God not ordered that the distinctive history of His church should be chronicled from period to period, but He has directed that His church in its peculiar order should be mostly overlooked by the professed writers of church history, and that it should be so obscured in the wilderness where it was hid, that any attempts to give a correct history of the travels of the gospel church, from the Apostles on to this time, would be almost a nullity. God has, however, so ordered it, that from time to time incidental notice have been taken by the historians of the times, of His people; not in a way, to be sure, to flatter the pride of those claiming to be descendants in a church relation, but sufficient to show that the same kind of separated people have existed in every past age, that were in the days of the Apostles, a people *everywhere spoken against*. And my word for it, Elder

Benedict, without our taking any trouble for it, will, in noticing the Old School Baptists as exceptions to those whom he will chronicle as the church, present to view a people having the same external works which Christ's people have always borne on the pages of history. If we wish to be numbered with Christ's little and afflicted flock, why should we wish to appear before the world in a different garb from that by which historians have always distinguished them?

My second objection to any attempt, at this day, to write a special history of the Old School Baptists, is, that Christ's church is the same church, and His people, in their distinctive characteristics, are the same now, as in the Apostles' days, and therefore their history even on to the end of time, has been long since written, and by inspiration of God. Do any inquire for the doctrine the Old School Baptist profess? Let them look into the New Testament and find the Apostles' doctrine and they have it. Do they inquire for our order? The order professed by Old School Baptists and mostly maintained by them, is that only which was established by the Apostles, and found in the New Testament. Do any wish to know the changes of external circumstances through which the church has passed, and shall pass? These are all faithfully given in prophecy, and God has made the fulfillment of such prophecies as have occurred to be clearly, though often unwittingly recorded by the worldly historians. Do we wish a history of the display which God makes of His grace in adding to the church? God is from time to time showing His church and people that the New Testament account concerning His grace is as true of it now, as when written. He displays the same sovereignty in it now, as then; shows it is now as almighty to break the hearts and subdue the prejudices of sinners, as then; and shows in it the same richness and goodness to bind up the broken hearted, and heal our wanderings. Of this display of God's grace we may speak and write, as they did in the days of the Apostles, for cheering the hearts and calling forth the gratitude of the saints. But think not that this or that showing forth of God's grace must be recorded on the history page as a memento of what that grace is, or of what it can do in conquering sinners. God has given already such memento of it in the New Testament; and He is from time to time recording the triumphs of His grace to the joy of His saints, not with ink, but by the Spirit of the living God, not on paper, but in the fleshly tables of sinners hearts, and His people carry within them a reward of its infinite greatness and goodness, and are ready when called, to bear either a living or dying testimony to it. God will never be without witnesses of His grace. Do you

wish a record from time to time of the number of the churches, disciples, &c.? Why should you? Our numbering of them has ever been found deceptive. He whose business it is to know their number, has His people all accountably numbered; He calls them all by name, knows them altogether, will take care that not one of them shall be lost, and when He comes to gather them all before His Father's throne, He will present such a multitude as no man can number. Do any of us think that by having a history written our names may be transmitted on its pages to posterity? How trifling, my brethren, is such a wish when rightly viewed, in comparison with having our names written in the book of life, where, if we are truly Christ's disciples, they were written before time began, and where they will remain prominent when *death and hell shall have delivered up their dead which are in them*. If we are not His disciples, we may yet contrive to have our names written on the pages of anti-christian history. Should it be objected that the Old School Baptists cannot be the same church that was in the Apostles' days, that dissensions and divisions and heresies, &c., are from time to time manifested among us. Read again, and you will find the same was the case whilst the Apostles lived, and that such things should be among the church. Why then should we want our history written by fallible man?

A third objection I have to a history of the Old School Baptists being written, is, that it looks like distrusting the faithfulness of God to accomplish what He has foretold and promised concerning His church, &c. But as my paper is full I will not dwell on this, so I close. Yours, &c.,

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol. 12 {1844}

The Sabbath.

Remarks on Isaiah 58:13,14.

Brother Beebe: - Having been led recently to speak from Isaiah 58:13,14, I was somewhat impressed, from reflection on the subject, with a sense of the great extent of the gospel standard, of *holiness to the Lord*; at any rate my judgment was convinced on the subject. As to feeling impressed with its importance, or with the beauty and excellency of *walking after the Spirit, and not after the flesh*, I do not feel as I would wish. But whatever may be my own, or the feelings of others on the subject, an examination of it, as presented to view in

that text, and illustrated in the New Testament, may not be unprofitable to me or my brethren.

The words of the text are these: *If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.*

By the Sabbath here, I think the gospel Sabbath evidently intended, as there are requisitions mentioned concerning it, such as are not named in the *fourth command*, or by Moses, in reference to the *seventh-day Sabbath*. Whilst a fresh zeal is now being manifested in enforcing an observance of the Jewish Sabbath, in a transposed state from the seventh to the first day of the week, surely we who have a hope of having been delivered from the bondage of the law, may well be engaged in inquiring and doing what the Lord requires of us, to honor Him, and that *rest* which He gives.

I have formerly given through the Signs, my views of the seventh-day sabbath as being typical of that rest which the believer enjoys through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, as showed in Hebrews chapter 4. The text now before us is, in my estimation, a confirmation of those views. They were briefly these: 1st. That as Israel were required to keep the seventh day holy, as a rest, in acknowledgment of God's having finished the work of creation in six days, having made all things *very good*, having given to man and beast for meat that which He had caused the earth spontaneously to produce, thus Himself making ample provision to meet every want His creating power had produced, so Christ also having finished the work of redemption; having brought in everlasting righteousness; made an end of sin, removed the curse, and provided an ample fullness to meet the wants of every sinner, who, under a sense of his guilt and ruin, is drawn to Him for salvation, and having removed every barrier to this fullness flowing spontaneously to sinners; has entered into His rest, having *ceased from his own works, as God did from His*; {Heb.4:10,} and gospel faith apprehending this, leads the individual to cease from his works under the law, to rest in Christ. He is further required to keep holy this rest in honor of what Christ has done. As under the law the Israelite who did any work on the seventh day, practically denied God's having made ample provision for the wants of man in the six day's

creation, so under the gospel, the individual who works for acceptance with God, denies Christ's having finished the work of redemption, and is a sabbath breaker.

2nd. That as *seven* in the figures of types and prophecy was used to prefigure a *fullness* or a *whole*, &c., so the observance of the seventh day, seventh year, &c., showed that under the gospel there should be to the true Israel of God, not merely a rest of one day in seven, and one year in seven, from the toils of the law, but a complete and continued rest from all its toils and burdens. And as the seventh day rest was to be holy to the Lord, so the believer in Christ is to believe all his time and himself holy to the Lord, and not to be satisfied with keeping one day in seven holy. Or as the Apostle teaches, they are to consider themselves *not their own*, that *they are bought with a price*, and that *they should glorify God in their bodies and in their spirits which are His*. I Cor.6:19,20. But the same law which required the Israelites to rest the *seventh day* from all their work, also required them to *labor six days*. The same law therefore which was designed to bear testimony to God's having finished the work of creation, and made *all good*, all subserving the wants of man, and anticipating them, was also a standing witness of the curse that was upon the ground, on account of man's sin, whereby man, instead of finding it continuing to bring forth spontaneously for his wants, was doomed to eat his bread in the sweat of his face; thus showing also the curse of the law that was upon man, so that by it he was debarred from attaining to the tree of life, and eating and living forever. Not so under the gospel; Christ having become the *end of the law for righteousness*, and having *taken the curse out of the way*, the believer has but to *eat His flesh and drink His blood* which He giveth, and *he hath eternal life*. Hence as life and salvation flow spontaneously to the believer through Christ Jesus, he has no occasion to sweat and toil for a righteousness of his own to save him from the curse of the law, but may devote himself and all his time to glorifying God, that *whether he eat or drink, or whatever he does, he may do all to the glory of God*. I Cor.10:31. Do those great Doctors of the Lord's-day Conventions, who are so zealous for a *legal sabbath*, know anything of this spiritual rest which remains unto the people of God, from *all* the demands of the law?

After this lengthy preface, I will proceed with as much brevity as I can to notice the several parts of the text. It divides itself into two general heads: First; What God requires of His people, that they may honor Him in a due observance of the gospel Sabbath. Secondly; Certain promised blessings, consequent upon the right observance of those requisitions.

1st. The *requisitions: If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day.* Our turning away our foot from it, as showed by the connection, does not mean a turning away from it in not observing it; but we are to turn away our foot from it, in that we are not to trample upon it as something common, or which may be thrown aside, for our own works or exercises. We are also to turn away our foot from it, in not doing our own pleasure on His holy day. The gospel dispensation is brought to view as one day. *It is the day which the Lord hath made.* Psalm 118:24. It is the day made by His resurrection, and which He rules, as He made the sun to rule by day in natural time. It is holy, in that it is the period devoted to the exercise of the power of the exalted Jesus over all flesh, that He may give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given Him. It is holy to the triumphs of the cross, and to the treading down of His enemies. It is holy as the day allotted to the church of Christ, from age to age, to bear witness to the truth of the gospel testimony, to the power of Jesus to save ruined sinners, to the nature of His salvation, as a salvation from sin, and to show her love and subjection to Him as her Lord. As such should believers esteem it. To this end are all the trials and deliverances of the saints, all their joys and sorrows, their seasons of light and of darkness, of temptations and persecutions, made by grace subservient. *Not doing their own pleasure.* The term pleasure here, according to the original, signifies - not amusement, but inclination, will or desire. The import of this passage, therefore, is, that as the gospel day is holy to the power and reign of the Lord Jesus, those who profess to be of the Israel of God, are not to consult their own inclination, not lean to their own understanding, nor depend on their own strength in things pertaining to His kingdom, but to be in entire submission to His revealed will, and dependent on His arm to save. Thus, for instance, those who claim liberty to consult their own inclination, instead of the scriptures, whether to contribute their money or otherwise support the popular inventions for moralizing or evangelizing the world, are doing their own pleasure on the Lord's holy day, are breaking His Sabbath. So those who consult their own inclination to avoid reproach, by not contending for the faith and order of the gospel, by not bearing faithful testimony against the subversions of the gospel, by countenancing those who do subvert it, in its doctrine or order, by meeting and associating with them in worship and other things pertaining to religion, &c., are more doing their own pleasure, than honoring the Lord and His truth: they are not regarding the holiness of the

day. Again; when preachers consult their own convenience, ease or worldly interest, in their manner of preaching, or in attending to their appointments, or to occupying the field the Lord in His providence has directed them to; or when private members consult their convenience, ease, or worldly business in reference to assembling with the church, and govern their contributions for the support of the gospel and other purposes, not according as the Lord has prospered them, but according as they think they can spare from their plans for enlarging their funds or business, or farms, or from furnishing themselves and family with every desired extravagancy, such are doing their own pleasure, and not acting under a sense of not being their own, but the Lord's. So also when we intemperately indulge in any of our appetites and passions, or give way to a conformity to the world, we are doing our own pleasure, and are not being separate to the Lord. Indeed, there is at this day too much of a propensity among christians to follow their own inclinations, to *do our own pleasure on the Lord's holy day*.

2nd. *And call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of Lord honorable*. Call that is manifest that it is their delight, their happiness, to trust in the Lord Jesus alone, and to give Him the glory of their salvation; to sit at His feet and wait to be led and taught of Him, and to have His word as authority for what they believe and do. If I know anything of a christian's experience, there is a principle within him, which, how much soever nature may oppose, leads him to desire not *to do his own pleasure*, nor to have his own way, and of course which causes him to be truly happy, as he can feel that he has laid his own wisdom and all that is of himself in the dust, and is receiving what the Spirit makes known to him, and as he makes it known, as truth; and that he is leaning alone on the Lord for his wisdom, his guidance, his strength and keeping, as well as for his final salvation. *And the holy of the Lord honorable*: The salvation by Christ Jesus, and His religion throughout, is a revelation from God, and is therefore as such wholly separate from all human wisdom and creaturely doings, and hence is truly the *holy of the Lord*. If every human mixture, made with the holy appointments of God in the tabernacle service, *received a just recompense of reward*, surely the mixtures which are made under the light of the gospel, with the *holy of the Lord*, will receive an awful retribution. When we, in preference to the applause bestowed upon those who conform to the world and its notions of religion, choose to meet the reproaches attendant upon a strict conformity to the revealed truth and will of God, and to be

marked as companions of the Lord's afflicted and despised people, and as separate from the popular religious combinations, we practically *call the holy of the Lord honorable*. And when we with patience and meekness bear the reproach and contempt thus cast upon us, we show that we not only *call*, but we esteem the *holy of the Lord honorable*.

3rd. *And shalt honour Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words.* We honor the Lord by showing an implicit confidence in Him, in His promises and declarations, and by strict obedience to His word; and not otherwise. We in many cases would obey the Lord, but we do it in *our own way*. Moses, in obedience to the Lord, gathered the congregation together at the rock, and took the rod to smite it, but he *did his own way* in the thing, *finding his own pleasure*. He spoke unadvisedly with his lips, and did not sanctify the Lord before the people. Numbers 20:12 & Psalm 106:33. So we may be zealous to bear our testimony against error, but instead of, *in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves*, we may suffer our zeal to lead us to *speak unadvisedly*, and to speak language which has the appearance of bringing *railing accusations* against those who hold the error. We may be obedient to preach the word; but instead of being only intent to honor the Lord by a plain declaration of His word and manifestation of His truth, we may *do our own ways*. We too often, instead of losing sight of ourselves, in a view of the glory of the Lord, like to attract a little attention to ourselves; we would be thought something; we would be noticed either as bold or as mild, as good speakers, or as oddities, as *sons of thunder*, or as *sons of consolation*, &c. Consequently we find much to lament in our services, as having too much of self in them. So in all the relations which we sustain as disciples, in our submission to ordinances, in attending to church discipline, to keeping up an intercourse and correspondence with brethren, &c., there is a doing these things so as to *find our own pleasure* and do our own ways, instead of doing just what the Lord has commanded, and as He has directed. We are too apt to think that we may consult our own notions and feelings in many things pertaining to religion. Some may be too fond of going before as leaders; but a great many more keep back from a faithful discharge of duty in various ways, from fear of incurring some special responsibility or blame. Again, in our intercourse with the world, in our transactions of business, and even in our choosing our locations and our course of pursuit, we ought no less to act under a sense that we are *not our own*, that we are members of the one body of Christ; and

therefore at no more liberty to *do our own ways*, and *find our own pleasure*; that is, regardless of the fellowship of our brethren, of our usefulness in the cause of Christ, and of the honor of His cause, than in things more immediately religious.

Not speaking thine own words. Many professors are very fond of speaking their own words, or of giving their own imaginary construction to the words of scripture, instead of seeking the plain meaning of the Holy Spirit therein. This is certainly not *honoring the Lord*, but our own judgments. We are frequently too little impressed with a sense of the holiness of the revelation which the Holy Ghost has given, and hence too often take the liberty of displaying our ingenuity in giving to the words of scripture a turn to suit our sentiments; as do lawyers their law books in their pleadings. This is not what the Apostles did: Paul says, "Nor handling the word of God deceitfully." Again, "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual." II Cor.4:2; I Cor.2:13. We are not to understand by the Apostle's expressions here, *the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth*, that the Holy Ghost taught the Apostles any different language from what is common among men. The words used in the scriptures have the same grammatical construction and the same literal meaning as when used in reference to natural things. But when the Holy Ghost revealed to them a spiritual truth, they declared it in plain, unequivocal language; not in words representing it as human wisdom would apprehend it, but in words conveying the very idea taught by the Holy Spirit: *comparing spiritual things with spiritual*; comparing them with Christ and His salvation, - not with the Sinai covenant, nor with philosophy, or husbandry, &c. The *not speaking our own words* has also no doubt a reference to the same idea taught in Zeph.3:9, "For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent." There is no doubt an allusion here to the language taught Adam in the garden, when he gave names to every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air, &c. Those names given being descriptive of some peculiar characteristic of each beast and fowl. Hence the words taught him were not like the words of modern languages in their refinements, mere signs of our ideas, but they were his ideas themselves, embodied in expressions. By the expression, to call upon the name of the Lord to serve Him with one consent, there seems also a reference in that text to the fact that the whole earth was of one language and one speech, until God confounded the language of the people for their presumption

in building the tower of Babel. Throughout the former dispensation, the service consisting in outward forms, much of their fear *towards the Lord was taught by the precepts of men*; they were taught, from father to son, a form of expressions in their worship, which they used without regard to the feelings of their hearts. Such also is the case with much of the language used in religious services at this day; the words spoken are not even *signs of their ideas*. But grace teaches under the gospel that only the language of the heart, the feelings thereof embodied in suitable expressions, is acceptable to God, and the child of grace, so far as acting from grace, is led to use this language of his heart in all his intercourse with God and men. Hence there is a oneness of language among the children of God in speaking of what they know of religion by experience; for whatever diversity there may be among them in their manners of expressing themselves, whether they speak in broken or distinct words, when one hears another declare his experience, he at once recognizes it as the language of his own heart; they understand one another. So when a preacher preaches the preaching which God has bidden him, the believer, from the correspondence which he finds in his own heart with the words spoken, is prepared to say amen. So grace would lead the believer also in his more general intercourse with men, uniformly so to speak the unequivocal language of his heart, that with all who knew him, his yea would stand for yea, and his nay for nay. So in the case under consideration that we are *not to speak our own words*. Whenever we are disposed, plainly and unequivocally to declare the real sentiments and feelings of our hearts, we have no need to hunt round for words, expressions will spontaneously flow out; our words may be few and not so elegant as we might have found by studying, but they will be expressive of our feelings, and so understood. But when we want to equivocate, to deceive, or hide our feelings or sentiments, we have to guard against letting the language of our hearts come out, and to hunt for other words to speak. This is what is forbidden in this clause relative to the gospel Sabbath, no *labored expressions* to be used in our approach to God, but the *spontaneous* language of our hearts. And in speaking in His name publicly or privately, we are to speak *that we do know, and testify that we have seen*. But in speaking the language of our hearts, we should be careful that it is the language of the renewed heart. The language of the old heart which is corrupt, may be full of bitterness, strife, and every vile thing.

I now come to the second branch of the subject

contained in Isaiah 58:13 & 14, namely: The blessings promised, as consequent upon a right observance of the Gospel Sabbath, as declared in the 14th verse: "*Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.*" Taking this subject in the connection, the *if* of the preceding verse with the declaration of this, and it might very readily be taken for a conditional promise, the same as the legal promises made to national Israel, which ran thus: *I will if thou wilt*, contrary to the order of the new covenant, which is *I will, and they shall*. God has evidently made wisely and graciously, the present enjoyments of the comforts of religion, intimately to depend on the believer's correct gospel walk; and so of the prosperous state of the church. But to avoid mistake here, we must know what is a correct gospel walk. It is very far from a self-confident going forward in religious, or moral duties, as though we would show our zeal for the Lord, like Jehu, or like Peter when he said, *Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee*. It is described in the scriptures thus, - "What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to *walk humbly with thy God.*" Micah 6:8. It is; *To work out our salvation*, {that is, from the daily snares, temptations, corruptions, and errors, with which we are beset,} *with fear and trembling*, from a sense of our weakness, but trusting in the Lord *to work in us to will and to do of His own good pleasure*. Phil.2:12,13. It is; *To be poor and of a contrite spirit, and to tremble at God's word*. Isa.66:2. Hence it is frequently the case, that while the believer is ashamed and debased in spirit on account of his past improper walk, he receives some precious promise applied to his case. But I was going to remark that it is quite a difficult part in the gospel ministry, to represent the comforts of religion as thus dependent on a proper walk, without representing them as conditional, and thus *sowing the vineyard with divers seeds; and ploughing with an ox and ass together*. Deut.22:9,10. But we should ever bear in mind the declaration of the Apostle, that the Son of God as preached of him, *was not yea and nay*, and that "All the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him amen, unto the glory of God by us." II Cor.1:19,20. The subject before us having a special reference as before showed to be the gospel rest, and gospel day, must be understood as harmonizing with this Apostolic declaration. Therefore, whilst we have no right to expect or to represent that the church collectively will be seen *riding upon the high places of the earth*, whilst she does not rightly honor

the Lord and His Sabbath, but *finds her own pleasure, and does her own ways*; nor that individual churches will be in a truly flourishing and exalted state, enjoying the manifestation of the Spirit's presence among them, whilst the members thereof are consulting more their own worldly interests and comforts, than honoring of the Lord and His truth, and a doing of His ways. Whilst they are going after a covetousness instead of manifesting a fellowship for the gospel, by contributing freely for its support, as the Lord *has prospered them*, and for the support of them that preach it, and by a regular attendance upon it, and a steadfast adherence to it, how can they expect it to be blessed to them for their increase, and for their being built up in the truth and consolations thereof? Neither that we as individual christians or as preachers, can expect to find our evidences bright, or the promises of God our support, whilst we are indulging in our corruptions, are going after the world, neglecting our privileges, and an attendance upon our religious exercises, or performing them as a lifeless task. And whilst we as preachers ought, perhaps more than we have done, to enforce upon the churches and the brethren, the importance of honoring the Lord, and His *holy day*, by close observance of all that He has enjoined upon His people, and as individual members should exhort one another to *love and good works*, and to hold out to one another the encouragements which the word gives to a faithful discharge of duty; yet we have no right to tell the churches and the saints, neither can we if led by the Spirit, that the increase of the churches, the prosperity and triumph of Zion, the steadfastness of the saints or their growth in grace, or any other blessings promised are subject to their exertions, or neglect; that by their own efforts they can forward the promises of God, or by their neglect they can retard them. We can, if left to ourselves, bring darkness upon our own souls, and disorder into the church; but the Lord alone can restore life and order to the churches, and comfort to our souls; and this He will do at His own pleasure, and prepare our hearts to look to Him for it. The blessing must come from Him, the blame is ours. So far from our being able, from any efforts of ours, to raise the churches from their present low and trodden down estate, it is more than probable that were it the Lord's pleasure now to revive His work in His churches, and the graces of His Spirit in the saints, their trials and their persecutions would in the same proportion be increased. But in this case, the saints would be better prepared to bear those trials with christian meekness and patience, and thus more to honor the Lord under them. And indeed if we felt right, I think

we should feel that if we could but honor the Lord we should have but little choice, whether it was on the *mount* or in the *fire*.

Should it be asked, then, What are we to do with the *if* in this passage? I answer, the text is a prophetic promise concerning Zion, and looks forward to the period when the church shall have been delivered from all those corruptions which have crept into her through the influence of anti-christ, marring her beauty and her peace, and bringing coldness upon her. The prophesy embraces in it this purging of the churches, and a bringing them back to an entire subjection to the gospel, and an entire resting in Christ, as well as the exaltation of Zion. And the *if* teaches that whilst the churches and saints are found trampling upon the Lord's Sabbath, *finding their own pleasure*, and *doing their own ways*, they may not expect to witness that exalted state of the church herein promised. On the other hand it teaches that when the churches shall be restored to the purity of gospel doctrine and practice, and as we see them thus restored, we may confidently look for the downfall of the *man of sin*, the breaking to pieces, *like the chaff of the summer threshing floor*, the four great monarchies of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, in their present subdivisions and intermixtures of iron and clay; and for the church and gospel of Christ to fill the whole earth. The blessings promised in the prophecy are, 1st. *Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord*. The experience of the children of God, if I am not mistaken, shows that we cannot delight ourselves in the Lord, and in the world, both at the same time, that if our delight is in the world and the things of the world, though we may have some remembrance of the Lord's excellency, and of His love and mercy to our souls, some little reviving at times under preaching, &c., of our remembrance of Him, and some momentary seasons in which we feel our hearts drawn off from the world to delight in Him, yet the main current of our desire will be after the world, in one shape or another; even our prayers will show the object of our delight. On the other hand, when our delight is in the Lord, as when we were first brought into gospel liberty, and perhaps at some other special moments, the world with all its concerns, appears as vanity itself; we can then cheerfully let them all go, having the Lord for our portion, it is enough. So frequently with the saints when about to depart; their delight is so in the Lord, that their having to leave the world is to them no loss, they anticipate the event as joyful. I will not say that all our delight in the world is wrong; much of it is sinful, vile, and, loathsome; but I have thought that, in our present state, a certain portion of it

is necessary, to enable us to fill, with fidelity, our several stations and relations in the world. But it is all earthy, and therefore it *brings forth its thorns and its thistles to us*. On the other hand, the saint's delight in the Lord is all heavenly, *all very good*, nothing in it to vex or annoy, or to cause the sweat of the face. A happy period of the church will that be when this promise shall be realized by her, when the saints shall so delight themselves in the Lord, that with David they can say, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want;" and with the spouse, "I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine." When they can so realize the Lord's presence with them, as to make the world and all its concerns sit easy about them, and to view the world as a platform, provided of their Father's goodness, for them to stand on till the door is opened for their entrance into their *house not made with hands*; a stage on which - not to represent the human passions, but to display their love to Jesus, and bear their witness to His power to save, and to His grace and faithfulness to sustain.

2nd. *And I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth*. Solomon says, "There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, as an error which proceedeth from the ruler: Folly is set in great dignity, and the rich sit in low places. I have seen servants upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth." Ecc.10:5-7. This evil has been for ages fully manifested in most countries, and is beginning to be plainly seen in this. The *rich in faith*, and the *princes of the kingdom*, are being put down, whilst religious folly and Moses' servants are being exalted to dignity. But the tables will, by and by, be turned. The Lord will yet appear for the destruction of the *man of sin*, and for vindicating the cause of His people. His church will be seen riding, {a mark of dignity,} and riding upon the *high places of the earth*, treading them under foot. By the high places, we may understand both the *high places* of religious establishments, and the high places of worldly governments and honor; answering to the ancient *high places* in which they worshipped, and to the *high places* in which is *spiritual wickedness*. I Kings 11:7,8; Eph.6:12. The church will be exalted above these, ride upon them, be *exalted above the hills*. John had a vision of the church as thus triumphing over anti-christ and the kings of the earth. Rev.19:11-21.

3rd. *And feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father*. Jacob is here represented as a father of the gospel church, or spiritual Israel. He was such in fact, as he was one of the fathers from whom Christ {concerning the flesh} came. Hence God promised unto him, that, "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Gen.28:14. Secondly,

Jacob was the representative father of the gospel church or spiritual Israel, in that he was a special example of God's electing love, that as he was made to inherit the blessings of Israel before his elder brother Esau, by the purpose of God according to election, so the spiritual Israel was preferred before the elder brother, national Israel, to the blessings of the Messiah. And so of the saints severally, being preferred according to their being chosen in Christ, and not according to their creation in Adam, and the elder or first manifested. Thirdly, Jacob was such to the gospel church, in being made a special object of God's overruling providence and care, as an example for the encouragement of the saints in all after ages to *commit their ways unto the Lord, and to wait patiently for Him*; so that God in His promises unto Christ and to His church, repeatedly, declares Himself as the God of Jacob. See among other texts, Psal.20:1 & 46:7, 11. This special providence was exemplified, first: In causing the law of nature in a special manner to favor Jacob, as in the increase of his cattle. Gen.30:31-43 & 31:7-13. Secondly, In providing before hand for Jacob's preservation and sustenance, when God's judgment was upon the land in the seven years famine, and in overruling the wicked intent of his sons, for the accomplishment of this object, as well as that of Potiphar's wife. Gen.45:4-11. Thirdly, In causing even his family afflictions to work for his good. Fourthly, In restraining the wrath of men against him, so that they should not hurt him; as in the case of Laban, Gen.31:24, 42; in the case of the Shemites, Gen.35:5; and of Esau. Fifthly, In God's imparting to him from time to time special manifestations of the angels of God as God's host, thus encouraging him to seek a meeting with Esau. Gen.32:1-5.

Surely in this history of God's dealings with Jacob, the saints may see exemplified how "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." Whilst others with their Canaanitish and Ishmaelitish wives may dwell at ease in the fat of the land, those who are called of God, in all their wanderings and pilgrimages are better provided for, in having the God of Jacob for their help. By *the heritage of Jacob* with which the church and saints of God are to be *fed*, we may understand, both that providential care which God exercised towards Jacob as above exemplified, and that blessing which he inherited from his father Issac, as preferred before Esau, namely: "God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and the plenty of corn and wine: Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee; be lord over thy brethren, and let thy

mother's sons bow down to thee; cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee." Gen.27:28,29. Moses, describing the land of Canaan, says - "It is not as the land of Egypt from whence ye came out, where thou sowest thy seed and wateredst it with thy foot, like a garden of herbs," &c. Deut.11:10. He refers here to the case of Egypt where they have no rain, that they have to dig pits, &c., in which water may remain from the annual overflowing of the Nile, with this they watered their seeds, raising it by buckets frequently worked by treadwheels. But the blessing of Jacob was the *dew of heaven* which descends without the labor of man, and distils, softly moistening and softening the earth, not washing and hardening the ground as do beating rains. Again: Moses says in his song; {Deut.32:2} - "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herbs, &c." There is much of *watering* the seed planted, *with the foot* in this day of coldness and contention, as did Israel in Egypt. Not by the popular ministry or clergy, for they only foul the waters with their feet, and tread down the pastures with their feet; and the Lord's flock, among them, eat that which they have trodden with their feet, and drink that which they have fowed with their feet. See Ezek.34:18,19. But I speak of the laborious task it is for the Lord's minister to preach, when he has to grope his way to an understanding of his subject, more by recollection of past views, than by present light; like a man walking blind-folded, and often running against some impediment, and is speaking, though here and there one may be fed, yet the preacher is not warned, {and he is not of those who would kindle sparks of their own,} and the countenances of most of the brethren indicate they have but little of a feeling sense of what is preached. What a pleasant state will the church be in, when God shall give her the *dew* direct from heaven; when the speech or word of Christ, the gospel, shall distil like dew upon both preachers and hearers, moistening, softening, and spiritualizing every affection of the heart, and every exercise of the soul! The child of grace then would not exchange Mary's part of sitting at the feet of Jesus, for the bustle of the world with all its pomp and splendor. The very thoughts of it, make me to desire with David, "Oh that I had wings like a dove, for then would I fly away" and meet the church thus coming out of her wilderness state, leaning upon her Beloved. But alas! Here I am, the gravity of my corrupt nature, and carnal heart, bearing me down to earth. Let us not, however, be ungrateful; the Lord has given us at times, some relish, some fore-taste of the *dew of heaven*, and the remembrance thereof is sweet:

Blessed be His name.

And the fatness of the earth. Christ crucified is the marrow and fatness of all that God made in His six days creation. In the glorious work of redemption; the *heavens dropped down from above, and the skies poured down righteousness; and the earth opened and brought forth, salvation and righteousness sprung up together.* See as foretold, Isa.45:8. This we now think of, and speak of, according as we have believed, and at times we have handled it and tasted it; but now little of its power and glory do we feel. But when the church is restored to Apostolic purity, she will feel its power, "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." II Cor.10:5. *And plenty of corn and wine.* Not a state of famine, as it now frequently is with many of the children of God; but a full supply to the churches, and to the saints individually, of the *bread and consolation* of the gospel. So of the other branches of this heritage. *People and nations,* instead of oppressing and persecuting the church, as they have done from the dawn of the gospel day, to this hour, will serve her and bow down to her. And *her mother's sons,* those leaders, who, departing from the faith of the gospel, and from the church in her order, have introduced systems of their own, and drawn away disciples after them. These, instead of glorying over the church as they *now* do, boasting of their popularity, will be humbled and brought down, and their systems given *to the moles and to the bats* when anti-christ goes down. These false teachers are not Christ's seed, but only the sons of the church; as they were brought into a profession of faith in the church, and then *went out from it, because not of it.* See Acts 20:30. *Cursed be every one that curseth thee; and blessed be he that blesseth thee.* All who have received the *mark of the beast,* and therefore united with that interest in opposing and reproaching the gospel and gospel church, are under the curse that is denounced against such, and *shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God,* &c. Rev.14:9,10. Whilst he that blessed the true church, acknowledging her as the church of Christ, and her doctrine as the doctrine of Christ, and being thus kept from worshipping the beast, will be kept also from the judgment that awaits it, and afterwards be brought to experience the blessings of the gospel, because his *name is written in the book of life, of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.* See Rev.13:8. The declaration before us is, that the Lord *will feed* the church with the heritage of Jacob, &c. This is different from God's dealing with national

Israel, in giving them the land in possession, and which they again lost. *Feeding* implies administering from time to time to the present want, as the manna was distilled daily upon the camp of Israel. The church and saints are not to be, neither have they ever been, as is the Arminian in his estimation, like a child that can run to the cup-board and help himself as he pleases, and therefore thanks no one for it; but they are like the infant which is constantly dependent on its nurse to be fed, and therefore shows sense of its dependence by crying. The Lord like a faithful nurse will feed His people with this rich heritage, administering to them as their case may require, and keeping them sensible of their dependence.

Fourthly, The certainty of these promised blessings: *For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.* Even Balaam testified that, "God is not a man that He should lie, neither the son of man that He should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken and shall He not make it good?" Num.23:19. Yes, as He has spoken, so He will make it good; and that He may thus bless, He will bring the church properly to reverence His *Sabbath*, that is, the gospel and its order, and that rest which it inculcates and gives. I have represented this passage as prophecy, as having a reference still future, whilst it teaches that holiness to the Lord, which the gospel revelation has in all ages inculcated, and because it is so inculcated, I believe the church must yet reflect it. If you and I, brother Beebe, now differ on this point, it is because the church is not yet brought to that full unity which the gospel inculcates, and we must wait the Lord's time. And in His time I think He will show He has spoken nothing in vain. *Hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?* Yours with christian regards,

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, Feb.8 , 1844.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.12 {1844}

The Law.

Brother Beebe: - In the communication signed P., Signs no.2, vol.12, Jan.15th, 1844, there were the following sentences, - "*The decalogue was given exclusively to National Israel, and its duration, in letter, was throughout their generations; and was predictive in all its requirements, and was coupled with the prophets until John, whose mission was to point unto Him in whom both the law and the prophets should concentrate.*"

The burden of prophecy from Adam to Zechariah foretold the coming of Christ in the flesh. The demands of the law being perfect, holy and spiritual, predict the righteousness of Christ being imputed to those who are born of His Spirit: hence Jesus quotes from the law, and He doubtless knew the use of it, saying, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy might, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength, &c."

I waited, thinking there were other brethren who would not let the sentiment advanced in the above quotation and its connection, pass unnoticed; feeling quite averse to again appear in the Signs as an opposer of the sentiments of Old School brethren, being aware of the offense I have formerly given to many, by my opposition to kindred sentiments with the above. I have wished that I could feel it consistent to let everything pass as good which appears in the Signs from Old School brethren; but it is not so. With me, error appears as wrong, and perhaps more grievous, when found in the Signs, than when advanced by those not of us. But, brethren, though I have been very troublesome to many of you as readers of the Signs, by being, as you think too strenuous, and even fastidious, bear with me a little longer; I may soon cease to be numbered among you.

What I wish in this case, brother Beebe, if you will permit me, is simply to show my dissent from the sentiment advanced by P., and some of my reasons for such dissent. I have no intention of engaging in a prolonged discussion of the subject. I dissent from the sentiment advanced in the above quotation: 1st. Because, if the decalogue, or law of Ten Commands, *was given exclusively to national Israel*, and in the *letter of it was restricted to their generations*, and in its *perfect, holy and spiritual demands*, it is to be viewed as a *prediction of the righteousness of Christ*, then I know of no revealed law which God has ever given, showing to the Gentile world, what God demands of them as creatures, and what sin is. If so, I cannot conceive how Paul could say, "The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent," unless the gospel is to be viewed as a law to the Gentile world. The world is bad enough now, with all the restraint which the decalogue evidently has upon them. But it would be worse if they could be persuaded that God has never forbidden their killing, committing adultery, or stealing, &c. Besides, although I have been, and still am, willing to bear the reproach of being called an *antinomian*, when so called for maintaining that Christ accomplished a complete redemption of His people from the demands of the law, believing with the Apostle that this doctrine instead of *making void the law*,

establishes it, {Rom.3:31,} and that the charge is false. But I am not willing to countenance a sentiment which would give the enemies of truth just ground to charge us with making void the demands of God's revealed law. It is true, it is not our business to consult consequences in receiving and advocating truth. But what is truth? Christ says to His Father, "Thy word is truth." John 17:17. But certainly the scriptures tell us nothing of the abrogation of the decalogue. When Christ came "to the law and to the testimony:" speculations may have been useful in advancing human science, but in reference to the revealed truth of God, they can have no other effect than to obscure that truth, and bewilder the inquirers after it.

2nd. I further dissent from P's view of the law, because if we Gentiles were never under the revealed law, then all our convictions of sin and sense of condemnation by the law, must have been as completely imaginary and delusive as ever a Campbellite represented them to be. And not only me, but Paul must also have been deceived in reference to his own experience as a child of grace, for he says, "Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin but by the law; for I had not known lust except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." Rom.7:7. This Paul spoke, as is evident from the connection, of his christian experience in common with the brethren to whom he wrote. And he shows clearly what he meant by the law, for he quotes the very letter of the decalogue, that is, from the ten commandments, *Thou shalt not covet*. But if the decalogue in the letter of it was restricted to fleshly Israel in their generations, what had it to do with Paul, in reference to his gospel experience?

3rd. I dissent from P's views, because, if I can understand the scriptures on the point, the redemption wrought by Christ was a redemption from the demands of the law. Thus Paul says, "Ye also are become dead to the law, by the body of Christ." Rom.7:4. And again - "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." Gal.3:13. And further he says, "God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to *redeem* them that were under the law," &c. Gal.4:4,5. If the Gentiles were never under the law, they of course were never under its curse; upon that ground I cannot see what part they could have in the redemption accomplished by Christ's death.

4th. I dissent from P. because I am in favor of taking the New Testament, after allowing for parables, prophecies, and figurative expressions, as it reads. Certainly according to the plain reading of the New Testament, those to whom its books were addressed, namely: believers in Christ, were once

under the law. Thus they are represented as having stood in a relation to the law similar to that of a wife to her husband, and as having become *dead to it by the body of Christ*, {Rom.7:1-6,} and Paul says, that, "Whatsoever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law, that *every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.*" Rom.3:19. This certainly looks as though all the world were under the sentence of the written law.

P., I apprehend, has not made the proper distinction between the law as given as a covenant and in covenant form, to national Israel, and the precepts of that law in their spiritual extent as being the revealed and unalterable standard of righteousness. Our Lord, in His instructions, instead of representing the law, in its essential nature, as passing away, at the setting up of His kingdom, illustrates its stability and exceeding broadness as in Matt.5:17-32, and 22:36-40. P. also has evidently mistaken the distinctive nature of the law, in confounding it with prediction. The law being the standard of righteousness, showed what was required of Christ to the redemption and justification of His people from its demands; but instead of merely predicting or foretelling that Christ would bring in such a righteousness it demanded it of Him, as standing in the law place of His people. I have taken the words of P. according to my capability to understand their natural import. I may have misapprehended his meaning, or he may have a turn for his expressions which I have not thought of; for I know some can give turns to their declarations, which I never should have imagined. Or he may cover himself under the position that the legal dispensation continued in force until the destruction of Jerusalem; but that position I cannot allow. But P. may be a person not wanting to avail himself of such a position. If so, I shall be glad to see him correcting with candor any misapprehension of mine concerning his views. Yours to serve,

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, March 14, 1844.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.12 {1844}

Views on I Cor.7:39 & I Cor.14:34,35.

Brother Beebe: - There was a call from brother Kelly of Ohio, quite prominently placed in the 3rd number, present volume of the Signs, for my views of I Cor.8:39, latter part; and I Cor.14:34,35. There being no such text in my Bible as I Cor.8:39, I knew not exactly what to conclude about it; though

supposing it a typographical error, I thought it would probably be corrected if I waited awhile; but as the correction has not been made, and several brethren have expressed to me their opinion that I Cor.7:39 was intended, I have concluded to give my views of that, together with the one in the 14th chapter.

I Cor.7:39, latter part, reads thus: "But if her husband be dead she is at liberty to marry whom she will; only in the Lord." Understanding this to be what it appears to be, plain New Testament instruction, I do not think there is any mystery about it, for us to rack our fancies to find out. The Corinthian brethren had written {see verse 1} to Paul for information concerning marriages, perhaps being somewhat diffculted to know what bearing the regulations upon this subject, given to national Israel, under the law, might have upon them; and he in answer gave them the instruction contained in this chapter. Having given his judgment concerning persons in the married state, and virgins, he in the passage under consideration gives his opinion concerning widows, and allows them full liberty to marry whom they will, with the one exception, that it should be *in the Lord*, that is, to a believer in Christ; the expression, *in the Lord*, being used to denote a being in Christ, as in Col.3:18 & 4:7, 17. The question here arises, Why is this restriction given concerning widows, whilst no such reserve is made concerning men or virgins? In reference to virgins, the parents in that age and country had the principal, if not the entire control in allotting their daughters in marriage, and the Apostle so speaks of it in verses 36-38. In relation to males, there is not the same necessity for the restriction; not but that it is prudent for all believers, male or female, if they marry, to marry those with whom they can have fellowship, and be united in their worship; but the man being the head of the woman, and of the family, can have a control over his family, in regard to their paying a respect to religion, and the liberty of pursuing his own course in the case, which a woman frequently cannot have when married to a man who is an opposer of the religion she professes. Hence the peculiar propriety of this direction to widows, who are at liberty from their parents to exercise their own choice in marrying. To realize the full importance of the advice which the Apostle gives in this and other parts of the chapter, we must consider the peculiar situation of the believers at that time; being spoken of as *the present distress*, in verse 26. They were encompassed with persecutions, and all who were not brought into subjection to the gospel, were its open enemies. Under such circumstances, for a believing woman to be married to an opposer of the religion she professed, and who might deliver

her up to persecution, or at any rate would seek to debar her from the privileges of the gospel, would be little short of madness. That of late years, many believing widows have married without regard to this direction of the Apostle, and that some of them have been favored with husbands who instead of openly opposing them, have been ready to accommodate them in attending upon the worship and order of their church, is manifest. But whether even these sisters, as kind as their husbands have proved, have not at times felt that if their husbands were believers, they should enjoy more of the privileges and comforts of religion in the family circle, is not for me to say. The circumstances in which the church has existed for years past, are very different from what they were in the earlier ages of the gospel. The educational bias of most persons has been, in this country, for years back, in favor of a decent respect to the gospel, so that they would be ashamed to be known as depriving their wives of the privileges of attending their churches. Indeed, the bias of some, both from education and rational investigation, is very strongly in favor of what we believe to be the truth and order of the gospel. These favored sisters probably have been married without being at all impressed with this advice of the Apostle as having any application to their case; and hence *have been beaten with but few stripes*, according to the saying of our Lord. Luke 12:48. But let not our widowed sisters or others who are at liberty to decide for themselves in reference to a husband, think, if they have a conscientious regard for the truth and order of the gospel, that the times approaching will be as favorable as the past for their finding peace in marrying unbelievers, and more especially, professors of religion who do *not receive the love of the truth*; such if they thus marry, will, I think, find trouble in spirit, as well as *trouble in the flesh*.

Another important inquiry touching this subject is, Whether the fact of a believing widow's marrying, *not in the Lord*, that is, to a man who does not give evidence of having received the truth as it is in Jesus, renders her a proper subject of church discipline? My own opinion is, that this circumstance of itself is not proper ground for church discipline, though it might lead to other circumstances that would be. But after advancing an opinion that would seem, at first view, to favor the idea that in some cases a disregard to Apostolic direction is not ground for church discipline, I must beg the forbearance of brother Kelly until I give the reasons for the opinion I have given. My first reason is, that I conceive nothing is a proper subject of church discipline, that is not either a neglect of, or a departure from what has been

established by the authority of our Lord or the apostolic authority of His Apostles, as either the doctrine, order, or practice, proper to the church, or to the professed disciples of Christ, as such. Secondly, The particular advice or instruction under consideration, together with the most of what he says in this chapter, is not declared by Paul, as of his apostolic authority. He gives it as, in his private judgment, wholesome advice; all things considered. And he whilst giving it carefully guards against its being taken as being enforced by his Apostolic authority, or which is the same thing, as of the commandment of the Lord. He says in one case, "I speak this by permission, and not of commandment." Verse 6. Again, verse 12, "But to the rest speak I, not the Lord." And in verse 25 he says, "I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment," &c. And in the case of the widow under consideration, after allowing her liberty to marry, &c., he concludes with saying - "But she is happier if she so abide after my judgment, and I think also that I have the Spirit of God." Verse 40. That is, *if she abides a widow*; and he gives good ground for his judgment in the case being relied on, for, having the Spirit of God, he could not be mistaken as to the troublesome times which awaited them. But how, says one, are the writings of the Apostles to be thus taken as having no binding authority? No; by no means. We find nothing like this disavowal of direct authority in the other writings of Paul or of the other Apostles. In addressing the churches, whether concerning doctrine, order, or general practice, they speak positively, and of authority; and their writings are to be taken as the commandments of the Lord. But in this case, the subjects on which the Corinthian brethren had asked Paul's advice, were such as would not consistently admit of any uniform order, being established. For instance, it was advisable in some cases for single persons to marry, in other cases {as *in the present distress* which the Apostle spoke of,} it was advisable for them to remain single and unencumbered with families. Hence it was not proper that Paul should establish by his Apostolic authority, the order, either that all should marry, or that all should remain single. So in the case of believers being connected in marriage only with believers, no uniform order could consistently be established; because in many cases of persons already married, one is called by grace, whilst the other is not; if therefore the gospel order were that believers should not live in marriage connection with unbelievers, such would have to separate, and their children be held as *illegitimates*, or as Paul says, *unclean*. This the Apostle with manifest propriety objects to, in case their unbelieving

partners be still disposed to live with them. Now the order, which would admit of some believers having un-believing partners, and absolutely prohibits others from such union, would not be uniform; more especially so if it were allowable for males who have equal liberty with widows of choosing for themselves, to marry unbelievers, {and there appears nothing in the connection to the contrary,} whilst widows alone were positively prohibited from such marriage. Hence whilst Paul so strongly urges upon believing widows, the advice, if they be married, to be married *only in the Lord*, he has let it be known that it was only of his private judgment, knowing by inspiration the occasion there was, and would be for it; he has not enforced it as a fixed order by his Apostolic authority. And what he thought not proper thus to enforce, I cannot think the churches have a right to enforce by their discipline. I have taken occasion to enlarge upon this subject on account of some who have been diffculted to reconcile what is said in this chapter, with the idea of the divine inspiration and authority of the Epistles generally. Now I believe Paul wrote this chapter, being guided by inspiration as much as in any other of his writings; and that he was thus unerringly guided, to leave these cases unestablished by any fixed Apostolic order. Had he been governed by his individual preference, he evidently would have established celibacy among all unmarried believers. He says, "For I would that all men were even as I myself."

The other passages on which brother Kelly wishes my views, {I Cor.14:34,35,} reads thus: "Let your women keep silence in the churches; for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home; for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." I would have preferred keeping silence on this subject myself, as other brethren have arrived at a different conclusion from the reading of the passage, from what I have, and I have not, that I know of, any special light on the subject. It is true the passage seems plain enough, in deciding that *women are to keep silence in the churches*. But the inquiry is, Whether they are absolutely, on every occasion and in every sense to keep silence, or only in certain senses? If in every sense, this prohibition would preclude woman from relating her experience, or professing her faith in Christ or willingness to submit to the ordinances of the gospel, as well as from giving testimony in any case in which she may be particularly acquainted with the disorderly conduct of another. So that I cannot think the prohibition is designed to be taken in so general a sense. We must therefore examine the connection,

to find in what particular sense or senses the Apostle is to be understood as forbidding that women should speak in the church. By looking at the preceding part of the chapter, we shall see that he is, throughout, treating on public speaking, such as speaking with tongues, and prophesying, both in the proper sense of speaking by revelation, and in a more general sense of speaking, or as we call it, preaching to *edification, exhortation, &c.*, as in verse 3, and also delivering *doctrine, &c.* Now as this is the particular subject on which the Apostle is giving instruction, I think it the only consistent construction of his declaration, to understand him as requiring the women, in the sense of *public speaking, to keep silence in the churches*. And in a parallel passage {I Tim.2:11,12,} he thus states the subject: "Nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." In I Cor.14:34, we read: "But they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law." Now for women to set themselves up, to speak for the *edification* of the church, or *to teach*, is not being under obedience, but is to assume authority to lead or guide the church. The same would be the case were they to attempt to direct the church in any matter of discipline or business that might be under consideration, that is, declaring their opinion or discussing the subject. Hence Paul's direction further is, that instead of querying on subjects or discussing them before the church, "If they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home;" and in the other passage, "Let the women learn in silence with all subjection." I Tim.2:11. The question may here arise, Whether this direction of the Apostle would debar females from voting in any case whatever in the church? Some say voting would be to usurp authority over the man, as their votes in some cases may carry the point. It would be taking the authority to express their assent or dissent to any measure. And in matters touching faith or fellowship, I have thought the woman had a right to this privilege, and to consider herself accountable to the Lord, her heavenly Husband; otherwise she would have no right to receive the gospel, or profess subjection to it, without her husband's being willing, and thereby subject herself to her husband's leaving her on that account; but Paul says of the sister, as well as of the brother, that she is not under bondage in such cases. I Cor.7:15. Hence in the reception of members, choice of a pastor and cases of dealing, &c., wherein a conscientious regard to the truth and order of the gospel is concerned, I think it the duty of the believing female to show her assent, or dissent, by a silent lifting of the hand. But the secular business of the church, they had perhaps better leave to the

management of the brethren. I do not think that it is any shame for a woman thus to signify her regard for the gospel and its order; but for a woman to speak in the church in a way to assume the lead or authority, is, as the Apostle says, *a shame*. It is a shame to the woman, for she is thereby assuming too much of a masculine attitude; it is a shame to the church, for it looks as if the church had reversed the order of nature, and acknowledged the woman for the head.

One other point embraced in this subject seems necessary to be noticed. In I Cor.11:5, we read: "But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head," &c. From this some persons have inferred that women were allowed to speak in prayer and in prophesying before the church. But speaking in prophecy before the church, is one of the principle points on which the Apostle is treating in the 14th chapter, and of course is a prominent point on which he says, Let your women keep silence in the church. Besides, prophesying is, according to him, *to edification, exhortation or comfort*, {I Cor.14:3,} or what we call preaching, and is therefore teaching. In I Tim.2:12 Paul says, "I suffer not a woman to teach," &c. If therefore the text I Cor.11:5, implied that Paul allowed women to speak in prophecy in the church, it would stand in plain contradiction to both these other texts. That cannot be, for Paul wrote by inspiration, and consequently could not contradict himself. Further, it belongs to the head to lead, and if speaking in prayer publicly is a taking the lead in prayer, it would be occupying the place of the head, and therefore not being in silence and in subjection, as the gospel requires the woman to be. We must therefore, if we believe Paul wrote by inspiration, understand him in this case, not as implying that the women speak or lead in prayer and prophesying in the church. And indeed, a little attention to the order of the gospel church as pointed out in the New Testament, will show that when the church has come together for worship, it is come together as one body; whatever part therefore one member takes in leading in the worship and order of the church, he does it as a member of that one body; and whilst sanctioned by the church, the church, and therefore each member, is properly considered as participating in it. This I presume will be readily admitted to be the case, in prayer, that though but one speaks in prayer, yet all present are supposed to unite with him in the act, and therefore to address God, or pray through him. But it may not at first view be so manifest that such is the case in prophesying or preaching, owing to the smoke which arose from the bottomless pit being not yet

dissipated from the gospel hemisphere; yet it is equally true, as in the case of prayer, that the prophesying or preaching in the church should be only through gifts fellowshipped by the church, and that the church and each member in thus allowing the gift to be exercised, should consider themselves as sanctioning what is preached, and indeed through the preaching bearing their united testimony concerning Jesus. Hence I think the order observed by the Scotch Baptists, of all the members of the church sitting in a body by themselves in their worship, thus showing their mutual participation in every part of worship, to be more consistent with the unity of the church and ancient order of the gospel, than is common among us, where professors and non-professors sit intermixed, and to all external evidence, the members having no more participation in the parts of worship, than others; too often the case, neither feeling that they have any other part in the preaching or prophesying, than merely to hear the preacher, and perhaps go away and find fault with what they have heard before the world. Are not preaching and praying as much orders and parts of gospel worship, as is the breaking of bread? If so, why should not the church be as distinctly known in the one as in the other? But custom has such a hold on us, that I have long since given up the hope of seeing the churches coming fully into the Apostolic simplicity of worship, until it is the pleasure of the Lord to bring the church altogether into a new state of things, which will be when the church is brought out of her thousand two hundred and sixty days of wilderness state. I therefore would not have touched this point now, but for illustrating the fact, that were we accustomed to the ancient gospel order, we should find no difficulty in understanding the Apostle in this passage as having referred to all the men and women attending as members of the church, and particularly in the several parts of the worship, the one to sit in the church uncovered, the other covered.

Thus, brother Kelly, I have given such views as I have of these passages; if they suit you I shall be pleased that our views harmonize, if they are not in accordance with that you understand to be the import of these scriptures, you or some one else perhaps can show a more consistent explanation of them. Yours to serve in the gospel,

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, March 25th, 1844.

S. Trott.

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Sovereign Grace and Good Works.

Brother Beebe: - Brother Jewett, in the Number of the Doctrinal Advocate for May, 1845, proposed that I, or some brother, should treat on the connection which may exist between the doctrine of *Sovereign Grace and Good Works*. When I first saw the proposition, I shrunk from it as a task less befitting me to undertake than others of our brethren, seeing that my practice or feelings seemed less corresponding with the gospel than was the case with others. But on further reflection, I thought that my experience in the case might have its use, and would be more consoling to some of the children of God than would a treatise from those who have been enabled more uniformly to keep under the awful corruptions of their nature; if indeed mine is the experience of a child of grace. I therefore commenced writing on the subject previous to brother Jewett's death; and I have since thought that perhaps what I had written might not be unacceptable to some of the readers of the Signs; I have therefore finished what I had to say on the subject, and changed the address to the Signs. I have no doubt that some positions which my experience will oblige me to occupy will astonish some brethren.

Brother Jewett rightly qualified this subject by defining it as a *spiritual reception of the doctrine of Christ*; for a mere theoretical reception of sound doctrine, or having only the natural judgment convinced of the truth of it, is but a *dead faith*, and of course brings forth no spiritual fruits. A connection between the doctrine of Sovereign Grace and Good Works was evidently understood by Paul, to exist; for after making a full representation of the sovereignty of God as manifested in the experience of salvation, {Titus 3:3-7,} he immediately adds, {verse 8,} "This is a faithful saying, and these things, I will, that thou affirm constantly, that they that have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works." He thus teaches not only that this doctrine has a tendency to good works, but also that this is the proper theme to excite believers to them. How different this, from the notion that this doctrine tends to licentiousness! When the natural judgment alone is convinced that salvation is by grace, and there is a reliance on that only for escaping future punishment, there may probably be a tendency to licentiousness. And it is no wonder that the opposers of this doctrine, who know nothing but natural reason as their guide, should view the doctrine of grace in this light. But we may be assured that

whoever can deliberately draw such a conclusion and act under its influence, gives decisive evidence that he is ignorant of that *hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory*, even that mystery, that *it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure*. I Cor.2:7 & Phil.2:13. Such know nothing of that implanted desire after holiness which belongs to the new man.

In coming more directly to the subject in view, I will first try to determine what *good works* are in a gospel sense. The old scholastic definition of good works, is, that they are such as are *done from a right principle, by a right rule, and to a right end*; but I would prefer a definition more simple. Indeed, good works do not require so much to be done by rule; they are not like positive institutions which require a strict observance of the letter of the command. Hence our Lord has resolved all rules upon this point into one, "Therefore all things that ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Mt.7:12. The term explains itself, for *good works* are such works as are *kind and beneficial* to others. Hence the Apostle defines them by saying, "These things are good and profitable unto men." Titus 3:8. Many seem to suppose that good works principally consist in religious exercises. Hence the great stress they lay upon a round of what they call duties, or upon a certain kind of bodily exercises; and being attentive to these, they are not careful to avoid covetousness, dishonesty, hatred, &c. They suppose that they are to *do good* to God, and that for this goodness He will reward them; as though if they kept the Sabbath strictly, or gave their money for religious purposes, God was thereby benefited. Even Eliphaz, the Temanite, had a better view than this of these things; he says, "Can a man be profitable unto God as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself?" So Elihu, "If thou sinnest, what doest thou against Him? or, if thy transgressions be multiplied, what doest thou unto Him? If thou be righteous, what givest thou Him, or what receiveth He of thy hand? Thy wickedness may hurt a man as thou art; and thy righteousness may profit the son of man." Job 22:2 & 35:6-8. The Psalmist in evidently personating Christ says, "O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord: my *goodness* extendeth not to thee; but to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight." Psalm 16:2-3. Religious exercises, such as waiting upon God, come more properly under the idea of privileges, than of works, though there is an obligation resting upon the believer to observe the institutions of the gospel, and to honor God in all his ways. Good works are set forth in the scriptures as a carrying out the spirit of the second

table of the Decalogue. Thus Paul in his exhortations to the Romans, sums all up by saying, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." He before said, "For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, &c., and if there be any other commandment it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself;" and adds, "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor." Rom.13:9-10. By an examination of all that is said on this subject in the New Testament, we shall find they are presented to view as both positive and negative: that is, they consist in being beneficial to others, or in doing good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith, as we have opportunity, and also in a faithful discharge of the duties of every station and relation we may sustain in life, both civil and religious; as well as in refraining from whatever would be injurious to others. But then good works, in a gospel point of view, or as evidences of a gracious state, consist in something more than a mere performance of the act. Many acts which in themselves are beneficial to others, are performed in a spirit or from a motive that is not good, but evil. Such is the case manifestly with much of that display made of what they call charity, and self-denial, &c., by the religious multitude of this day. They are done either to be seen of men, or as a means of bringing those to whom they are done, in some way under their influence; or to make up a sum of righteousness on which to rest their hopes of salvation; or perhaps in a real infidel spirit, to show how good they can be and how much better human nature is, than those who believe the scriptures, describe it to be. There is a meekness, a kindness of feeling in doing good works, a fear of God and regard to the honor of His cause, in shunning to do wrong, which are more decisive evidences of a gracious spirit, than the mere doing or shunning the act. Yea, the humility and self-condemnation frequently manifested by the children of grace, for doing what they ought not to have done, and for not doing as they ought, gives more assurance to others of their true love to God, than would the not doing or doing the acts. The child of grace does nothing for mere ostentation and show, but from a sense of duty and a love to uprightness. Neither is a studied secretness, unless on some peculiar occasions, necessary. Some are so sly in what they do for the poor, and for the support of the gospel ministry, as almost to lead to the belief, that they are ashamed to have it known that their religious impressions disposed them to kindness to the one, or fellowship for the other.

But to come to the existing connection between a spiritual reception of the doctrine of Christ and good works; we

will remark, *First*. That such reception of the doctrine of Christ, implies the being born again - not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible; consequently it implies that the law in its spirituality has been written in their hearts, or that the love of God has been implanted therein. In this change, is at once presented the principle of good works. Love to God leads to a desire to be like Him, and to a delight in His law after the *inward man*. This change also produces in equal proportion a loathing of sin and of ourselves on account of it, and consequently we desire not to be under its influence. But the inquiry looks to the idea, whether soundness of doctrine as received by faith tends to the maintaining of good works. Its direct tendency evidently is towards the maintaining of good works. The notions of conditional acceptance with God, by obscuring the holiness of God, in supposing that He can be pleased with impure or imperfect obedience, and by hiding the exceeding sinfulness of sin so as to make the creature satisfied with his imperfect and unholy performance of duties, tends to make him careless about motives, so long as he can keep up the appearance of religious devotion, and about the performance of good works or religious duties, any further than he expects to be rewarded for them, or than he supposes necessary to secure his acceptance.

But the doctrine of Christ gives such enlarged views of the holiness of God as to lead those who receive it so to feel the hidden abominations of their own hearts in contrast therewith as to destroy all confidence in any of their own acts, and to pant after more holiness in heart and life. In addition, sound doctrine gives such a view of the riches of the love and grace of God towards vile, unworthy sinners, that whenever faith gives a glimpse of it, every power of mind is captivated thereby, and they are made earnestly to desire to glorify God in their bodies and in their spirits which are His.

Again; a belief in this doctrine, by giving us a deep sense of the deceitfulness of our hearts, and the depravity of our natures, leads us to be guarded against trusting to our own hearts, or depending on our own resolutions and strength, and to seek frequent supplies of grace and strength to resist temptations, and to overcome the corruptions of our nature, and to do that which is right. And what was Paul's experience, is the experience of every believer, "When I am weak, then am I strong." II Cor.12:10. And again, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Phil.4:13. Whenever we go forward carelessly or with self-confidence, we are sure to come short or fall; but none is ever confounded whilst, sensible of his weakness, his heart truly trusteth in God. Once more, that

faith which receiveth and resteth upon the doctrine of Christ, is that which overcometh the world: "This is the victory which overcometh the world, even our faith." I John 5:4. Faith, taking hold of the immutability of God in His purpose and promises, leads us forward as disciples of Christ, to face the frowns and scoffs of the world; presenting to us the certainty and fulness of salvation in Christ Jesus, it shields us from the fiery darts of the adversary, and strengthens us to meet the sword and faggots of the persecutor; assuring us of the love and mercy of God to our poor souls, and the beauties of the Saviour, it drives away those death-chills which the world by its influence tends to throw over the graces of the Spirit and our soul's comforts; and presenting to our minds the declarations of God's word, it foils the tempter in his aims to ensnare us, as for instance, when Satan would persuade us that we might indulge in this gratification of the flesh, or that, without reproach to the cause of Christ, as it would not be known, &c., faith brings forward such antidotes as these, "Be sure your sin will find you out." Num.32:23. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore will I punish you for all your iniquities." Amos 3:2. Or as temptation is varied, so faith brings from the treasury that which meets it.

There are an abundance of inducements connected with the reception of sound doctrine, to maintain good works. 1st. As already noticed, the love and mercy of God towards us invites to gratitude, and a strong desire to show our love to Him by a denying of ourselves, and a walking in obedience to His ways. 2nd. From our love to the doctrine, the very reproach and opposition it meets with, tends to increase in us the desire to show forth its holy and beneficent nature in our lives and conversation, and to avoid occasioning reproach to it. 3rd. The promises of grace and strength, and of escape in the time of temptation, which this doctrine shows to be *Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus*, encourages us to pursue the path marked in the New Testament, regardless of the difficulties we may meet with. I will add, the fear of experiencing the frowns of our heavenly Father, and of being left to ourselves, and to mourn in darkness, is a strong inducement, to those who have known what it is to have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, to watchfulness and prayer against temptation. So that with these and the like inducements, the child born into gospel liberty needs not to go back to the letter and bondage of the law, to find in its demands and threats that which will excite him to good works.

I have thus sketched the direct tendency of sound doctrine to good works, and the consequent connection

between them. But do we at this day see this connection fully manifest in ourselves and others generally, who, we hope, believe the doctrine of Christ? I think not; though in none is there as great a deficiency, perhaps, as in myself. How are we to account for the failure? I might briefly answer, from the weakness of our faith, and the prevalency of that *sin which so easily besets us*, namely: unbelief. But I wish to be indulged in some extended remarks on this point.

In the first place, we are to bear in mind, and we shall be often reminded of it to our sorrow, that whilst we are made partakers, if children of the kingdom, of a life that *was created in Christ Jesus unto good works*, and therefore in the new man delight in holiness, yet the old, the Adamic man is not changed, but is in itself as earthly, sensual, and devilish as ever. Hence the warfare in the believer, between the flesh and the spirit, between Christ and Adam. Here I wish, if I can, to present the subject of the warfare in its different bearings in a true light. For just here it is that the formalist who, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, bolsters himself up in his own self-importance, and trusting to his own self-taught belief of the doctrine of Christ, he walketh after the flesh without remorse of conscience. And here it is, that the child of grace finds an abundant source of doubts and fears.

The position I have above laid down, that there is no change in nature, is correct; but still the implanting in us of that *life which is the light of men*, has given us to know the hidden depravity of our hearts, has convinced our natural judgments, that *the law is good, and that the commandment is holy, just and good*, and that a departure from the principle of love to God and love to our neighbor, is evil and sinful. And we know, as men, that an indulgence in sin, and a neglect of our obligations as christians, brings darkness and sorrow, and convinced of the truth and consistency of the doctrine of Christ, and our minds and affections participate in the joys and sorrows of the new man. Yet after all this, our passions, appetites, self-love, &c., are left in their natural strength and depraved bias; and not only show themselves as such in the breast of the believer, but come forward with their demands for gratification. I am led to the conclusion, from the confidence which natural persons have in their power to keep themselves, and from the equanimity of mind and the strict morality that many such are able to maintain, contrasted with the bitter complaints the children of grace make of themselves, that the depravity in believers is frequently stirred up, and made in one shape or another, far more turbulent in their breasts, and impudent in its demands for gratification,

than in others; so that if it were not for the opposition of the new man, and its leaning them in their straits to look to God for deliverance, they would be overwhelmed in their corruptions. Not only are their sins revived, stirred up at first by the demands of the law being set home, but God, as in the case of Israel in the wilderness, {Deut.8:2} will have His people from time to time know what is in their heart, and therefore suffers Satan to stir up their corruptions.

At one time a temptation will be presented for indulgence, under so much disguise, and with so much plausibility, and at another time it will come so suddenly and unexpectedly, that the poor believer is almost swept away by it, and would have been quite, had not the Lord made a way for his escape. At another time some temptation from without will unite with some inward corruption, and make and pursue its demand for indulgence in such an insinuating manner and with such perseverance, notwithstanding all the remonstrance of the judgment, and all the abhorrence of the spirit at the idea; and perhaps at times the spirit and judgment both appear to be asleep, and the affections seem to contemplate with pleasure the indulgence, so that when the mind is again aroused to a sense of the danger, the poor, ashamed, and confounded soul, concludes that he is gone, and carried away he must be by the temptation, and becomes discouraged, and almost arrives at the conclusion that it is no use any longer to contend against it. Perhaps in this state of the confusion of his mind Satan tempts him with the suggestion that the only way to escape being led into open sin, and from disgracing his profession, is to put an end to his existence.

Thus the believer is at times tossed in his little ark upon the billows of his corruptions, raised by the winds of temptation, and his Lord appearing to be asleep, or to care not for him, yet in the end, at the last extremity, he will be made to cry for help, and the Lord will appear to hush the storm and give peace. Hence I conclude that it is not grace, or the Spirit of life, in the believer, that will keep him from being overcome by his corruptions, and the temptations he meets with, but special grace is manifested in calling his faith into exercise, or otherwise encouraging and strengthening him to maintain the contest, or in some way providing for his escape. Hence the evidence of being a child of grace, though it is ground for hope that the Lord will keep him, is no just ground for the individual to conclude he can keep himself from falling; nor on the other hand, is his being tempted a just reason for him to conclude that he is not a child of grace. Watchfulness and prayer, and enduring hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, are

important duties of believers - they are essential to his enjoying the consolations of the gospel, and to his glorifying God in his body and spirit. But still the believer's strength and security for living thus to God, is not in himself, but alone in God, and his having a spirit of prayer is as God is pleased to impart it.

I think I am sustained in my views above expressed, both by the experience of the believer and the language of scripture; thus, for instance: Rom.8:20 - "For the creature {the new creature} was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope." Also, John 15:5 - "For without me ye can do nothing."

In the second place, if the facts are so as we have endeavored to show from experience is the case, and this sustained by scripture, then the conclusion must be, that the present low and cold state of the churches, and the severe conflicts which many of the children of God are experiencing at this day, with the world, the flesh, and the devil, are God's appointment. Whether this be as a chastisement for their ingratitude in being kept from being swept away by the anti-christian flood, and for too great a disposition to yield to the influence of the world, or whether it be for the purifying of the churches, by separating from them all who *are not kept by the power of God*, and for disciplining the saints to a sense of their weakness and of their dependence on God to keep and sustain them, preparatory to the great struggle with the man of sin, which may be shortly approaching, or both, I am not prepared to say. In conclusion, I would say that I would like to see some of our brethren on this subject, and particularly on the struggle between the flesh and the spirit, and of the believer's being kept not by any power in the new man, but by the *power of God through faith*, &c. Brother Barton knows something of fightings without and fears within, so does brother Buck, and others, if they would write. In my former draught, I referred also to brother West, but his pen is laid silently by; being, happily for him, exchanged for a harp of glory, having passed victoriously through the *great tribulation, having washed his robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb*. Though we may miss the wholesome productions of his pen through the columns of the Signs, and many a scattered sheep grieve the loss of his ministerial labors, yet for him we have no ground to mourn. But will such be the case with some of us who are yet in Bochim? Yours, &c.,

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.13 {1845}

S. Trott.

Christian Experience.

Brother Beebe: - There have been occasionally communications in the *Signs*, written as relations of experience, which have occasioned in me a desire that something might be said in reference to them. And I now undertake it, although I am aware that either my former communications, or the remarks of some others, have raised in the minds of many of the brethren, a prejudice against me, as though I wished to be thought a little more correct than any others on doctrinal points, and therefore that such will now think that I am setting myself up as better acquainted with experience than others. As I have heretofore tried to state in candor my reasons for opposing what I believe to be error in my brethren; I know of no better way, than, if they will think thus without just cause, to let them think. Though I would not have it understood that I am, or wish to be indifferent to the good or bad opinion of my brethren, or that I am so stoical as not to feel hurt at being the object of their prejudice. But what I mean is, that when a sense of duty, or inclination to enjoy my privilege, leads me to write, that I should not be deterred from it, because some will not receive what I advance, whilst there is a hope, that others may be comforted or edified.

My objections to certain relations of experiences to which I have reference, is not that I think the persons not subjects of grace, but that they have missed stating the exercises in which they were brought first to exercise faith in Christ, and have stated other things as those which they look to as constituting their deliverance, which in themselves afford no evidence of faith in Christ. Take for instance the communication of brother Burroughs in the last, {or sixth} number of the *Signs*.{1845}. From some things which he states as being the ground of his trust, &c., I hope the Spirit has taught him and applied the gospel consolations to his mind. But I should not be able to draw any such conclusion from what he relates as constituting his change; namely: that he was greatly distressed, and from what he says, this distress mostly arose from an apprehension that the time was about to pass in which he could be saved, and that this distress went off and was succeeded by a pleasant and cheerful sensation. The magicians of Egypt can produce as great a miracle, or as good an experience as such would be. Mere natural men are capable of being excited to just such exercises. They can be so alarmed as to be greatly distressed, at the idea that their supposed, or rather fictitious day of grace is passed, or about

to pass. And it requires but little attention to the workings of nature, to know that these excited feelings are very apt to subside during a nap of sleep, or even from mere exhaustion, and that they are naturally succeeded, like any other pain, by a pleasant feeling; and it is easy for the imagination, as in the case of the *front-bench* converts, to draw the conclusion that this great change of feeling is an evidence that they have got religion. It is no wonder that this excites them to as great a pitch of joy as they were before to that of grief. I feel sorry to see such things given as a relation of experience among O.S. Baptists, - first, because, as in the case above referred to, there being grounds to hope that they are subjects of grace, I feel sorry to see the children of God so bewildered as to their deliverance, and as having no clearer evidence to their minds, to refer to at times, of their having passed from death to life. I know how to pity them, having been in like situation; from not having been conversant with clear, experimental persons, and not having heard discriminating, experimental gospel preaching, when Christ was revealed in me to the apprehending of Him by faith as a Saviour suiting my case, I had no idea that the exercise I had at that time was a being born again, or a first believing in Christ with that faith which is the gift of God. The exercise was something new and made a deep impression on my mind, but I considered it only as an evidence given me that I was truly a subject of religion, as I had most of the time before for three or four years hoped I was. And when I went to offer to a Baptist church, I had no idea of relating this exercise as an evidence of my being a believer or a fit subject for baptism, though I think something of it was drawn from me in their questioning me. But my own statement was similar to what I had made to the church session when I joined the Presbyterians some years before; that I had been impressed with a desire to be religious and to serve God, &c., with the addition of some of my ups and downs since, and the manner of my being convinced concerning believers baptism, &c. It was not under fifteen months after that I had an idea of that exercise being that in which I was first brought to know Christ crucified and to believe on Him, so completely had my mind been bewildered by the muddy preaching I had been accustomed to; but then it was so showed to me that the thing appeared plain. And from that day to this I have known when and how I was taught the way of salvation for poor, condemned, helpless sinners, as I then was, through a crucified Jesus; and I know that man had no hand in teaching it to me, that I never learned it from reading nor preaching. Yet I have since passed through many

dark seasons as to my interest in Christ, and to this hour have many doubts, from the awful corruptions within me, whether I can be a subject of grace, or whether my *spot* is the spot or exercises of God's children.

2nd. I feel sorry because such relations unnoticed make it appear as though the experience of O.S. Baptists is nothing more than that of *camp-meeting* converts.

3rd. Because such unexplained statements are calculated to deceive inexperienced persons as to what an experience of grace consists in. Yet, I blame not this brother, nor others similarly circumstanced, seeing he is located where he can have but little intercourse with such as know what gospel experience is, for embracing the privilege of stating, through the Signs, what he had been led to look to as his conversion, doing it, as he evidently does, with a desire to be *instructed in the way of God more perfectly*, or, if he is deceived, to be undeceived. But in such cases I think it important that some one should be ready to act the part of Aquila and Priscilla; and my volunteering to do this is what may subject me to the charge of setting myself up as the standard of gospel experience. And it might have savored a little more of humility for me to have waited for some other one to step forward; in other similar cases which have occurred, I did wait, but in vain.

As to a standard, my wish is to make the Scriptures the standard of christian experience, as I have ever aimed to set them forth as the *only* standard of gospel doctrine. As I have freely objected to the relation this brother gave of his experience it is incumbent on me to show what it is that makes one manifest as a subject of salvation, according to the New Testament. For brevity's sake I shall touch only those points which might be questioned. A coming to Christ is admitted as necessary by all professors; I will, therefore, here show that Christ has said that none can come unto Him except they are taught of God. The words are, "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the Prophets: And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me," &c. {John 6:44-45}. Thus he evidently represents the *drawing* and *teaching* as the same thing. Teaching has to do with the mind, not the animal feelings; it is an instructing of the judgment, or a giving of understanding to the thing taught. But God's teaching is not like man's, a mere enlightening of the head whilst the heart is untouched. It is a revelation of truth in the heart, so that the affections are arrested; there is a heart-

feeling of the truth taught, and a heart-love for it. To come to Christ, or to be believers on Him, we must know Him in His true character as the Saviour of sinners; as said he that had been blind: "Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on Him?" {John 9:36.} Thus to know Him we must know what it is to be sinners in God's account. "By the law is the knowledge of sin." "The law is spiritual." Spiritual life is therefore first imparted to give spiritual discernment or understanding, and the *commandment* then *comes*, that is, the person, under the divine teaching, is made to understand its force and special application to himself, condemning him and all his seeking and doing; and ultimately he is made to know {if not, as in some cases, at once} its spirituality and exceeding broadness to the *thoughts* and *intents of the heart*. He then knows why he is distressed; the curse of God's law stands against him, all his former hopes and expectations of doing anything to obtain the favor of God are cut off, and he lies helpless and dead under the righteous sentence of the law. Were it not that the Spirit in that case *helpeth his infirmities, making intercession for him with groanings which cannot be uttered*, that is, leading him to lift up his heart to God, in desires for mercy if it can be extended to a wretch so vile, he would be silenced in dead despair. Ask this person now what distresses him; his answer will be not that his time for obtaining salvation is passed, but that he is such a sinner against God that he sees not how any salvation can be for him, consistent with justice. Nothing which he has ever learned of Christ from reading or from hearing of preaching reaches his case. He cannot believe on Him, for he knows not his fullness of grace and truth, neither can he know Him till God teaches him the knowledge of Him. But when the Father thus teaches him, or the Spirit takes of Christ's and shows to him, he understands the mystery of salvation through Christ crucified, views Him as the Lamb which God had provided for a sacrifice to His justice in the room of the guilty, condemned sinner. He now sees how he can be saved consistently with justice and how the mercy and promises of God can come to a wretch like him; and from this time his trust is fixed on a crucified, risen Jesus, and he has hope towards God and approaches Him as a Father. {Eph.1:13 & I Pet.1:3} Now he will rejoice even unto tears, and knows what occasion he has for rejoicing in God his Saviour. The knowledge he now has of Christ as the *Way of salvation* is altogether different from what he had before conceived of; and the purpose of God, as he now sees it, of saving polluted, helpless sinners, instead of such as can help themselves, and the salvation of Christ being so fully and exactly adapted to

the case of such, is all new to him and all lovely and glorious, reflecting a glory upon all the ways and works of God around him. Can a man be taught these things of God and not know that his views of himself and his views of Christ and his expectations of acceptance with God are all new, all different from what they once were, and that they are what he never learned of men?

The Spirit had probably implanted in brother Burroughs the principle of life, causing a desire after God before the exercises he speaks of; but it may not have been till some time after this that he was truly drawn to Christ. I think, if he will review his past experience, there will be brought to his recollection a time when the awful depravity of his heart was so laid open to his view as to make him feel the justice of his condemnation, and the utter impossibility of anything good or acceptable to God coming from him; so that all idea of seeking salvation on his part was excluded; "Lord, save or I perish" was his cry in substance. Again that in reading the Scriptures, or in hearing preaching, or in some passage of Scripture being presented and opened to his mind, he had a view of Christ crucified as a foundation just suited for such a condemned and helpless sinner to lean upon and trust to for salvation; and that since that time his hope of acceptance with God has not been from his determination to seek, but wholly through Christ and His finished work; and since then, it has been, that he has known something of the God of Israel's opening rivers in high places, &c., for the *poor and needy* when everything else fails and they cry to Him. This revelation of Christ in him may have been at once by an opening up of the Scriptures to him, or it may have been more gradually that his mind was enlightened to understand the way of salvation.

The exercises which he related are such as are frequent with persons under a work of grace, by which Satan tries to settle them down on something short of Christ. Besides, being led by a way we know not, we are apt to look for a resting place short of the proper one.

The position I have taken relative to this subject will I think be admitted by every reflecting christian as the scriptural one, when he considers that the promises of salvation run alone through faith in Christ, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." {John 3:36. See also Mark 16:16} And that faith implies a knowledge of Christ, and this knowledge evidently is only from being taught of God. "No man knoweth who the Son is but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son and he to whom the Son will

reveal him." {Luke 10:22} I hope this brother on a re-examination will be able to tell us something of what he has learned of Jesus and of His saving power. Yours;

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.13 {1845}

S. Trott.

On Faith.

Brother Beebe: - I thought my pen was nearly laid by, excepting for private correspondence. I had concluded the readers of the Signs were tired of discussions; and nothing of a different class seemed to present itself to my mind. But brother Johnson's request through the Signs for my views of Heb.11:1, affords an occasion for again writing, which I readily embrace.

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Heb.11:1. The Apostle having in the preceding part of this epistle drawn a comparison and a contrast between the carnal things of the earthly or typical dispensation, and the spiritual things of the anti-typical or heavenly dispensation, comes in this 11th chapter to describe that faith by which these spiritual things are known and received in distinction from our natural faculties, by which those carnal ceremonies were apprehended. He commences his description of faith with the position laid down in our text, and then illustrates it by showing its power as exemplified in the experience of the ancient worthies.

Whether we consider the faith here described, in its special relation to the spiritual things of the gospel, as contrasted with the carnal ceremonies of the law, or as exemplified in the experience of the patriarchs, or in the position laid down in the text before us, we must in either case arrive at the conclusion that, it is a spiritual exercise, and as distinct from natural belief, as are the spiritual truths of the gospel from the external ordinances of the law. The requisitions of the law upon national Israel as such, consisting only in the letter, could be taught by parents to their children, and were required so to be taught; and therefore could be understood by their natural faculties, and be believed as their natural judgments were enlightened. But the knowledge of the truths of the gospel in their spirituality, is not imparted by, nor received from human instruction. Even after all the oral instruction which Christ had given His disciples while in the flesh, He had, after His resurrection, to open their understanding that they might understand the scriptures; that

is, in their application to Him. Luke 24:45. And before this, when Peter declared his faith in Christ as the Son of God; Jesus said unto him, Blessed art thou Simon Barjonah, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven; thus showing this knowledge of Jesus, was not science, but direct revelation from the Father. Hence Paul says, "No man can say Jesus is Lord but by the Holy Ghost." I Cor.12:3. See also Paul's own experience in the case. Gal.1:11,12. But why multiply proofs on this point? For after all that men may do, in their attempts to carnalize the gospel so as to make it a subject for human instruction, the testimony of God will stand sure, that, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God," and that, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the things of the kingdom of God." I Cor.2:14 & John 3:3.

But to the Apostle's position: Faith is the substance of things hoped for, &c. What are *the things hoped for*? They are the perfect deliverance from sin &c., which is promised to the saints. Or they may be any particular instance of a promise, applied to us, like the special promise which God made to Abraham. Gen.15:5,6. There are many things which we at times hope for, which have no substance but in our imaginations, for God has never promised them to us, and consequently, with such, faith hath nothing to do. Faith is the substance of those things hoped for, that is, with a true gospel hope. The word here translated *substance* is different from the word so rendered in the tenth chapter and 34th verse. The lexicons give an explanation to this word evidently with reference to its use here, as meaning to be present to the mind; that is, to be seen or felt by the mind, as natural substances are seen or felt by the outward senses. It seems explained as by contrast, by chapter 10:1 - "The law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things," &c. That is, the legal ceremonies could only present a shadow of spiritual things, and therefore left the comers thereunto without an actual sense of their sins being cleared away as before God; or as the Apostle says, could not make them perfect. It is true, faith, in those who had it, gave them the assurance that there was a substance thus shadowed forth, and therefore gave them hope of acceptance with God. Now, instead of this shadowy, imperfect view, faith under the gospel, presents to the believer the salvation of sinners, as finished in Christ Jesus, and also, all the promises of God as flowing through Him, and as being *in Him yea, and Amen*. Thus through faith the believer rests in this salvation, and these promises as solid substances. Again, the Apostle

describes this faith by another mode of expression, namely as: *The evidence of things not seen. Things hoped for, are things not seen, for what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for?* Rom.8:24. These are things spiritual and not apprehended by the natural senses; but faith being the substance of them, is the evidence of their reality to the mind; and it is also the evidence of our enjoying them, as it apprehends and gives us the assurance of the faithfulness of God, in bestowing what He has promised in Christ. So clear and decisive, is the evidence of faith in such cases, that wherein it is in exercise all doubt is removed. Now the faith that can do this, that can present unseen things to the mind, and constrain the mind to rest upon them as present realities, must be a living principle, and possess a power independent of anything belonging to the natural mind. It is very different from that belief which is an exercise of the natural mind, and which is produced by instruction, or external evidence, acting upon the mind and convincing the judgment of the truth of the thing. Hereby we may be assisted in drawing the distinction between the living and dead faith, in their essences, which James speaks of. {James chapter 2}. That the *dead faith*, cannot be the *faith which is of the operation of God*, I think every child of grace will admit. Of course, it can be nothing more than an exercise of the natural mind. The living faith has, as already noticed, a controlling power over the mind, bringing it with all its powers into submission, to the will of God; but natural belief being but an exercise of the mind, produced by the exercise of other faculties of the mind, has of course no necessary control over the mind; though it may influence the mind to determine on action. Thus two persons may each be led by conclusive evidence, to believe that he has an estate left him in England; the one may be influenced by his belief to take measures to obtain his, whilst the other, from other considerations, may altogether neglect his. What is commonly called belief, that is, of the natural mind, is of two kinds. One is a mere passive assent to the truth of a thing. It is a belief arising from education, or produced by the declarations of others, without their ever investigating the subject, or judging for themselves. This has no claim to the name of faith; yet a little examination will convince any one, that on the subject of religion, this is all the faith which the greater production of professors have claim to; they being in their religious characters either the mere creatures of education, or the dupes of artful *priests*. Again, there are others, who are accustomed to investigating subjects for themselves; and who have thus investigated the subject of religion, and what they believe concerning it, they believe

because according to the light they have, or use, their judgments are convinced of the truth of it. This is often mistaken for true gospel faith, and yet it is only a belief produced by the exercise of the rational faculties. This was the faith with which Simon believed, from seeing the miracles performed by Philip, {Acts 8:5-13,} and with which many believed, from seeing the miracles of Christ. This is the faith which the Campbellites claim as the gospel faith; though many of those they baptize evidently have nothing more than the passive belief before described. This rational faith may influence to many things called religious works. Yea, it may influence to a regular attention to the outward performances enjoined upon believers by the New Testament; such as a submission to the ordinances, and order of the gospel. It may lead to a bestowing of *their goods to feed the poor*, and to meet persecution, and a *giving of their bodies to be burned*. I Cor.13:3. Or a person may have this faith, and yet not be influenced by it in his life, or to any act of religious obedience, or separation from the world. But whatever effect it may have upon the outward life, it is still nothing but a dead faith. It has no spiritual life, and therefore produces no spiritual action, nor makes any true application of the consolations of the gospel. It is an exercise of the powers of the natural man, and, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." I Cor. 2:14. It knows nothing of resting, with the depravity and vileness of our hearts in view, upon Christ for full salvation. It knows nothing of a going out of heart in love to a poor sinner, because he has such a discovery of the awful depravity of his heart as to have lost all confidence in his own exertions, nor because it discovers that his hope is fixed alone on Christ for salvation. It may produce a love to sinners because it discovers them engaged on the subject of religion, or because it sees them conforming in doctrine and practice to particular views of religion. It knows not the sealing of the Spirit of God, whereby believers are sealed with the spirit of adoption, and are led to approach God with that confidence with which a child approaches its parent. Neither does it know anything of resting upon the promises of God, excepting as we can discover some supposed ground in us, or outwardly, why we should hope for the thing promised. The child of grace, though probably he is at no time without some traces of the actings of a living faith in Him, yet has much of this dead faith blended in his exercises, and which he often mistakes for the only faith he has; and finding it to want that power which in the New Testament is ascribed to true

faith, he at times, concludes that he has been altogether deceived in himself. In most cases, the child of grace has this dead faith to a much fuller extent, than any unregenerated person can have it; from his being led through the teachings of the Holy Spirit, to a fuller and more intimate acquaintance with the truths of divine revelation. Hence it is that we frequently find the child of grace under disappointments, and afflictions of various kinds, complaining of a want of submission and reconciliation of mind to God's dealings with them. Tell them, God is doing it in wisdom, and love, they will reply, "We believe it, and know we ought to be submissive, but we cannot bring our stubborn minds to it;" which shows this belief to be but a dead faith. Were the Holy Spirit to bring their living faith into exercise, in relation to this dispensation of God toward them, it would present to their minds such a feeling sense of the goodness of God, as revealed to it, that their minds would be brought at once, into patient and cheerful submission to His will. Again, our minds are frequently led to contemplate some particular promise, we see how appropriate it is to our case, and we have heretofore been enabled by a living faith so to apprehend Christ Jesus as the *end of the law for righteousness*, and as the medium of gracious communications between God and poor, vile sinners like ourselves, that we believe, unworthy as we are, that we may hope for an interest in it, and do believe that it will be verified, and yet this belief does not enable us to exercise that comfortable reliance on it, and that patient waiting for it, which we desire. Now if the Holy Spirit were to lead us to exercise faith in reference to that promise, or in other words, were He to apply the promise with power to us, we should receive it at once as the word of the living God, and all the powers of our mind would be made to rejoice in it as ours, and to admire the goodness of God in it, and to realize in sweet anticipation, the gracious fulfillment of it. Thus brethren, I think, by a little attention to their experience, may readily trace, in this case, and in reference to the preached word, and to the various dealings of God with them, a manifest distinction between these two kinds of faith, as exemplified in them. Many of the children of God, at this day, I have no doubt, go for years, without any special exercise of this living faith; other than in its exercise towards the one great object which is necessary to their being known as believers, namely: its exercise in apprehending the blood and righteousness of Christ, as our plea at the throne of grace, and the ground of our hope of acceptance with God. But the inquiry may further be made, Whence is this living faith, and how is it brought into exercise? It is a spiritual exercise, as

before shown, and can therefore be the actings only of the spiritual life of the believer. This life, although implanted in the soul, is not subject to the control of the natural mind, and therefore cannot be called into exercise at our will. As its being brought into existence in the soul is *not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of men, but of God*, it is the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, who alone controls its action, in faith. It is itself love to God, and to holiness, and therefore from its indwelling in us, we are made to feel a going out of love to God, to His ways, and to His people, and a corresponding loathing of sin and ourselves on account of it. But the Holy Ghost, who knoweth the will of God, knoweth when to call forth the exercises of faith to apprehend Christ as our salvation, and when to lay hold of any special promise, or any unfoldings of the Scriptures; and when, through our faith, to make intercession for us in prayer, according to the will of God, and He only knows, and therefore has never left the exercise of our faith, to the control of our wills. Or perhaps a more correct illustration of this point, is this: Faith must have an object to be believed, set before it. The *word of God* is the proper object of faith. And by the *word of God*, I do not understand the scriptures, as such, although they are the proper standard by which to know what is the word of God; but I mean by it, the special application of some portion of scripture to us as a promise, a command, a consolation, or as instruction in doctrine or practice, so that we receive it as the word of God, entering our hearts with power. Now as the scriptures are thus applied by the Holy Spirit, faith is called forth and we believe. Thus when the revelation of Christ Jesus is made to the regenerated person, then he believes, and cannot before.

Again, by the illustration which the Apostle gives of this faith in the following part of the chapter, it is evident its exercise is what we call grace, when he says, "Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness," &c. verses 33 & 34. We in similar cases, would say, the grace of God enabled them to do it, and we should say right, and yet it was through being enabled to exercise faith in God, and in His word, that they were strengthened to endure that to which they were called. Now as the Spirit *searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God*, {I Cor.2:10,} He as the Comforter knoweth when the exercise of faith is needed, and in such cases in faithfulness brings it into exercise, and not otherwise. Hence the early disciples who were called to meet persecution, were *full of faith*. Most of believers when called to depart have faith given them as a shield in the conflict with death. And how often do we see those christians who are much afflicted

manifest stronger and clearer faith than others, not so called to suffer. And thus when it is the pleasure of God to bestow some special blessing upon any of His children, He gives them to ask for it in faith frequently, and when we so ask we have the assurance of His hearing us, and therefore of receiving what we ask. See I John 5:14,15. If the Lord is withholding from many of His children, at this day, those special exercises of faith, which to us would be desirable, it is in chastisement, or because in His present dispensation towards His church, He sees it not required. Though really it would seem to us that we have need with the Apostles to pray: "Lord, increase our faith." Luke 17:5.

I fear I have not done full justice to this subject. I have advanced some ideas which may appear new. But experienced christians will know whether they accord with christian experience or not. If they do not, reject them. I have been led sometimes, since I commenced writing this, to doubt whether *I know anything as I ought to know*. Not whether *I know anything*, but whether I have that clear knowledge of it, which I ought to have; and this from the little experience we have of those special acts of living faith. Yours in a hope of salvation,

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, Feb.13, 1845.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.13 {1845}

An Examination.

Of certain points of doctrine referred to in the Circular of the Licking Association, for 1845.

Brother Beebe: - I remarked in my communication touching some things in the *Response* of the Licking Association, that if spared, I would examine some points handled in their Circular. I also remarked that some of the things touched therein might have reference to what I had written in the Signs; those points, and those only, I shall attend to.

One of these points is introduced in these words, "*There are those who attempt to minister in holy things, who tell us that the foreknowledge and decrees of God are synonymous. Now that the foreknowledge of God comprehends all events; past, present, and future, we presume no christian will deny; but that God irrevocably decreed all that He foreknew, is not so clear. Does not the sentiment necessarily declare God to be the author of sin?*"

There may be in Kentucky, those ministers who would make the above declaration, but I will venture to say, they are very scarce, there or elsewhere, at this day. But it looks so much like the misconstructions frequently given of the doctrine of *predestination*, that I suspect that is the doctrine alluded to. If they mean by those expressions to represent the doctrine of predestination as advocated by Old School Baptists through the Signs and other Old School papers, they have greatly missed their aim. No such doctrine as they describe has been advocated in the Signs. I know of no one who holds such. It is true the Licking brethren may find some apology for substituting the word *decrees* for *predestination*, from the fact that Doctor Gill and other writers frequently use the term *decrees* in the sense of predestination, and represent the decrees of God as including all things and events. The term I think is so used in the Philadelphia and old English Confessions of Faith.

Does not the Licking Association in her Constitution refer to the Philadelphia Confession of Faith as containing a more full and explicit summary of their faith than what they have expressed? Is it a *thirst for novelty* which has led that Association now to controvert so important an article in that Confession, which was so long held as the standard of orthodoxy among the Baptists? And does it comport with their strong advocacy of Confessions of Faith? I will here remark, that the term *decree, decreed, &c.*, are used in several hymns in Watts and Rippon, I think improperly, for *purpose* or *predestination*.

The *absolute predestination* - not decreeing - of all things, is what has been advocated in the Signs. The reason why some have opposed predestination, I apprehend, is their confounding it with decrees. The ideas conveyed by the two terms, according to their natural import, and as they are used in the scriptures, are quite different. *Decree* signifies an *edict*, or *established ordinance*; and to decree is to make known an ordinance by command or proclamation. Of course when the *decree* refers to intelligent beings, it is what they are required to observe; and when it refers to inanimate things, it points out the order which God has established for them. So it is evidently used in the scriptures. The term *decree* is used, denoting an act of God, in reference to the rain, &c. Job 28:26; in reference to the sea, Job 38:8-11; and Prov.8:29; in relation to the heavens, Psalms 148:6. The term is used to denote that order, &c., which should be established and made known for Zion by her King, "I will declare the decree," Ps.2:7; to inform Nebuchadnezzar that he must submit to the

humiliation which God had appointed for him, Dan.4:17 & 25. So the resolution adopted by the apostles under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, for the rule of the Gentiles {Acts 15:28-29} is called their decrees. Acts 16:4. We find the word repeatedly used in the scriptures, to denote the edicts and commands issued by the kings and rulers of the earth to their subjects. Thus according to the uniform use of the word *decree* in the scriptures, we may say that God's decree concerning Adam was, that he should not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; that in the day he eat thereof he should surely die. *Predestination*, on the other hand, though given in some of our dictionaries as synonymous with *decree*, from the use of it in scholastic divinity, is a formative from two Latin words, *prae* {before}, and *destinatio* {a purpose, destination, determination, &c.}, so to predestinate is formed of *prae* and *destino*, of like import. Hence to predestinate is to purpose, to determine beforehand. So the Greek word rendered to *predestinate*, signifies *to define, to bound, to determine, &c., beforehand*. Hence predestination is a counseling, purposing or determining beforehand. And these words, as is well known, relate to the conclusion a person arrives at relative to his own future management, rather than to a rule to be observed by others. Thus men predestinate, not absolutely, at least not with certainty, for whilst all is certainty with God, *time and chance happeneth to all men*. A man predestinates to build a house; he predestinates the size, the form, the kind of materials, the class of workmen he will employ, &c., and if he knew, as God knows, he would predestinate the exact time and expense it should take; and this predestination is to govern his own arrangements in contracting for, and ordering the building, &c. So God's predestination is that according to which He governs the world; and conducts all things relative to salvation and glory. It extends with the utmost precision to every event that occurs under His dominion, even to the fall of a sparrow, and to the hairs of our head, and to the small dust of the balance; for nations are counted as the *small* dust of the balance by Him; and His infinitude extends as directly to the notice of the one as the other. Mt.10:29-30; Isa.40:15. So the term predestination is evidently used in the New Testament; as in Rom.8:29, "He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son." This is not given as a rule to which the elect must conform themselves, but a declaration of what God by His grace will do with, and for them. And so in Eph.1:5.

Thus while God's decree forbade Adam's eating of the tree of knowledge, He predestinated his eating of it; that is, God foreknowing with certainty that Adam, if left to encounter

the temptation in his own creaturely weakness, would sin, predestinated so to leave him to meet the temptation, and to permit the temptation to be presented to him. So every sin which God permits to take place in the world, from the greatest to the least, from the crucifying of Christ to the parting of His garments among the soldiers, God predestinated its taking place and its working for the greater good. Acts 2:23; and 4:27 & 28; and Psalm 22:18, compared with Mt.27:35. This predestination is not a constraining the will of the individuals, but a leaving them to act it out under the attending circumstances. Thus God *works all things after the counsel of His own will*, {Eph.1:11,} permitting sin to transpire where He sees it for good, and restraining it in other cases; and constraining by His providence, or grace, to acts of goodness, &c.

As to our saying that the foreknowledge and predestination of God are synonymous, if that is what the Licking brethren mean, we do not say so. We say that from the nature of things, they must go together, and be mutually dependent one on the other. We do not admit that God predestinated any event merely because He foreknew it would take place, but because from His foreknowledge of all things and circumstances, He in infinite wisdom saw that it would be for the greater good. God cannot foreknow any event unless it is certain, because His foreknowledge is unerring; and it cannot be certain unless He has determined concerning it, and all circumstances leading to it. Thus the prophecies of God in their accomplishment, are a standing proof of His absolute predestination in all things.

We pass to another item in their Circular. It is thus introduced: "*Another error is becoming too common, even among those claiming to be Old School Baptists, namely: Denying personality in the Trinity or Godhead.*" In the course of their remarks they have also this statement: "*Yet, say some, the Son is not a person.*" What is this? Professed Old School Baptists denying *personality* in the Godhead! That is, denying individuality or distinct intellectual existence in or belonging to, the Godhead! They who would deny this, must be avowed atheists. And are there Old School Baptists found who say that the Son is not a person? That He who represented His people under the law, and represents them in heaven, and who is King in Zion, declared to be the Son of God, with power, &c.; He who is God, the Almighty, the Jehovah, is not a *real individual being!* Socinians would not thus degrade the Son of God. Certainly our Licking brethren are not justifiable in publishing such charges against Old

School Baptists, and giving them to the wind to be scattered among those who are ready to catch at anything to reproach us with. If those sentences were written inconsiderately, the association ought not to have let them pass under their sanction. If they were so worded, to render obnoxious the sentiment of those who would confine their views to just what the scriptures reveal on this point, instead of receiving what Constantine's counsel presumed to prescribe as the mode of God's existence, it is worse. I hope it was inconsiderateness of expression. If they had reference to the denial of a *tri-personality*, or the existence of *three persons* in the Godhead, and of the Son being a person distinct from the Father and the Holy Ghost, I acknowledge myself to be one who thus denies; and I do it because God has not declared Himself as so existing.

To suppose that so important a point of faith as this is represented to be, and as it would be, if God was thus three persons or individuals, is left to be inferred from the incidental use of the pronouns, would be to reflect on the faithfulness of the Holy Ghost, of whom Christ told his disciples, "He shall guide you into all truth." But as our brethren have referred to the use of the pronouns as proof to the point, I will examine their use. That they are distinctly used in reference to each of the Three who bear record in heaven, I admit. But though they are called personal pronouns, and mark definitely the distinction between first, second, or third persons, in grammatical construction, I do not admit that they uniformly point to distinct persons, or to persons at all; if not, then their use in reference to the Father, Word, and Holy Ghost, is not proof of their existing as three distinct persons: and if not distinct persons, then they are not persons distinctly. I make this last remark, because our brethren do not use the qualifying word *distinct* in their remarks, and I do not use it to misrepresent them, but to qualify what I say. That the pronouns do not always point to persons, is evident; for they may be used in reference to a horse, and yet no one would say that a horse is a person; and yet in grammatical construction *horse* is here of the *third person*. And that they do not always, in their use in the scriptures, point out distinct existing persons, I will now prove.

I bring as proof a use of the pronouns which is frequent in the scriptures, and which, for instance, is illustrated in the text, Psalm 116:7 & 8, "Return unto *thy rest*, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with *thee*; for thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling." See also Psalm 11:1; 103:1; and other

places. Our Licking brethren certainly will not say that the use of the pronouns *thy* and *thee* in this text from Psalm 116 proves David's soul to have been a person, distinct from himself, or from his body. And if they do not prove a distinction of persons in this case, how can a similar use of them in Hebrews 1:8 be proof of a distinction of persons? I do not understand this address, nor other instances where the soul is addressed or spoken of in distinction from the body, or speaker, to be mere figures of speech. There is a reference to that real distinction which exists between the soul and body of every man. This distinction is no mere nominal thing. The soul of David was a distinct something, and so was his body; and yet they were together but one and the same person - the one David. There was a propriety in David's thus addressing his soul distinctly in this case, for the rest to which he refers, is not that final rest of which the soul and body of the believer shall share in glory, but that rest which, in this life, the soul of the believer particularly enjoys by faith in Christ. The oneness of the person is thus preserved; for it is David that addresses *his soul*, &c. But I refer not to this instance to show that the existence of soul and body in one person is a correct illustration of the Trinity in unity, but to illustrate the propriety of the use of the pronouns distinctly in reference to the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, though they be not three persons, or individuals, but one individual being - one God. But again; if the use of the pronouns in Heb.1:8 - a text which our brethren take as proof - be admitted to prove the Son to be a person distinct from God who addresses Him, it proves more than they would allow, for it by the same rule proves Him to be a *distinct* God. *Thy throne, O God*, is the address. If He who addresses the Son is also proved to address Him as a distinct person, and He addresses Him as God, {see verses 1 & 9,} then each in His distinct individuality is a God, surely this makes two God's; for a person is an individual, and an individual is a single one of a species. Can our brethren by any ingenuity get clear of the conclusion of two Gods in this case, if two persons? But they will perhaps say that they do not use the term person in its proper sense as denoting a distinct individual; if so, they certainly use it improperly. Why will they persist in the use of a word which they admit does not properly convey the idea which they intend; and even make it a test of fellowship?

That use of the pronouns which I have shown the scriptures to authorize, is adapted to that revelation which God has made of Himself, as *Three* and *One*, as in this text {Heb.1:8} God addresses the Son in His distinctive relation,

and therefore addresses Him as a second person, in grammatical construction, yet at the same time addresses Him as one with Himself, for He addresses Him as God, and God is one - *one being*, and therefore *one and the same person*. Certainly our brethren must see that they cannot sustain their position concerning three persons in the Godhead, as a truth revealed of God, without better proof than is to be derived from the use of the pronouns. But they do produce what they would have received as another proof, namely: Heb.1:3, "Who being the brightness of His glory and the *express image* of His person." They ask, "If the Son were not a person, how could He be the express image of His Father's person?" True, if He were not a person, and if He were not a divine person, a *divine intellectual being*, how could He? But after examining the passage, let me propose one or two questions for the consideration of our Licking brethren.

On examining this passage, I find the antecedent to the *His* in these sentences, is not the term Father distinctly, but it is, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets;" {verse 1,} and I do not believe that the Holy Ghost made a mistake in indicting the common name *God* instead of the distinctive name *Father*, though the name Father would be very convenient here for those who want to force a proof from this third verse, in favor of tri-personality.

If it can be showed that the Father distinctive spake thus by the prophets, it can also be showed that He who is distinctively known as the Redeemer, the Son, thus *spoke unto the fathers*. See among other passages, Isa.43:10-15; 45:23-25, compared with Rom.14:10-12, and Phil.2:10 & 11; and also that the Holy Ghost thus spake by the prophets. II Pet.1:21. Not to insist now on the proof here afforded relative to the sonship of Christ, it must be manifest from the above proofs that it is God, and not the Father distinctly, which the Apostle here has in view. Again, the word *person* in this text; the original word is not that which is generally used for person or persons, but is one which means one's *subsistence*, or *real being*. Again, the Son is not an *image* merely; in that case He might have been supposed to be another being or person; but He is said to be the *express image*, the very representation, or as the original word denotes, the *distinct character*, or that by which one is known from all others. Now I would ask our brethren whether they believe that any one short of Him who is God in all His fulness, can be the *brightness of God's glory*, and the very representation of God's *real being*? Is there any that can be like God, or that can be

compared unto Him? Isa.45:18. Whatever therefore you may think, brethren, as to the Son's being some other person, or being, like or equal to the Godhead, I must conclude that the Apostle's design in these expressions was to show that whilst the Son appeared among men as God's messenger, He was the very God, having all the *fulness of the Godhead dwelling bodily* in Him. So Christ said to Philip, He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," John 14:9; and Paul speaks of Him that "*God was manifest in the flesh*," I Tim.3:16; and His name *Emmanuel*, is *God with us*. Neither in these nor in other passages, is He said to be a *distinct person of the Godhead*, but, *the God*. Why will not our brethren be satisfied with the revelation which God has made of Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Three, distinguished by different names and relations, &c., and yet each in His distinct relation being God manifested in all His divine attributes, the same one glorious Being, and divine Person; instead of representing the Son as another person, being but the image or likeness of God, or the Father if they please, as their construction of this text would imply? Hence if our brethren can bring no clearer proof than they have produced for their *three-personal* scheme, I for one cannot receive it as a scriptural doctrine. And if not found in the scriptures, however antiquated it may be, even though it can be traced back to the Nicene Council, and to the persecuting Athanasius as its father, and was established as the creed of the church by the ambitious Constantine, it is not sustained by the proper authority, and is too *novel* for Old School Baptists to subscribe to it with consistency. At least so I think for myself, but I would not wish to prescribe or think for others. However, I would like for my brethren to show me direct or clearly implied proof in the scriptures, for their views on this point, or at least show that the reasons offered herein for not receiving what they have presented as proof, are not good, before they set me aside as a heretic for not receiving their doctrine on this point.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, Nov.5, 1845.

S. Trott.

From: *SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.13 {1845}*

Not a Novice &c.

Brother Beebe: - I see by *Signs* for Dec.15, 1845, that brother Mitchell of Alabama requests my views of I Timothy 3:6 - "Not a novice; lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the

condemnation of the devil." I have never had any special light on this text; my views must therefore be such as arise from a comparison of this with other scriptures according to my understanding of them. Sickness in my family with my being much from home, prevented for a time my attending to this request.

The subject of which the Apostle is here treating, as seen by the context, is that of the qualifications for the office of bishop or elder; among other disqualifications which he mentions, is that of being a *novice*, and the reason for its being such, is assigned in the text proposed for consideration. A *novice*, properly signifies, one *new-made* a disciple, or *new-born* into the gospel faith. Such persons have not experienced enough of the warfare within, nor of the *wiles of the devil*, to serve as a proper ballast and to prevent them, if too much prompted and flattered in the church, from becoming inflated and top-heavy.

But Brother Mitchell more particularly inquires about falling into the *condemnation of the devil*. 1st. What is intended by the *condemnation of the devil*? I presume no one will seriously entertain the idea, that condemnation here as referring to the devil is to be taken in an active sense; that is, the devil sitting as judge will condemn him for being lifted up with pride. Neither do I think it will be supposed that the devil will comparatively condemn him, as being worse than himself; as our Lord said the *Ninevites should condemn that generation*. Luke 11:32. How else then can we understand this than in a passive sense; that is, as the condemnation into which the devil is fallen, or to which he is adjudged? This therefore necessarily involves in it the idea that the devil, like Adam and his posterity, is under condemnation; hence also it involves the idea that the devil was originally under the law, and therefore a creature of God.

Again; the Apostle speaks of this condemnation of the devil as a something known. He may have referred to some particular sentence of condemnation passed upon the devil and handed down by tradition, and now first confirmed by the spirit of inspiration in Paul; as was the case about *Michael and the Devil's disputing about the body of Moses*, as recorded by Jude, verse 9. But, I am inclined to the belief that this relates to the state of the devil as understood among the disciples, and as referred to in a different form in other portions of scripture. Thus Jude refers to the angels which *kept not their first estate*, as being *reserved in everlasting chains under darkness*, &c. I with some others, understand these angels to be those evil spirits called devils. So our Lord spake of the

devil not as having never been in any other state; but, as having *not abode in the truth*, as though that was the first estate in which he was created; and why? Because, *there is no truth in him*; Christ, or the Truth having been no more implanted in him, by the Spirit, than he was in Adam in his first creation. Christ says further of him, "When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar and the father of it." John 8:44. Such appears manifestly to be the condemnation into which multitudes of young upstarts have fallen, having been lifted up with pride and self-conceit; their minds evidently being *chained down under darkness* as to the truth revealed in the scriptures and are retailers, if not manufactures of false systems of religion, or lies. And even there are persons whom some of us have known, who, when they first commenced preaching, appeared to know something of the truth experimentally, but being much flattered and caressed, began to go off into the popular current; and now their minds seem entirely dark as to the authority and import of God's revelation, and are the strenuous advocates for what we understand to be doctrines of devils, or false doctrines, of which the devil is the father. Now, in my opinion, these have fallen into the condemnation of the devil; how long they will remain there is not for me to say. Such, therefore, I give as my opinion of this text in connection with those others; and I give it only as my opinion, though the text, {I Tim.4:1 & 2,} "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the last times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy," &c., I think tends to confirm the correctness of this opinion. When they depart from the faith they give heed to seducing spirits, as in themselves or in others, and to the doctrines of devils, and, of course, they fall into the same condemnation, under darkness and falsehood.

My brother, if we have been kept from this condemnation, may the same grace continue thus to keep us.
Yours, &c.,

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, Feb.13, 1846.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol. 14 {1846}

The Word was made Flesh.

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, {and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the

Father,} full of grace and truth." {John 1:14}. By the Word that was made flesh, we are to understand one of the Three who bear record in heaven, "The Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost." I John 5:7. By comparing this latter text with John 1:1, we see the propriety of the expression, "The Word was with God," as the Word is *one* of the *three* who distinctly bear record. We are also taught by thus comparing these texts, that the Three, are not merely three manifestations of God, nor three parts of God, or three distinct persons, or beings comprising the Godhead; for it is positively said that "The Word was God." Hence it is evident, though we can not comprehend the how, that God exists as Three, and so exists, that the *Three* are *One*, and that each of the Three in this peculiar relation is the One God. Hence also that the Word who *was made flesh*, was God, - not in part - but in all the fulness of the Godhead. Thus it is said "God was manifested in the flesh," I Tim.3:16; and of Christ it is said, "For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." Col.2:9. And; "There is none other God but one." I Cor.8:4.

We will now notice the declaration, "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." 1st. *The Word was made flesh*: Not that there was a transmutation of *Spirit* into *flesh*, or of the *eternal Godhead* into the babe of Bethlehem. We must understand the expression *made flesh* as explained by other texts; as the one from I Tim.3:16 - "God was *manifested* in the flesh," and Phil.2:6-7 - "Who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." Thus the being *made flesh* was a *being manifested in the flesh*; a *taking upon Him the form of a servant*; a having a *body prepared Him*. Heb.10:5. Again we are taught from Gal.4:4 - "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law," &c., that this being *made flesh* was not a mere assuming of a fleshly body, but that the term *flesh* is here used as in several other places {see Gen.6:3 - John 3:6} for the whole of manhood or Adamic nature, in distinction both from angelic nature, and the spirit of the new man. Thus the being *made of a woman*, was a being *made under the law*. But the law has dominion over man as a living soul - not as a mere body formed of the dust of the ground. So Christ speaks repeatedly of His soul in a sense in which He could not have intended merely animal life. It may be asked, Why is the strong expression used "The Word was *made flesh*," if it intended only the assuming of mankind? I answer; We are not to understand that it was merely assumed as an outward

form; but that the Word was *so made flesh*, that the manhood was *personally one* with the Word, with God, and the Man, Christ Jesus, whether viewed as the babe in Bethlehem, as growing in stature, or on the cross, was personally the Word, was God, was the Jehovah. Thus Watt's sings:

"Aaron must lay his robes away –
His mitre and his vest;
When God Himself comes down to be –
The offering and the priest."

The Word was made flesh, that He might accomplish the work of redemption and meet the demands of the law which stood against His church and which His relation to her as her Head and Husband required Him to meet. The law could not have dominion over the Godhead as such, either to demand and receive obedience, nor to inflict its penalty of suffering and death. Hence the word's being *made flesh* or *made of a woman*, was that, He might be *made under the law*. And being thus made it was no other than the Word, the God of Abraham, the Almighty God, who yielded obedience to the law in His own flesh or manhood which He *was made*, or which was made in personal union with Himself in behalf of His people. In His manhood He bore their sins, was made a curse for them, and thus by His infinitely perfect offering, and obedience, He brought in everlasting righteousness, took the curse out of the way, expiated their sins, and made an end of them, and finished transgression. For though it was only through and in His manhood of which He was born of Mary that He would be in subjection to the law, or endure its penalty; as the Godhead in itself could neither suffer, nor be in subjection as before shown, but the Word in *being made flesh*, was so God and man in one person, that the Godhead in all His fulness of attributes, carried all its powers and excellency, &c., into all that the man Christ Jesus did and suffered, and thus perfect redemption from under the law was accomplished for His people and death was conquered.

2nd. *And dwelt among us*: This embraces the whole of Christ's humiliation. His birth, His growth in stature, His susceptibility to hunger, thirst, weariness and being grieved and angered; in a word, having all the original appetites and passions of man without being disordered with depravity, being in all things made like unto His brethren; that He might *be tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin*, and be a merciful and faithful High Priest. It includes also His

ministering in common with His brethren as a servant under the law, and sharing with them in all the evils, sorrows, enmity, &c., consequent upon sin, even to the condemnation of the law, though in Himself without sin. Thus, in all the debasement of His people, He owned them as His brethren, His bride, sharing with them in this debasement, that He might raise them to share with Him in glory. As His oneness with His people was manifested in His sharing with them in the consequences of sin, so their oneness with Him shall be manifested in their sharing with Him, in His being *appointed heir of all things* and in the *glory He had with the Father before the world was*; Surely, this is love and condescension immeasurable! Well might Paul desire to know the *fellowship of His sufferings*, that is the participation His people have in what He *suffered for sins*; and *the power of His resurrection*, in His being *declared to be the Son of God with power* and their being *quicken together with Him, and raised up and made to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus*.

3rd. "And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." John may have reference to what he and Peter and James beheld - the transfiguration of Christ; and to which Peter somewhat similarly refers, II Pet.1:16-18. This however was but a view given to these disciples beforehand, of the glory that should follow His sufferings. Hence I think this text has a further reference to that full manifestation of Christ in His kingdom. Not even the disciples in this sense beheld *His glory as of the only begotten of the Father* whilst He was a minister of the circumcision and served under the law; for then He was seen in *the form of a servant*, and in the likeness of man, Phil.2:7. The Jews seem never to have beheld this glory in the Messiah, but have supposed that His kingdom would be set up like David's under the dominion of the law of Moses. None of the conditionalists see this glory of our incarnate Lord. They view Him as like the servant Moses, and as proposing salvation *as it were* by the works of the law - not by the works of the law - but *as it were* by them; that is, by creaturely activity, and mortifications, &c., "For they stumble at that stumbling stone" as did the Jews. See Rom.9:32.

But what is this glory, "The glory as of the only begotten of the Father?" 1st. How the *only begotten of the Father*? In Psa.2:7 it is said of Him when God had *set a King upon His holy hill Zion*, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." By turning to Acts 13:33 and Heb.1:3-5 we see that this relates, not to His being born of Mary, but to His being the "First begotten of the dead" {Rev.1:5}, or to His being

"declared to be the Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead." {Rom.1:4} I do not understand by this that Christ did not exist as the Son of God before His resurrection, or before His being made flesh. He existed as such from everlasting; hence it is said of Him *who is to be Ruler in Israel*, {and therefore the same, and spoken of in the same relation as in the 2nd Psalm, the King on the holy hill Zion}, that His "goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Micah 5:2. It is also said in Heb.5:8 - "Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered," which shows that He was a Son before *He learned obedience*, &c. Hence also whilst He is said to be "the beginning, the firstborn from the dead," Col.1:18, He is also said to be "the first born of every creature," and that "He is before all things and by Him all things consist." Col.1:15-17. Hence I understand the text, "Thou art my Son this day have I begotten Thee," as referring to Christ being manifested in His resurrection, to His church, as the *beloved and only begotten Son of God, in whom God is well pleased*, and to His establishing that new dispensation the spirit of which, is the spirit of *sonship* and which is distinct from the former dispensation, the spirit of which is that of *bondage*. As Christ was born of Mary He was born as *made under the law*, as He had been manifested in types, &c., to the fathers He had been only manifested through the law; but now in His resurrection He was manifested in His glory as freed from the law, having canceled all its demands against Him as the Husband and Surety of His church, and His church in Him; and therefore no longer does His relation to His people impose on Him the *form of a servant*, but He is declared the Son of God; and His people as no longer *servants*, but sons and heirs of God in Him. Now the Sonship of Christ, as declared by the resurrection, was in His relation to His church as the Head, for as such He was raised from the dead, and if this was the glory which *He had with the Father before the world was*, {and that was the glory with which He prayed the Father to glorify Him,} then His glory as Son before the world was, must have been in His relation to His church and body as its Head. See John 17:5. Whether therefore we consider Him in His being *begotten from the dead*, or in His being the *first born of every creature*, He is the *only begotten of the Father*, as Adam was of the human family, the only direct creation of God, though Eve and all his posterity were created in him, and have therefore proceeded from him, and formed in their distinct manifestations according to God's arrangement and are therefore creatures of God. So Christ was the only begotten of the Father, though in His being

begotten His *seed* or posterity were begotten in Him, and are therefore spoken of as His *seed*, being, though born of God, directly begotten of the Son as the Everlasting Father. Isa.9:6. Hence, it was, that they were predestinated to be *conformed to the image of God's Son*, "That He might be the firstborn among many brethren." Rom.8:29. Hence also it is said: "Both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one, for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." Heb.2:11. *All of one lump*, of one original production. So also whilst they are the *children which God hath given Him*, He recognizes them as brethren, saying unto Mary, "Go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascent unto my Father and your Father; and to my God and your God." Heb.2:13 & Isa.8:18 & John 20:17. Thus it is also that whilst He as Son is "appointed heir of all things," His people are *heirs of God, and joint heirs with Him*. Heb.1:2 & Rom.8:17. This relation of Christ's people to Him, alike applies, in their manifestation as sons, to His manifestation as the Son of God by His resurrection; and in their original *predestination to the adoption of children*, to His *goings forth from of old, from everlasting*. It appears to me that I tread on safe ground, being sustained by the declarations of Scripture, in going thus far in reference to the sonship of Christ as being in relation with His people, but I do not feel safe in going into the Athanasian view of the sonship of Christ, with nothing but human speculation and theological dogmatism to support it.

2nd. *What is His glory and how beheld*. His glory is that which He had *with the Father before the world was*. In this He is the *brightness of God's glory*; not the essential glory of the Godhead, for that shines as bright in the Father as in the Word - but the manifested glory of God, this centers in the manifested sonship of Christ, and outshines all the glory of the heavens. This glory is only seen by faith. Even the quickened souls see nothing of it whilst under the law, they look to God then only through the law, and therefore see nothing but wrath reflected upon them. But when faith is given them to behold God in Christ, then the glory of God's way of salvation as contrasted with their formed legal notions, and of the peculiar liberty and privilege of sonship as contrasted with the bondage of the law, bursts with heavenly splendor upon their vision; and though filled with wonder and admiration at the glorious scene before them, reflected through the gospel, yet they have no disposition, like Peter, James and John, to make tabernacles for Moses and Elias with Christ - but rather are they disposed to hear only Him as God's beloved Son in whom they see God *well pleased*. But, though the children of God

may have, from time to time, glimpses of His glory while in this dark vale, yet the fulness of this glory will not be seen by us until that prayer of our Lord has its accomplishment: "Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which Thou hast given me." John 17:24. Thus we see that this glory of the Son is not His essential glory as God, for it is *given Him* of the Father.

3rd. "Full of grace and truth." According to the parenthesis in which the preceding sentence is included, this clause should belong to the former sentence, thus, "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us full of grace and truth." And surely there was nothing but grace in the errand on which He came and dwelt among us. Grace was the moving cause; and redemption from the law, and the establishing of the *reign of grace unto salvation* was the result. Hence His people *receive grace* - not for their works - but for *grace given them in Him before the foundation of the world. And truth.* His sacrifice and blood and righteousness are not shadows like the sacrifices and ceremonies of the law; but real substance, where is no deception in trusting by faith in His blood and righteousness for pardon and acceptance with God, as there is in trusting to human efforts. Or if the meaning is that "we beheld His glory as of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth," how full of grace did the whole gospel plan of salvation, and the whole Scripture testimony concerning it appear, when we beheld Christ by faith, as contrasted with what the Scriptures and what we heard appeared to us before, all denouncing the curse against us. Now all is refulgent with love and favor, and all is beheld in beholding Christ. How *full of truth* did this sure foundation now appear as contrasted with all the foundations we had before been trying to find rest upon? The promises of God as viewed in Him are a revelation wholly of grace, and are in Him *yea and Amen*. None of those *ifs* in them which marred the excellency of the promises of the Sinai covenant and changed them in consequence of disobedience to curses. May we be enabled to keep Christ in view as the only begotten of the Father, and beholding His glory be *changed into the same image from glory to glory.*

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, June 25, 1846.

S. Trott.

From: *SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.14 {1846}*

Remarks on the Parable of the Unjust Steward, &c.

Brother Beebe: - In Signs No.12, present Volume, Brother Mitchell has a request for my views of Luke 16:9. "And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail they may receive you into everlasting habitations." This has been to me, and I believe to many others, a very difficult text to understand. One difficulty has arisen from its connection with the parable of the *unjust steward* and whether like him we are to make use of other people's property to make to ourselves friends, as the terms *mammon of unrighteousness*, that is, *riches unjustly obtained or used*, would seem to imply. Such an idea would be revolting to any one having the principle of grace. Another very serious difficulty arises from the idea of any friends we could make thereby, being to *receive us into everlasting habitations*. Hence I have formerly thought that this text was spoken ironically by our Lord to show to His disciples the absurdity of coveting after or trusting in the riches of this world. This would very well correspond with the concluding declaration, verse 13. "No servant can serve two masters, &c." But by comparing this text with I Tim.6:17-19; I conclude it is to be taken in a different sense. The passage in Timothy reads thus: "Charge them that are rich in this world that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." Indeed on a little reflection, the comparison of a disciple in his relation to his Lord, to the case of the unjust steward as here presented, appears much more close than is discovered on a superficial view of the subject. The child of grace is brought so to feel his relation and accountability to God, as to know that all he possesses whether of an earthly or spiritual nature, he holds, not as his own, but as entrusted to him as a steward by his Lord. And we are taught by this text, and the one in I Tim.6:17-19 and in other scriptures, that whatever is thus entrusted to us, is neither to be held as for our personal or family accommodations only, nor to be viewed as entrusted to us to be held close, as in trust, subject only to our Lord's personal calls, as is the case with that intrusted to worldly stewards, but is to be used to enable us *to do good*, and to *distribute* and *communicate* to our *Lord's debtors*, as

occasion and opportunity calls. Thus if gracious communications are made to us, we are not to lay them up to ourselves, but to seek to *comfort others with the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God*, and to administer the instruction which we receive; so of gifts, they are not to be *kept laid up in a napkin*, but to be employed for the *edifying of the body of Christ*. So of worldly riches, if we have them and rightly view their use, instead of supposing as is too often the case, that they are given to us to hold fast, and to make us drudges to them, till they are taken from us or we by death are taken from them, and are thus *put out of the stewardship*, we should view them as committed to us, to make us more useful, according to the station assigned us, in doing good to others, and in serving our Lord, not in person, but in His members. "The Lord commended the unjust steward because he had done wisely." So our Lord in His word commends those stewards to whom He has committed riches, when they according to worldly wisdom waste them, in distributing of them to the necessities of His debtors, especially those who are debtors to His grace, notwithstanding what human reason and self may say about the prudence, if not righteousness of holding the riches fast in their own hands to transmit to the hands of their children. But why in our text, are riches called *the mammon of unrighteousness*? Certainly not that our Lord requires His disciples to make use of any riches they may have acquired by unrighteous gain, for distributing to the poor or communicating to His saints or cause, instead of making restitution for the same. Such course only befits those who instead of trusting Christ, are for purchasing heaven and worldly glory together, by their donations and bequests. But worldly riches are fitly so termed because most of the unrighteous acts among men are done with a reference to acquiring riches. Besides they are the *unrighteous mammon* in the hands of Christ's disciples {and those are the persons He addresses,} however honestly obtained, when hoarded up by them for their exclusive personal and family use instead of being so employed as to make themselves or their wealth useful to the cause and people of Christ; seeing that He has a just claim on them and all they have. Thus it is seen that what was unjust in the steward of the parable in giving away his Lord's goods, is in substance the very use which our Lord requires His disciples to make of the goods He commits to them.

We now come to inquire concerning these *friends*, which we are *to make to ourselves*, and the *everlasting habitation*, &c. It is not said, "Make to yourselves friends *with* the

mammon of unrighteousness." In that case it would be supposable that like the unjust steward we were to make friends of those on whom we bestowed our Lord's goods, and that should be the object in bestowing them. But the direction is: "Make to yourselves friends of the," &c., that is, the friends are to be made *of the mammon of unrighteousness* and not of the persons to whom we make distribution. When we trust in riches and seek to hoard them up, *to have and to hold* for our special benefit, instead of being our friends, in reference to the heavenly mansions, they become our masters and grind us down to servitude under an earthly yoke. But when instead of trusting in them, we *trust in the living God and do good*, being *ready to distribute and willing to communicate*, according to what we have, our riches that we may have then become our friends in the christian life, they enable us to be more useful or *rich in good works*, which of course is what the christian delights in. Riches thus used become instrumental in furnishing a decisive evidence of our love to Christ in our love manifested to His members; and consequently of His love to us, and therefore of our interest in those mansions, He has gone to prepare a place in. Hence *when we fail*, when heart and flesh fail under afflictions, persecutions, &c., riches being thus made friends, instead of tying us down to earth, point our dejected spirits to those mansions in the house above, and thus in anticipation welcome or receive us into *everlasting mansions*; or as Paul has it, enables us to *lay hold on eternal life*. No wonder the covetous Pharisees who heard our Lord, derided Him. They thought more of providing earthly mansions for themselves and their children with their riches, than of securing in anticipation a reception into everlasting mansions. If this is a correct view of our Lord's instruction in the text, as I think in substance it is, how few comparatively of disciples in our day, obey the instruction, Farewell.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, August 19, 1846.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.14 {1846}

Views on Phil.3:10 & 11.

"That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."

Brother Beebe: - As your Correspondent F. refers to me as well as to yourself for an exposition of Phil.3:10-11, and you have seen fit to submit the subject to me, I will give such views as I have of the passage.

Paul having in some of the preceding verses, showed his superior religious advantages in his natural state, over many, in reference to legal or conditional acceptance, and consequently the great advantage he had on the ground of creaturely boasting; then states the great change he had experienced, in being brought to count those religious advantages which he had considered a great gain, a *loss*, a real *nuisance*, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, his Lord; and speaks of so accounting them that he might *win Christ*. The term *win* is here not used in the sense of obtaining a prize by venture or exertion, but in the sense of esteeming Christ as his *prize or gain* in contradistinction from those things he formerly counted *gain*. Then to have Christ would have been esteemed by him as a loss, now, those things he formerly prized, he knows to be *loss*, and Christ he esteems and desires as his *gain*. That is, not merely to have Him in name, but - "to be found in Him, not having," he says, "mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." How completely does the Apostle here cut off all *creaturely means* in the article of a justifying righteousness; it is *through faith* - not of works; it is *by faith*, not of the preacher or hearer, but *of God*.

Paul goes on to say in the 10 & 11 verses; "That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings; being made conformable unto His death. If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." That I may know Him: Not that Paul did not know Him as the long expected Messiah, as the God of Abraham, the Immanuel; nor that he did not know Christ crucified as the only way of salvation, as the *end of the law for righteousness* &c. But the sense here may be, the same as he told the Corinthians, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified;" that is, as the subject of gospel preaching, or the ground of gospel hope, so in reference to himself he desires to know Him as the only ground of his hope and trust. Formerly he knew many things, when under the law, as grounds of hope, such as his circumcision, his blameless life, his zeal &c., but when sin revived and he died, all the goodness of these was destroyed;

and now Christ Jesus only does he know, or even desire to know, as his trust and plea for acceptance with God. We may in some measure appreciate the force of the Apostle's expression: "That I may know Him," when we consider how prone we are to look to other things as grounds of our hope and confidence, such as our love, religious zeal, upright walk &c. Again Paul may have desired to know Christ, or God in Christ, in the sense in which he says, "now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known," I Cor.13:12, that is, he desires a more perfect knowledge of the "Only wise God our Saviour." We know but in part in reference to His exalted, glorified state. We have but a faint conception of the putting forth by our exalted Jesus of all the attributes of Jehovah for the salvation of His church and people. If we did but know Him more; know more of His love, truth, power, wisdom, and of the riches of His grace &c., we should not be so often doubting whether He could or would save such poor wandering sinners, who have no other hope. Paul partook of this imperfection of knowledge and was therefore susceptible of a growth in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ; and this he desired.

"And the power of His resurrection." In considering the *power of His resurrection*, we must remember that He died as the Head and Representative of His people, having all their iniquities upon Him, when He arose, He arose triumphant over their killing power, had expiated them, and left them buried, never to arise for His people's condemnation; and as He represented His people, in bearing sin and dying; so He in His triumph, brought them forth freed from the curse of the law. Again, He was under the law to redeem His people from under the law; to Him therefore the law looked for the redemption price as standing between His people and its demands; when therefore He came forth from its servitude, having canceled its demand, and was "declared to be the Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead," He brought them forth with Him, from bondage into the same relation of sonship to God, as *brethren* and *joint heirs* with Him; and therefore brought in a dispensation of sonship under the *new covenant* in the place of legal bondage. There His people *were quickened together with Him, and raised up together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus*. {Eph.2:5 &6.} So that when any are *born again*, they are born free from the curse, born in a state of justification, of liberty, of sonship and receive the spirit of adoption, crying Abba Father. No wonder then, that Paul wished to know the power of Christ's resurrection; to have a constant and sweet experience of it, in

enjoying the privilege and confidence of a son and heir of God; and to have an abiding sense that all this comes by Christ's resurrection. How much more glorious a state this, than that of legal servitude! What a display does it afford of the grace of God! What confidence does a knowledge of these things give in approaching God; beyond what we could have while dependent on our own faithfulness and acceptance with Him.

"And the fellowship of His sufferings." Christ in His sufferings under the law, on account of sin, and in enduring its penalty, suffered, as has been noticed, as representing His people: They have therefore a mutual fellowship or participation in those sufferings, and the redemption wrought thereby. They have thus through Christ their Head, received what the prophet calls, *Double for all their sins*; have received full punishment due for them and rendered full satisfaction to law and Justice. {Isa.40:2} No Fullerite evasion of the demands of the law, in this thing. When we so feel our sinfulness, as to query whether a just God can have compassion on such base transgressors; how comfortable to know our fellowship in Christ's sufferings, and that thereby our sins have been expiated, and justice on their account satisfied. We then know that a just and holy God can be favorable to us, notwithstanding our vileness as sinners. Alas, how few and scattered are the moments when, in this day of coldness, we know these things in real heart experience.

"Being made conformable to His death." This is an important consideration. Neither Paul, nor any other subject of grace would be satisfied with knowing the above things, whilst sin had its full dominion over them. We are told of Christ, that, "In that He died, He died unto sin once; but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God." Rom.6:10. In regeneration and the new birth we are in this thing made conformable unto His death. When the *commandment comes, sin revives and we die*. We so know and feel the exceeding sinfulness of sin, that we fully acquiesce in the justice of the sentence of death, which the law passes upon us. And instead of wishing to live any longer in our sins, we desire to be saved from them. And when born again, or brought into gospel liberty, we are born of a principle of life which lives not unto sin, but unto God. It has no delight in sin, but delights in God, and in a conformity to His will. This is a source of many doubts, particularly to young christians; these are apt to suppose that this dying unto sin, is a being delivered from the sinful propensities of nature. Hence when they feel these working in them, they fear they have been deceived in their hopes of having passed from death unto life. Paul felt the same propensities, *with his flesh he served the*

law of sin &c. Rom.7:15-25. This death unto sin has often been represented, a *being dead to the love of it*. But this helps not the matter; for the natural affections are no more changed than in nature itself. Hence we find our affections setting towards that which is sinful, like a current. As Watts expresses it:

"The fondness of a creature's love,
How strong it strikes the sense;
Thither the warm affections move,
Nor can we call them thence."

Christ did not die unto the love of sin; for He never did love it. But He died under the sentence of the law on account of the sins of His people laid upon Him. And if we have been made conformable unto His death, we die daily to all creaturely glorying, and creaturely confidence on account of finding sin mixed in every thing we do; so that we no more have any confidence in the flesh, in our gracious exercises; nor love for it or its doings; but have confidence in God and a desire after Him, and after a conformity to His will. Thus, we see the propriety of the Apostle's exhortation - "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin &c." Rom.6:11-13. No more consider sin your proper element. Again, Christ died unto the servitude of the law, and if we are made conformable unto His death, *we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but we have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father*. And therefore *we serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter*. Rom.8:15 & 7:6. Now when we are thus made conformable to Christ's death, an increased knowledge of the *power of His resurrection, and of the fellowship of His sufferings*; instead of leading to looseness of life, will lead us the more earnestly to desire *to live unto God*.

"If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." Not to stop to inquire what any supposable meanings of this text may be, I will inquire what the *resurrection of the dead* is, and let Paul answer. He says, "it is raised in incorruption; it is raised in glory; it is raised in power; it is raised a spiritual body." I Cor.15:42-44. Who that knows the internal warfare of the christian, does not, when his desires are not benumbed by the world or the flesh, desire like the Apostle to attain to this holy perfection in body as well as in spirit? Not that they are so anxious to be *sown*, or to be dead and buried; as the Apostle shows by another figure when

he says, "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; *not for that we would be unclothed*, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." II Cor.5:4. Paul with propriety illustrates the extent of the desires of the *new man* by the idea of the *resurrection of the dead*, because he well knew, that neither he, nor any other christian would realize the satisfaction of these desires, short of the resurrection of the dead, as says the Psalmist: "I shall be satisfied, when I awake with Thy likeness." Ps.17:15. That Paul designed thus to express his earnest desire after entire perfection in heart and life, and therefore did not rest satisfied with any attainments short of it, is evident, from the further explanation which he gives in the following verses of the chapter, and which those who wish for satisfaction on the subject will do well to read. Here I will stop, lest remarking further on this verse, I should touch on controversy.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, Sept. 24, 1846.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.14 {1846}

Exposition of I Kings 19:9 & 13.

Brother Beebe: - I see by the Signs, {Vol.14, No.23.} that Gera Gether, or a *pilgrim in the valley of trial*, or *searching*, requests from me an exposition of the inquiry: "What doest thou here, Elijah" {I Kings 19:9.} It seems a little singular that one inhabiting the *Hill country of Judea*, so nigh Jerusalem, should ask an exposition of one who has never got any nigher to the temple than the *valley of Achor*, or at most to visit Bethel to prophecy against the altars and calves there. And there being now as in the days of Amas, some *Amaziah's* that object to prophesying at Bethel because it is the *king's chapel*; and I not liking as did Amas to turn and prophecy against them, I have been disposed like Elijah to flee; and it may be that as in the case of another prophet who prophesied against the altar at Bethel, a lion may meet and slay me. For if I have ever received any commission from the Lord as more immediately impressed upon me, it is to prophecy or bear testimony against the errors which I find in Israel. But this produces discussion, and discussion being forbidden in the *king's court*, the Signs, I choose not to appear there, unless when called there by some one; and then if discussion follows I shall have one to share the blame with me. But if spared I may *drop my word* in Judea or in some other place. Thus far

may suffice, as a reply to any reproof which this *pilgrim* may have intended to administer to me by his text; and as it may be a vain fancy of mine that he designed any such thing, but really desires from me an exposition of the text. I will give such as I have. As Melchisedec was designed to fore-shadow the kingly and priestly offices of our Lord as combined and as having the *counsel of peace between them both*; so Elijah seems to have fore-shadowed the ministry of John as precursory to the manifestation of the Messiah, or the setting up of the kingdom of heaven, or gospel dispensation and the co-sequent downfall of the legal dispensation. Hence John was prophesied of under the name of Elijah; Mal.4:5; and it was said of John by the angel, "He shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias &c." Luke 1:17. As Elijah stood at the mount of God, Horeb, which signifies - *alone, solitary* or *desolate*, he was a complete illustration of the law, and legal dispensation and their termination as a ground of acceptance with God. As representing the legal dispensation and its bearing, he had called down a three year's drought and famine on the land; he had been miraculously fed with temporal food during that time; he had been answered in his vindication by the *fire of the Lord* which consumed his sacrifice and the wood and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench, as though nothing would satisfy its craving appetite; he had slain the priests of Baal; he had proclaimed the sound of abundance of rain, and had gone up to the top of Carmel, and placed himself in a suppliant waiting posture, until a little cloud was seen rising like a man's hand. But when threatened with death by Jezebel he finds himself without power to resist, without a shield or sanctuary to protect him; he has to flee for his life; and whilst abundance of rain came to water the parched earth & dispel the famine, he is found traveling forty days, through a desert on the strength of the bread and water with which he had been fed by the angel under the Juniper tree, and at length finds himself at the mount of God and is met with the searching question: "What doest thou here, Elijah?" So the legal dispensation, or Sinai covenant, could give temporal mercies, and miraculous supplies of food, and deliverances; it consumed the many sacrifices offered, and still called for more to feed its fire, no creaturely offering could satisfy its demand, "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin;" {Heb.10:4.} Hence it ultimately consumed the temple, the city and the nation. No offering, but the Lamb, God had provided for sacrifice could satisfy its demands. For a long time before the coming of John, there had been a drought and

famine in the land; "Not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water; but of hearing the word of the Lord;" in the meantime, like Elijah on the top of Carmel those *who looked for consolation in Israel*, were in a waiting posture expecting the coming of Messiah, like Simeon and Anna; a sight of the very budding of the Messiah's reign, like the little cloud of the size of a man's hand, led old Simeon as he took the child Jesus in his arms, to cry out: "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation," &c. Luke 2:25-28. As Elijah previous to his long famine or fast was fed by an angel in the strength of which food he went his long journey, so the last of the prophets was named *Malachi* or *my angel*, and on the strength of his prophecy the Jews continued looking for the coming of Elijah and He who was called Christ. But alas when He *came to His own* they did not receive Him, and though there was abundance of the rain of gospel grace, they as a nation dwell in a dry land and desolate; their legal righteousness, and zeal for God as declared in the law of Moses, never could enable them to take hold of gospel grace or to receive Christ as He was revealed. And when they come to the mount of God, the full manifestation of mount Zion or kingdom of God, and doctrine of Christ is more searching to them, than the inquiry to Elijah, "What doest thou here," it is *like a refiner's fire and like fuller's soap*. Mal.3:2,3. And as the name Horeb signifies - desolation - so *their house is left unto them desolate*. Luke 13:35. And as Elijah instead of being able to say in reply to that inquiry, Lord I have come to restore Israel to thy favor, makes intercession against them, saying "The children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars &c." So the Sinai covenant instead of giving them a right to the blessings of Messiah's reign; required that the wrath of God should come upon them to the uppermost; and that the fire thus kindled against them *should burn unto the lowest hell*. Deut.32:22; I Thes.2:16. Thus, were we to pursue the figure in reference to the sinner laboring under the law until he comes to the mount of God we should find the parallel holding good. I will just glance at some of the particulars. First; however much others may get their passions excited &c., this poor creature goes for months and sometimes for years without any meltings of heart which he can acknowledge as such; he can obtain neither dew nor rain, all seems to be a famine and parched up within him. Second; Everything he brings forward - reformation, prayers and all - is consumed by the fire of the law, water them as he may by his tears, the fire or demands of the law, consumes all, and calls for more, even

his own destruction. Sometimes he tries to flee from the whole, concludes that it is of no use, there is no hope for him, and wishes to die; yea may be strongly tempted to take his own life. Third; As he thus lays as one alone, and tries to find rest, an angel or some sweet power awakes him, sets food before him, and bids him to eat, that is, applies some scripture or some circumstance to his case, and perhaps repeats it and in the strength of this, that is in the hope of yet finding mercy, he goes, sometimes for a longer period than Elijah did, till he comes to the mount of God. This figure of the angel thus administering food and strength to Elijah appears to me a most lovely representation of that secret strengthening and encouragement the poor soul meets with at times when he is about to faint by the way. If it might be proper for me to mention my own experience or any part of it in the *King's court*, I would say that I look with admiration at the encouragement I received from a part of the words of the text, Phil.1:6, being presented with some force to my mind. "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." I was strengthened by it to persevere, and do not recollect of receiving either dew or rain from the *cloud* for nearly three years after, nor any other moisture excepting what arose from my own perspiration from hard labour under the law, that is; my self-gratification which I at times felt at my great zeal and attention in what I then considered religious duties, but which I afterwards saw to be the greatest sins of my life. Fourth; When the sinner comes to the mount of God it is *Horeb* to him, he is as one *alone* and *desolate*, as I have already noticed the import of that word to be; he stands before God as one by himself, justly condemned and lost, whoever else may be saved. To the enquiry: "What doest thou here?" he has nothing to say but to cry for mercy, whilst the law as did Elijah, pleads for punishment. See Rom.11:2 & 3.

But Elijah had another lesson to learn, that he might know something of the distinguishing nature of gospel grace as having a power above the law. He is ordered to "Go forth and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And behold the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountain, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake, a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire." Thus the law with all its tremendous display of authority and power, leaving man to his own will, often passes by and leaves him unmoved, though when Christ summons him to judgment he will then sink under

its curses; but, "After the fire a *still small voice*. And it was so when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entering in of the cave." He felt that the Lord was in it, and therefore in self-abasement he hid his face, as did Moses when God called to him out of the burning bush, &c., {Ex.3:6,} and as did the *seraphim with twain of their wings*, Isa.6:2. It was a *still small voice*; *still*, not outwardly heard; *small*, not boisterous; yet it was a *voice* in which the power of the Lord was heard and took effect. Herein is the mystery of the operation of gospel grace: Men cannot learn it by the outward ear; neither the excitements of the passions, nor the power of eloquence, nor the thunderings of the law, can affect and humble the creature as does this *still small voice*. "Not by might nor by power but by my Spirit saith the Lord of hosts." But further, Elijah being thus prepared for the information, is told of the Lord, that, what he had not known as representing the Sinai covenant, and what he had not been able to accomplish by prophesying against the sins of Israel, and denouncing upon them the judgments of God, distinguishing, reigning grace, had accomplished. "Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him." ver.18. See also Rom.11:2-4. Paul after quoting this, says, "Even so at this present time also there is a remnant," according to what? According to John's preaching repentance, and baptizing with the baptism of repentance? No! "According to the election of grace." "And if by grace, then is it no more of works;" no more of the works of the preacher, nor the works of the law performed by the hearer. See Rom.11:5 & 6. The connection of the subject would seem here to call for a few remarks illustrative of the fact of John's coming in the spirit and power of Elijah or Elias, but I forbear. The enquiry, "Why did the prophet of the Lord flee before Jezebel?" may be taken in two ways. First; Why did the Lord leave His prophet thus to flee? To this I would answer; because it was necessary to carry out the figure as I have shown. Second; Why Elijah, in reference to himself after having obtained such a victory over the priests of Baal and of the grove, and having received such a distinct manifestation that he was owned of God as His prophet, did flee at the threat of Jezebel? The answer to this is, he was then left of God to himself, and the consequence was, he showed himself, in himself, to be a poor, weak, cowardly fellow, like any of us. Hence it was manifest that it was not by any power or holiness of his own, those wonders had just been wrought; but that it was God working in him. Well might James say that "Elias was a man of like passions as

we are," and bring him to view as showing that *the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man* is something more than mere creaturely desires and petitions. James 5:16-18. Elijah showed his being of like passions with us, not only in fleeing from Jezebel, but also in that because he had been left to himself and was confounded, he wished to die, and prayed the Lord *to take away his life, for he was no better than his fathers*, verse 4.

Perhaps Gera will not thank me for the exposition given, as not being satisfactory; but I perhaps ought to thank him for proposing the subject to me, for in reflecting on it, I have been led to some views concerning Elijah, &c., which I had not had before. Yours affectionately,

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, Dec.16, 1846.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.15 {1847}

Parable of what has been called the Prodigal Son.

Having been requested in a letter from brother James P. Howell of Michigan to give through the Signs my views of the Parable in Luke 15:11-32; I will extend this communication, with your permission, Brother Beebe, to the giving of my views of it. This passage, is not by itself directly styled a parable, though from its connection with the parable of the lost sheep, {Lk.15:3-7}, and from its style, it has been generally, and I think rightly understood to be a parable. By a parable is understood a similitude, or relation, founded upon things natural or commonly believed, and designed to illustrate things spiritual; the persons or things therein mentioned being designed to illustrate characters spiritually, and the events related, to illustrate divine truth. But as these circumstances are such as relate to things natural, it is perhaps an error to suppose that in all cases, every incidental circumstance has a correspondency in that which is prefigured.

Brother Howell wishes to know *who* or *what characters* {to express his queries in my own language} are designed by *the two sons; when the younger left his father's house;* and what was the *design of the parable in general*. The design of the parable, I understand, was primarily to illustrate more fully and distinctly the two characters brought to view in the commencement of the chapter, the publicans and sinners as

the one; and the Pharisees and Scribes as the other, and to show the *purpose of the grace* of God toward the former.

Before we proceed to enquire who are represented by the *two sons* it seems proper to enquire who is designed by the *father*. Generally I believe, persons, who have attempted an illustration of this parable, have assumed the idea the God is immediately intended by the father; but I am led to the conclusion that Abraham is immediately intended. This idea is certainly countenanced by the fact that Abraham is prominently brought to view in the New Testament as having two sons, two distinct seeds, the one *born after the flesh*, the other *of promise*; the one natural, the other spiritual. Abraham occupies a peculiar station in the Scriptures. This name *Abram*, signifies *high-father*; this was altered of God to Abraham, signifying a *father of multitude* or *many nations*. Rom.4:11-18; to his being the father of *all them that believe, though they be not circumcised* or *be of the law*, or of his natural seed. He stands also at the head of the two covenants, or as the father of those existing under each of the two covenants, the earthly Jerusalem and the Jerusalem which is above; Hagar and Sarah representing these two covenants figuratively. Gal.4:21-31. He represents both covenants, or testaments, in the case of his offering his son Isaac. In binding him and taking the knife to slay him, he evidently represented the law as about to inflict its penalty; and in taking the *ram and offering him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son*, he no less evidently represented the new covenant in its provision of a substitute, a sacrifice for God's Isaacs, those who as Isaac was, are the children of promise. Gen., chapter 12 and Gal.4:28. It is frequently said that Abraham was a type of Christ; I find no authority for it in the Scriptures. Christ is declared to be Abraham's seed, Gal.3:16. In the parable of the *rich man and Lazarus*, {Luke 16:19-31,} the rich man I think represents the self- righteous Jews; and Lazarus is said to be carried, when dead, by angels, to *Abraham's bosom*, which can mean no less than his being put in possession of the full blessing of the new covenant; Abraham thus representing it. On the other hand the rich man calls Abraham father, and Abraham recognizes him as his son. Perhaps I have thus sufficiently fortified my position that Abraham is the intended father in this parable. Of course the two sons must mean his two seeds, the *natural*, and *spiritual seeds*; as Paul said on another occasion, "That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, afterwards that which is spiritual," I Cor.15:46, so in this case, the types as in Ishmael and Isaac, and in Esau and Jacob, represent the natural seed as the first-

born, of course the spiritual seed is the younger son. The law as spiritual must therefore be the younger son's portion. But these spiritual ones, first exist as natural persons, and as such hold on to as long as they can in common with Jews; and which like Saul of Tarsus they esteem as *gain*. On the other hand the covenant of circumcision, including the Sinai covenant, and all therein promised in the letter of them, relative to the land of Canaan, &c., was the elder son's portion. Thus was divided unto them, Abraham's living, that which God secured unto him by covenant.

The enquiry next in order, is, *when did the younger son receive his portion and leave his father's house?* Of course not until he began to exist as Abraham's seed, or had spiritual life imparted to him. The idea appears to be this, that the elect of God, whether Jews or Gentiles, whilst in a state of nature, are living, in common with the nation of Israel, as under Abraham's roof, that is, they, like the Jews, expect justification, as Paul says, "*As it were by the works of the law.*" Rom.9:32. They feel at home there, as well as in the possession of an earthly inheritance, like the Canaan of the Jews. But when quickened by the Spirit, they begin to desire the *portion of goods that falleth to them*; that is, they desire to know more of God and of His law, and also to *gather all together*, or in other words to bring every good thing and good feeling &c., forward that they can, to render themselves righteous and acceptable to God. But they soon find that the law is spiritual, that they have to do with a God who searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins; the consequence is, they feel no longer at home in the possession of the things of this world, nor under Abraham's roof, or the Abrahamic covenant, nor sheltered by anything substituted for it, they willingly retreat from all such shelters; and indeed find themselves strangers in a strange land, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel; and as soon find all their *substance wasted by riotous living*, their good hearts, good deeds, sincere seeking &c., all gone, all vilely cast away as they think, by their carnality, their badness of heart, &c. Then comes a *famine*, they have spent *their labor for that which is not bread*; they are in a starving situation; they cannot feed upon their tears or prayers, they are loathsome. *He joined himself to a citizen of that country*. Many such citizens there are, who only know God and the things of religion by education, who are ready to receive these prodigals and give them such employment. *And he sent him into his fields to feed swine*. This would look like making legal preachers of these children of Abraham. They however get but few of them so far entangled as that; though they may get

many of them into their churches, or have done so in times past. Some of them stay there starving, without coming to themselves, probably till near their death, and then experience deliverance. Others may have Abraham's faith given them to receive Christ as their righteousness, and yet be so entangled in mind, or by family connections, or by being put forward and into office in those churches, that they still remain in those fields, until God takes them away. Others come to themselves and come out. But to return to the import of the parable in this thing. *The joining himself to a citizen of that country*, seemed designed to show the propensity of these perishing sinners to adhere to the suggestions of *natural reason*, which is indeed a citizen of that country, and to be persuaded by it, or which is the same by their unbelief; that there can be no hope of God's saving them as they are, they must in some way become better; and as they have failed of coming up to the law, they must try to love God, and to repent and believe, and that God will meet them on this ground. The idea of *sending them into the field*, is that reason provides no shelter for the sinner, it leaves such *cast out into the open field, to the loathing of their persons*. *The feeding swine*, as these are unclean animals and fond of filth, show that they succeed no better in performing the work of prayer and repentance &c., than in doing the works of the law; their hearts are seen to be so corrupt that the tears they shed are so polluted therewith as to be fit for nothing but for the swine to wallow in, and none but swinish multitude could be satisfied with them. *And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks {the outside shells} which the swine did eat, and no man gave unto him*. These poor sinners would be satisfied, if they could, with the outside repentance and faith, and perhaps at times fret that God does not meet and bless them in their praying and weeping before Him. But no man gave unto them, either to be satisfied with the outward shell of religious exercises; or which perhaps is the true meaning of this sentence, no man gave unto them bread that they could eat, or gave them the *bread of life*, they heard it preached, but it was not for them.

And when he came to himself; when these come to know themselves, come to their proper place as creatures of God, they see their entire, dependence on Him to sustain them in existence; and their no less dependence on His sovereign mercy to save them. They with this prodigal say *how many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger*. Yes, they look around them and see multitudes who are working for hire, as mere day laborers, under the law of the Abrahamic covenant, who seem to have

plenty of goods, or that for which they expect acceptance, but alas, for me! says this poor one, I am such a sinner; there is none like me; there is but one thing left for me; that is, *I will arise and go to my father*. For what? Again to attempt to obtain justification by the deeds of the law? No, not that. Is it then to declare off from all relationship to your father, and to live in the full indulgence of sin, as without law, seeing you have no hope of salvation? No, no! What then? To give honor to God and the law; I will, say, *Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants*. This exercise of these experimentally lost sinners, is fitly represented as going back to Abraham as a father; for, "Though Abraham be ignorant of them, and Israel acknowledge them not" yet it is a going back to the law of which, as has been showed, Abraham was a covenant head, to honor it in its sentence, and to acknowledge the justice of God in their condemnation, and to renounce all claim to be accounted as Abraham's sons, or to receive the blessing promised to his seed. And this expression put into the mouth of this returning son, *Make me as one of thy hired servants* is strikingly illustrative of the truly subdued spirit of those who are thus humbled before God. For though all hope of justification by the law, from such, is gone, yet let what will become of them, they do not wish to sin against God, but rather to continue to serve under the restraints of the law, though it be but serving as *hired servants*, having no claim to Abraham's blessing *as sons*.

"*And he arose and came to his father.*" Yes, these poor sinners are no sooner brought to this *last resolve*, than in true supplication of heart, true lifting up of their souls to God, they cast themselves upon His mercy. "*But when he was yet a great way off*" - No exercise of the sinner brings him nigher or gives him to feel that he is nigher to God; God must come to him. "*His father saw him, and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.*" His father saw him, saw his heart thus humbled and prepared for receiving pardon. And ran and fell on his neck, &c. This illustrates that first exercise the sinner passes through in experiencing deliverance. Suddenly and unexpectedly, as expressed by the *father's running*, the cloud is removed, the sense of wrath taken away, and peace and joy fills his mind. Still it seems impossible that he should be an heir of salvation, he is if anything more sensible of his vileness and unworthiness; and therefore with the son says, "*Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight and am no more worthy to be called thy son.*" But the delightful peace he feels in being resigned into the hands of God, who, he now

sees is *Love*, together with the consequent hope of salvation, prevents his going further and saying, *make me as one of thy hired servants*. The father without appearing to notice the sentence of condemnation he pronounces against himself, "*Said to his servants, bring forth the best robe and put it on him and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet, and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it and let us eat and be merry. For this my son was dead and is alive again, was lost and is found.*" There is work for gospel ministers to do, this is the proper sphere for the gospel ministry toward sinners, the pointing them to the Lamb of God. The whole of the above quotation, illustrates that view which is now given to the sinner through the gospel, as preached or as in some way brought to his mind, of the atonement of Christ and the consequent effect. I say, *now given*, as being the next view given, though hours, and even days may intervene, between his experiencing that peace, and his viewing Christ by faith; and he may endure much of distress in the mean time lest he was deceived in that peace and that as his burden is gone, he is in a worse state than before. *Bring forth the best robe*; Christ as of God made unto him righteousness, through that perfect satisfaction He rendered in His obedience and death, to law and justice, which as the sinner now sees by faith, was wrought for such lost sinners as he is. Well is this called the *best robe*, as far surpassing any righteousness which Israelites could attain to under the law, or even the righteousness of angels. *And put a ring on his hand*. He is led to view the everlasting love of God in Christ; and to feel that it embraces him. *And shoes on his feet*. He is made to feel that his poor crippled feet are bound up by the promised grace of God, to go forward in obedience to the commands of the Lord. *And bring hither the fatted calf and kill it and let us eat and be merry*. The sinner is thus led to rest in the atonement of Christ, receives and rejoices in Christ's *flesh as meat indeed* and in His *blood as drink indeed*; as that which his soul relishes, and on which he can live as before God. Now as *Abraham is the father of all that believe*, this is properly represented as coming and being received as a son of Abraham; as a partaking of Abraham's faith, and a receiving the blessing of Abraham; a being *grafted in and made to partake of the root and fatness of the olive tree*. {By which I understand the promise made to Abraham and his seed.} See Rom.4:11; Gal.3:14 & Rom.11:17.

"*For this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.*" He was lost and dead as under the law, but was found and raised to newness of life by the promised

blessing. For, "The law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect." - Gal.3:17 - "*And they began to be merry.*" Both this now believing son of Abraham, and the other members of his spiritual family, who hear what the Lord has done for his soul.

The account given in the remaining verses, of the elder son's conduct on the occasion, is characteristic of the conduct, not only of those Pharisees mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, but also of the Jews toward the gospel in its being preached to, and received by the Gentiles. His declaration to his father, "*Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment; and yet thou never gavest me a kid that I might make merry with my friends,*" is strikingly descriptive of them and of their situation under the law. Not that Israel never transgressed the law, but they esteemed themselves at that day as living up to it; see the Pharisee's prayer, Luke 18:11 & 12. Neither the covenant of circumcision, nor the law *gave them a kid*; they provided no substitute for them, but demanded *all* of them, even the daily and special sacrifices; all depended on their obedience.

The declaration of the father, "*Son, thou art ever with me and all that I have is thine,*" is appropriate in the mouth of Abraham toward the Jews his natural seed in the line of Isaac and Jacob; for they were included with Abraham in the covenant of circumcision; and all that God gave to Abraham in that covenant, including the land of Canaan, was theirs and that forever. The declarations of the covenant were, "I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant," &c. Gen.17:7 & 8. The further declaration of the father, "*It was meet that we should make merry and be glad, for this thy brother was dead,*" &c., also befitted Abraham toward them. Because they had been taught in their Scriptures to expect that the Gentiles, even all families of the earth should share in the blessing promised to Abraham and to his seed; and also by the type of Isaac as the child of promise, as well as by the prophets, that Abraham should have a spiritual seed; and of course a seed that should be their brother as they were the brother of Ishmael. It was, therefore, meet that they should be glad and welcome the bringing of their spiritual brother from the dead: *for Abraham their father rejoiced to see the day of Christ; he saw it and was glad;* and the day of Christ was the day of this spiritual seed's being made manifest. John 8:56.

I have given and endeavored to sustain the views I have of this parable; if brother Howell, brother Beebe, or any other

brother does not consider them supported by the testimony, I would be glad that either of them would give a more scriptural and consistent view of it.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, Sept.23, 1847.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.15 {1847}

Difference between the Spirit of God & Grace of God.

Brother Beebe: - An esteemed sister has, by letter, requested me in behalf of a third person, to give my views through the Signs on two or three different subjects. This I propose to do with God's permission and your consent. I shall write and send on the communications as I have opportunity to be at home, and to attend to them. If in connection with the communications recently sent on, you should judge I am crowding too fast upon the columns of the Signs, considering the feelings of brethren averse to my occupying them with my opinions, you must let them lay over as prudence may direct. I feel an unpleasantness in burdening the Signs with my views, contrary to the wishes of so many of the brethren, {and if I write, I must write my own views,} but on the other hand when brethren request my views, I think it a duty to comply. I will however try on the subject now before me, on which I shall probably differ from some, not to present my views in a controversial shape.

The first subject proposed is, *What is the difference between the Spirit of God, and the grace of God?* Our first enquiry will be, What are we to understand by the Spirit of God? The term Spirit of God is used, I think generally, if not in every instance, to denote the essential Holy Ghost. It is evidently so used in Gen.1:2; Job 33:4; Mt.3:16; I Cor.3:16 compared with 6:19 and other places. Understanding therefore the Spirit of God to be the same with the essential Holy Ghost, I view Him as no other than God, the one God. Permit me to assign some reasons for so viewing Him. My first reason is, He is so mentioned in the Scriptures in connection with the Father and the Word or Son, as to present the three to view as *One*, and therefore *equal*. Thus in I John 5:7; "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one," the three being one must be equal. None will I presume deny that the Father as such is

God: and Old School Baptists will allow, however scripturally or unscripturally they may arrive at the conclusion that, the Word is God; how then can they satisfy themselves that the Holy Ghost is not God? So Mt.28:19, "Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Here it is not in the *names*, but *in the name*, showing a oneness as their name is *one*.

My second reason for believing that the Spirit of God, being the same with the Holy Ghost, is God, is, that the term God is repeatedly used as a synonym or in the place of these terms. Thus in Acts 5; lying unto the Holy Ghost, verse 3 is said to be lying unto God in verse 4; and that in the most positive terms. "Thou hast not lied unto men but unto God." So in I Cor.3:16 & 17, the *Spirit of God dwelleth* in the saints, constitutes them the *temple of God*. So also I Cor.6:19, the *body* of the Corinthian brethren, is called the *temple of the Holy Ghost*, and in II Cor.6:16, they are said to be the *temple of the living God*.

My third reason is that those things which are ascribed in the Scriptures, to the Spirit or Holy Ghost, can only be attributed to God. As for instance omnipresence is ascribed to Him, in the promise that He shall abide forever with the saints, and of course in all places where they may be; John 14:16, so also in Ps.139:7. Second, His *searching all things, yea, the deep things of God*, shows that He is no less than God. Third, Divine sovereignty and personality is distinctly ascribed to the Spirit, I Cor.12:11; "But all these worketh that one and self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will." Owing to my views in reference to personality, having been so unwarrantably represented in certain Circulars &c., it seems important that I should here explain myself a little. I have opposed and still oppose the idea of three distinct persons in the Godhead as involving the idea of three Gods. I presume the advocates of that system will not contend that their three persons, are human or angelic persons, they must therefore consider them as divine persons. Three human persons can be nothing less than three human individuals, men or women, how then can three divine persons be any less than three divine individuals, or Gods? God is evidently a divine person because He is an individual distinct in existence from all other beings, and the term person is used in Heb.1:3; in reference to God. As I understand the revelation which God has made of Himself, He has revealed Himself as existing as three, and yet as being one, one God; thus the Father as such, is distinct from the Word and Holy Ghost as such, yet He is God, the one God in all His fulness, and therefore as God is a divine person.

So the Word and Holy Ghost each as such is distinct from the Father, and from each other, and yet each is God, and therefore as God is a divine person. Hence, each is a divine person as He is God, and therefore there can no more be three persons in the Godhead, than there are three Gods. In the text above quoted, as the Spirit is evidently spoken of as a person, dispensing gifts according to *His own will*, He cannot be a mere emanation from God, or an attribute of God, but must be God. Thus I understand the Apostle as directly asserting in verses 4,5 & 6 of context, he says: Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, - not in distinction from the gifts and administrations, but in reference to them, "but the same God which worketh all in all." Thus showing that the Spirit and the Lord are each the same God. In addition to all this, when I consider that the Spirit united with the Lord God in sending the Lord, the Redeemer, {Isa.48:16 & 17,} and that the Spirit prepared a body for Him and quickened Him when put to death, {See Mt.1:20 compared with Heb.9:14 and 10:5, also I Pet.3:18,} I cannot conceive that we are to understand from the revelation made of Him, that He is any other than God. Indeed I cannot apprehend that any advantage can be gained even to those who would explain away the mystery of God's existence, by viewing the Holy Ghost as a mere power or emanation from God. I certainly should be sorry for myself to have to believe that He on whom we must depend as a Comforter and Guide, a Helper of our infirmities, the Inditer of our prayers, and of the Scriptures, is any less than God. See John 14:16; 16:13; Rom.8:26,27 & II Pet.1:21. But the terms, Spirit, Spirit of Christ, Spirit of life &c., are frequently used in the Scriptures to denote that spiritual life which is imparted to the elect in regeneration, and is so to be understood even when printed with a capital S. We find these terms so used, Rom.8:2,9 & 10, as well as in other places. It is very common among men to denominate this spiritual life, *grace*; but I know of no text of Scripture in which the term grace is definitely so used. It is used to denote the sovereign love and favor of God as reigning in and throughout the everlasting covenant and gospel dispensation as distinguished from the conditions and wrath of the law. Hence, not only is salvation in the whole ascribed to grace flowing from God's love to the objects of it in Christ Jesus, independent of all works done by them as children of Adam, but thus different branches also and parts of it, are thus ascribed to grace, as being of God's appointment in love, and not of the creatures procuring, and that; even down

to the privilege granted to Paul to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to suffer the persecutions and trials incident thereto. See Eph.3:8 & Phil.1:7. As therefore all and every part is of grace, the term grace is frequently used in the Scriptures to denote particular privileges or blessings bestowed as in Phil.1:7 just referred to, in which the Phillipian brethren are represented by Paul to be partakers of his grace, in being partakers of his bonds or similar persecutions, and of laboring for the defense of the gospel. In this view of the use of the term grace, we see there is a propriety in denominating the spiritual life of the believer, grace, though, as before remarked we do not find it so called in the Scriptures. It is certainly of the sovereign favor of God that it is imparted to any of us. Thus we see that the difference between the Spirit of God and the grace of God is this; that the grace of God is the sovereign acting out of His love, toward the objects of His favor; and that the Spirit of God, is God Himself in His distinct relation and manifestation as Holy Ghost. I have aimed to confine myself in this communication, with one exception to the immediate subject of the enquiry, otherwise I might have extended the remarks on personality to a notice of the distinct relation, of Jesus Christ as the one Mediator, as being evidently a personal relation, as also on the use of the term Holy Ghost, in some instances to denote an emanation from the Holy Ghost, as in Acts 2:2 & 3 compared with verse 16 & 17. But this is sufficiently extended, and if I have succeeded in illustrating the subject correctly, may the Lord be thanked.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, Nov.17, 1847.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.15 {1847}

What are the Conditions of Salvation?

Brother Beebe: - The next subject on which my views are requested is embraced in this inquiry: What are the Conditions of Salvation?

If the term *condition* were at all admissible in reference to that which is the sovereign act of Jehovah, I would give these as the conditions of salvation, namely: 1. That there are guilty, justly condemned sinners to be saved; and 2. That a way was provided in which God is just in saving sinners or in justifying the ungodly. These are certainly inseparable from the idea of salvation though not conditions in the common

sense of the term. If we were not sinners ruined in ourselves, and already condemned by the just and unchangeable law of God, we had not been proper subjects of salvation; but on the contrary would still be *probationers*; that is would be in such circumstances that our future destiny whether of happiness or misery would depend on our acts or the course we take. Could we get to heaven under such circumstances, it would be as much the consequent result of our own acts, as would be our going to hell in pursuing a different course; hence there could no more be salvation in the one case, than there would be unjust oppression in the other. So also in reference to the other circumstance or condition, justice must be satisfied; the law of God must be canceled in its demands or it would forever bar the flowing of grace to the sinner: God *cannot deny Himself*. Hence the grand leading subjects of revelation are that these circumstances actually exist, or that these conditions are fully met in reference to all who are chosen to salvation. Thus the use of the law on the one hand, to show our guilt and condemnation; "That sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful." See Rom.7:7-13 & 3:19, 20. So on the other hand, the gospel is a declaration of Christ Jesus having magnified the law and made it honorable, and being *the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth*; and hence, of redemption and salvation in Him. Of Him it is said, "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare I say at this time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Rom.3:25 & 26. Hence the justice of God is manifested in fully acquitting and justifying all them that believe in Jesus though in themselves *they have sinned and come short of the glory of God*, and are justly condemned by the law. So in christian experience, none can receive the hope of salvation in truth until they know themselves sinners, ruined and justly condemned by the law; and by faith know that God is just in pardoning and saving sinners alone through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. On the other hand he that knows and feels his just condemnation as a guilty transgressor of the law, and the deep pollution of his nature and acts so as to have lost all hopes of escaping the curse by any thing of his, is the very character, whom, as declared in the Scriptures, Christ came to save. He *came to seek and to save that which was lost*. And he that by faith knows and receives Christ as the end of the law for righteousness, his hope for salvation resting upon a foundation that can never fail, is according to the Scriptural

decision, a saved one.

But I presume the inquirer had in view conditions according to the common notion of the term; something found in us or done by us, which at least gives us the ground to hope for acceptance with God; such as our repenting, believing, sincerely seeking and loving God, &c. The natural mind becomes so completely imbued with this notion of conditions, by hearing and reading of them so much, as set forth by men, that even believers frequently, notwithstanding what they have been taught of themselves, and of Christ's full work, will be looking for some of these conditions as an encouragement to hope, instead of looking to Christ. Hence the propriety of discussing this subject. In contradiction to all notions of conditions performed by creatures interposing in the work of salvation; 1st. We are taught that "Salvation is of the Lord," that "He that is our God is the God of salvation." The consideration that He claims salvation to be of Himself; and that He is self-existent and absolutely independent, that everything else exists of and from Him, and therefore that He cannot be influenced to act from anything out of Himself, shows that salvation being of Him, it must be exclusively of Him. Were He induced to save by the creature's performing certain conditions, He would be controlled in the act by the will of the creature, and could no longer justly claim the sovereignty He does, when He says, "I even I am the Lord {Jehovah} and besides me there is no saviour. I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed when there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God, &c. Isa. 43:11-12. 2nd. The fact that those who are saved were, *from the beginning chosen to salvation*, and therefore before they actually existed or had *done any good or evil*, effectually excludes all conditions or works done by the creature. See II Thes.2:13, Rom.9:11. 3rdly. Salvation as wrought out is embraced in redemption; it is redemption from the curse of the law, and from under the law. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." Gal.3:13. And receiving the adoption of sons was the result of this redemption, Gal.4:4 & 5. And mark, it was God that sent forth His Son, &c., to redeem, and hence it was not that He was moved to it by any act of the creature. Even in His very birth as a Saviour, all fleshly power was excluded, He was *made of a woman*; not born by any act of man. And lest men might claim that God's thus sending His Son was the result of conditions performed by Abraham or his posterity, it is declared that, in the very relation in which Christ was born as a Saviour, *His goings forth have been from*

of old, from everlasting. Micah 5:1 & 2, and Matt.2:5 & 6. Thus effectually debarring all creaturely influence or conditions from having any control over His coming. 4th. The experience of salvation, or being brought to have communion with God as a Father, is so represented in the Scriptures as effectually to deny its dependence on conditions. God is a Spirit, this communion of course must be spiritual, and of which the flesh can have no part. Therefore to enjoy it we must become spiritual. This can only be by our being born of the Spirit; *that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit*. The fleshly birth is the result of being begotten of the flesh. The spiritual birth of course must be the result of being begotten of the Spirit. So says our Lord, *It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing*. Of course the flesh has no part in the quickening or begetting. No room then for conditions here. See John 3:6, and 6:63. And of this birth as sons of God or as spiritual, it is said "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1:13. Here all natural or blood descent is excluded, and of course all conditions performed by parents. No fleshly volition wills it, nor any will of man, even though he may be regenerated, produces it; but it is of God's sovereign volition. If we perform a condition as such do we not will the result? In excluding then the will of the creature, is not the condition excluded? - But 5. Not to be extremely tedious in multiplying proofs establishing the same fact, I will confine myself to this one more point of illustration. Paul in confirmation of the view above given of salvation as wrought out, says, Eph.2:4 - 6, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, {by grace ye are saved;} And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Here he shows that the saints were delivered from it; and were raised up together and made to sit together in *heavenly places* - not placed back again in Adam's original state of innocency and like him left subject to conditions or the requisitions of the law; but embraced in the provisions of the heavenly or everlasting covenant, having no *ifs* in it, no conditions to render it uncertain, but *ordered in all things and sure*. Well therefore might Paul interrupt the thread of his discourse to exclaim, "By grace ye are saved," every line, and word, shows God as going forth in the sovereignty and independence of His love and mercy, toward guilty sinners; a love that even their being dead in sins, could not check, and one therefore which creaturely works could never have drawn forth. But Paul goes on in verse

7 to show an object God had in *raising them up and making them sit together in heavenly places*; namely, "That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." *In the ages to come*, that is, in the experimental deliverance, in all succeeding ages, of those He had made to sit together in heavenly places, He might show the *exceeding riches of His grace*, &c. One might have supposed that if Paul had mentioned only the *riches* of God's grace as that which He intended to show, no one would ever think of its being found so scanty as to be limited and confined within the bounds of such conditions as puny man could comply with. But the Holy Spirit knowing the proneness of man to bring every thing, even God's rich grace, down to the standard of *earthly things and places*, which all have limitations, directed the use of the still broader expression, the *exceeding riches of His grace*. That which is *exceeding*, must *go beyond, over-top* everything in competition; but if the grace of God in salvation, were suspended upon any conditions whatever, those conditions uncomplicated with must bar that grace and therefore exceed it. And hence where sin abounded in the non-compliance *grace could not abound*. Not so, such is the riches of God's grace that it must exceed every impediment. So is the testimony, "That where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom.5:20 & 21. It certainly can not be possible that a conditional salvation can consist with the exceeding riches and sovereignty of God's grace. Salvation must flow as sovereignly free from Him as did creation, for He is alike the God of both.

But again, many persons, generally sound, hold the idea of a conditional covenant contracted between the Father and Son, the salvation of the elect being suspended on Christ's fulfilling the conditions thereof. The inquirer may have had reference to this idea. But there is no declaration made in the Scriptures of any such contracting between the Father and Son, nor anything to justify the idea of such a conditional covenant. That there is an *everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure* established with the elect in Christ as their Head I think the Scriptures clearly teach. Of this covenant {or *testament* as the original word is in some cases rendered, though more generally rendered *covenant*} Christ is revealed as the Surety, Heb.7:22, the Mediator, Heb.9:15, and the Messenger, Mal.3:1, each of these terms conveys an idea very different from that of a contracting party, as will be manifest on a moment's calm reflection. The great mistake in reference

to this covenant arises from man being disposed to think of God as *such a one as themselves*, and therefore when God's covenant is spoken of, they conclude it must be like the covenants existing between men; and to carry out the idea they split up the Godhead into contracting parties having distinct, and therefore clashing interests in the concern. But no such idea is conveyed in the language of any covenant revealed in the Scriptures. As the Psalmist says of the everlasting covenant, Ps.111:9, "He sent redemption unto His people: He hath commanded His covenant forever &c.", so it will be found in every covenant recorded, and in every reference to the everlasting or new covenant made in the Scriptures, that God appears as the sovereign Jehovah establishing every part by His absolute *wills* and *shalls*. Look at the covenant God established with Noah, &c., Gen.9:8-17; the one established with Abraham, Gen.15:7-18, and the one, Gen.17 - then to the covenant mentioned by David, II Sam.23:5 & Ps.89:19-37 and see the wording; and David's views of it, as confirmed to him as the type of Christ, II Sam.7, and then pass to Isa.59:21, and to the new covenant - Jer.31:31-34, and see if in any instance God appears in relation to those covenants in any other light than as the sovereign God commanding and promising in His own absolute independency? And then look through the Scriptures and see if you can find a single promise made to Christ as the Head or to His people in Him, depending on an *if* or contingency. If you cannot satisfy yourself hear Paul's testimony: "For all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us." II Cor.1:20. I said above, this covenant was made with the elect in Christ their Head; thus all the other covenants mentioned in the Scriptures were made with certain persons as heads and their seed in them; the head being subject to the provisions of the covenant in common with the posterity. So in this in an infinitely fuller extent; He being their Head, their Life, their all, every provision centers in Him, whilst its blessings terminate in His seed. Thus the purpose and grace which secures their salvation, are given in Him, II Tim.1:9; all the promises of God are in Him, II Cor.1:20; and indeed He is the covenant; was *given for a covenant of the people*, Isa.42:6 and 49:8. And notice in all this, that Christ instead of being represented as stipulating and coming forward as a contracting party, is represented as the servant, God directing and promising that He shall do it and succeed. So Christ Himself represents the matter. He says not, that I *came down from heaven to fulfill my part of the contract*; but that, "I came down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of

Him that sent me," &c. John 6:38-39. Thus, in accordance with the above, when the sword of justice was commanded to awake, it was to awake against Him who was the Lord's *Shepherd*, against the *Man* that was His *fellow*. Zech 13:7. Thus, it was not by contract, but as the Lord's appointed *Shepherd* that He was accountable for the safety of the sheep. See also John 10:11-16. It was not to the God that was *fellow to the Lord of hosts*, but to the *Man* that was His fellow. It has been said that *fellow* means an *equal*. Not so, its proper meaning is an associate, and it here particularly designates, that *Man* who is the one Mediator, and who is associated in personal union with the Godhead. I think if the Scriptures are carefully examined on this head by anyone disposed to receive Scriptural truth, he will be convinced that the covenant securing salvation as sovereignly free and absolute as the purpose and grace thereby revealed; that God appears as God commanding it; and that Christ and His people are one in all its provisions.

To the inquirer then, in conclusion, I would say trouble not yourself about *conditions of salvation*. If you have been taught by the law to know that you are altogether sinful in yourself and justly condemned, be assured that God has provided in Christ Jesus a full and free salvation for you as thus helpless.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, Dec. 14, 1847.

S. Trott.

From: *SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol. 16 {1848}*

On the Atonement.

Brother Beebe: - The third and last subject which has been proposed for me to give my views on is the Atonement. This is of itself a copious subject: it will therefore readily be expected that I shall be rather lengthy on it; and I may as well at once divide it into chapters, to relieve in some measure its tediousness.

Chapter 1

Atonement, what it is, and its inseparable connection with redemption, as taught in the Scriptures.

I would here premise that the atonement made by Christ is

shorn of much of its glory, by being represented as a provision entirely distinct from redemption, or if redemption is spoken of in connection with it, there is no more extended idea given to it, than what is contained in atonement or forgiveness of sin. This is a convenient way of representing the subject for those who will have the redeemed still retained under the law, or subject to conditions as grounds of their acceptance with God. But it is rather a matter of surprise that persons who contend for the scriptural doctrine of redemption have so frequently suffered themselves to be dragged into an argument on the subject of atonement alone. It is true there is a distinction of idea conveyed by each term, and the two are mostly represented by distinct figures in the Old Testament; but that evidently arises from a deficiency in the types fully to represent the perfection of Christ's offering.

We will in the first place notice the distinct idea conveyed by each in their use in the Scriptures. First, Atonement: This word is found but once in our translation of the New Testament, though the same idea is abundantly taught therein. This instance is in Rom.5:11. The word in the original is derived from the verb which in verse 10 is translated *reconciled*, and this word is in other passages rendered *reconciliation*, and such is evidently its import; that is, as representing a restoration of peace where wrath had before existed; of course it has particular reference to God's wrath as manifested in the law. In the Old Testament, particularly in the law, we repeatedly find the word atonement. As in Lev.4,5 and 16. It is there used to denote a covering over of sin by sacrifice, so that the sinner is freed from the penalty, or is forgiven of his sins, whilst the law in its penal requisition, is honored and hence there is reconciliation for his sins, and the sinner is reinstated in the favor of the law; so says the Psalmist: "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered." {32:1} But this as by verse 2 is spoken more in reference to Christ's atonement; see Rom.4:6. Atonement thus in type as under the law, falls far short of representing the redemption and atonement as accomplished by Christ's blood, for though it represented a clearing away or covering over transgressions as past, it left the Israelite still subject to the law, and liable to its curse, in case of future transgression. And so I cannot see how atonement or reconciliation alone even by Christ's blood, if that was all that was accomplished, could have secured any from future condemnation as it would leave them still subject to the demands and bondage of the law, unless there were ability secured to those whose sins were forgiven, to obey fully the

law in future. The apostle notices the insufficiency of the legal sacrifices to make the comers thereunto *perfect*. Heb.10:1. Hence, because typical expiation of sin could not represent the redemption accomplished by Christ's blood in the sacrifice He offered for sin; there were distinct types appointed representing His redemption; this leads us secondly to notice the idea embraced in the term redemption as used in the Scriptures. 1st, we find it declared that the Lord *redeemed Israel out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh*. &c. Deut.7:8, and in many other places this deliverance of Israel from Egypt is represented as a redemption. And this was clearly typical of the redemption of spiritual Israel. This was nothing less than an entire breaking of Pharaoh's yoke from off their necks and bringing them out of the house of bondage and into the promised land, and giving them a standing there as an independent nation, and as the people of God. Surely this is more than a mere expiation for sin; leaving His people still subject to the law. Again, God claimed specially all the first born of Israel being males, of man and of beast, as His, in consequence of His sparing Israel on the night He smote the first-born of Egypt. The first-born of man and of the ass He required to be redeemed. Ex.13:11-16, & 34:20. By this redemption they were freed forever from that special demand, and were placed in similar circumstances with other Israelites. Here then we have another figure of redemption by which complete deliverance is accomplished. In the case of the Israelite who had waxed poor, and his inheritance or himself had been sold for debt; we have another illustration of gospel redemption. The redeemer must be one of his kin; and being redeemed he is completely released from bondage and from all claims of his old master; and so of the inheritance. See Lev.25:23-25, also from verse 47 to 55. It is true this Israelite might wax poor again and be again sold into servitude; the type could not prevent that. But the claim of the original creditor was in the redemption fully consulted, and this is what we contend is implied in redemption. I will now give one instance from the New Testament showing that the redemption by Christ fully meets these types, accomplishing a complete release from the bondage of the law. Gal.4:1-7. The expression in verse 5, "To redeem them that were under the law;" has been somewhat involved in obscurity by the different constructions put upon it. Some have supposed it had reference only to the Jewish disciples as having been under the law of Moses, and some one thing, and some another. This shows the necessity of attending to the connection, or the design of the apostle's argument. He was writing to the

churches of Galatia, and, of course to Gentiles, as is also evident in his warning them against being circumcised. His object appears to be to guard them against the errors of judaizing teachers, and of being involved in their minds in bondage under the law by being circumcised. In the 3rd chapter he shows that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek; that if they were Christ's, then were they Abraham's seed. He then goes on in this chapter to show, that according to the Roman law, which held minors in the same bondage to their fathers, and gave the father the same right to sell them as though they were children of slaves, and required the going through a form of redemption or emancipation to give them the standing of citizens; and both forms before they could be acknowledged by adoption the successors to the rights and estate of other persons, that they when children, that is previous to their manifestations as citizens, and as having right to the privileges of the gospel kingdom, were in *bondage under the elements of the world*. And what were these *elements* but law as established in creation both upon matter and mind, varying according to the nature of each? Hence the necessity of being redeemed from under this bondage to the law, before they could receive the adoption of sons. The extent and limitation of the redemption is found, not in being *under the law*, for according to the figure, the servants as contrasted with the heirs, were in the same bondage, that is, *under the law*; but in being predestinated *sons* or *heirs*. Now the redemption of the servant, though it would free him from bondage, would not of itself entitle him to be accounted a son and heir of his redeemer; as in this case, it was not their being redeemed that entitled them to the adoption of sons; but it was *because they were sons*, that *the spirit of God's Son* was communicated to them. But as showed it was necessary that they should be redeemed from the bondage under the law; otherwise to bar them from the privileges and liberty of sons. The redemption therefore must be a complete and final redemption from the bondage of the law, and from its demands. So Paul says, verse 7th: "*Wherefore thou art no more a servant but a son, &c.*" And this is the redemption represented as accomplished by Christ in being *made of a woman and made under the law*, and is therefore gospel redemption.

We pass to our second general head, which is to show the intimate connection there is between, or rather the oneness of redemption and atonement, as accomplished by our Lord. Both must go together in order to bring the children of God into the comfortable enjoyment of the relation of sons.

Atonement or expiation for sins alone, would, as showed, leave them in bondage under the law; and redemption, that is, complete deliverance from the law, without expiation for their sins, never could satisfy those who have been truly convinced of the evil of sin, nor give them confidence in approaching a holy God.

The idea has long been entertained by many and advanced in books, &c., that redemption from the law, as requiring perfect obedience, was distinct from atonement, in that the one was by Christ's obedience to the preceptive requisition of the law, and the other, was by His death as enduring its penalty; the one has been called His active, and the other His passive obedience. So of justification in distinction from pardon, which are but the results of redemption and atonement. This has heretofore been my view of the subject, and which I am now convinced I derived from tradition, that is from my early religious intercourse with men and books; and having not been particularly led to doubt its correctness; and I have held on to it; and when I have been led particularly to notice texts, which did not read in accordance with those views, I have had the awful presumption, to suppose it necessary to add something explanatory of that which is divinely perfect, as the revelation of God. Being now convinced of my error in this thing, I think it proper to confess and abandon it. It may be proper to assign some reasons for my present different view of this subject. I will therefore try to present my proofs of the oneness of atonement and redemption, as considered in the work of Christ, so as to meet both cases. 1st, then, I will say, I have no doubt that Christ Jesus, in His manhood and life was perfectly conformed to the law, loving God and his neighbor as it required. This was essential to His being *holy, harmless and undefiled*, in His manhood, and necessary to His being a suitable offering for sin. But I much doubt whether this could have been accepted by the law as a redemption price from the obligations His people were under to obey it. The original obligation man was under in his creation, *to love God with all of his heart, &c., and to love his neighbor as himself*, would have been perpetual had he continued in his state of uprightness, and one act in opposition would have incurred the penalty. Could the law have accepted of any extra obedience as a redemption price for man's being released from his obligation thus to love God and his neighbor? I think not. At any rate, I have never seen any intimation in the Scriptures that man ever would or could have been redeemed from the obligation he was under to the law had he not first incurred the

penalty. If preceptive obedience by another could not have been a redemption price for man then, I see not how it could enter into his redemption price now. 2nd. The penalty for transgression was death, and this eternal in its duration as borne by the creature. This being inflicted and borne; could the law demand anything more? Would not this therefore be an end to all its demands? If then the law looked to Christ, as the Head, Husband and Surety of His people for satisfaction for their transgressions, and He could and did, in a limited period of time, bear the full weight of the curse or penalty thus due; would it not equally be an end to its demands on Him and them, and therefore a redemption from it? Paul certainly took this view of this subject, when {Rom.7:6} he compared the relation between man and the law, to the relation of husband and wife. Could a man love and cherish his wife so faithfully for a given period, or could anybody else for him, as to release him from any further obligation to her as his wife, both still living? No. But let death take place in reference to either party, and the relation and obligation is at once dissolved. It is then *death* and not life that dissolves the relation between man and the law, or redemption from it.

3rd. The Scriptures no where ascribe the redemption of Christ's people to His life or obedience to the precepts of the law; but repeatedly and directly do they ascribe it to His blood or death. See Eph.1:7 & Col.1:14: "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins." Here, not only is redemption spoken of as *through His blood*, but *forgiveness of sins*, or *atonement* is represented as one and the same with it. Thus also justification is spoken of as being through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, {Rom.3:24} and is said to be by His blood, {Rom.5:9}. Peter also ascribes redemption to the blood of Christ, as of a lamb, &c. I Peter 1:18,19. So the elders, Rev.5:9, in their song to the Lamb, sing, "For Thou wast slain and has redeemed us unto God by Thy blood, &c."

4th. Not Christ living under the law, but Christ crucified, is the theme of gospel preaching. "We preach Christ crucified," &c. I Cor.1:23. "I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." I Cor.2:2.

5th. But some may object to this view, on account of Christ's being revealed as our righteousness, &c., supposing that this must be by His conformity to the law in living under it. But, I would ask, is there not as much righteousness in the penal, as in the preceptive requisitions of God's perfect law? I think there is. How is it, that we were *made the righteousness of God in Christ*, but by His being *made sin* or a *sin offering* for

us? See II Cor.5:21. And how was He *raised for our justification*, but by being first *delivered for our offenses*? See Rom.4:25. Examine also Rom.3:21-26, and see if the righteousness of God, there spoken of, is not *declared* through Christ's *being set forth to be a propitiation*, &c. If these things be so, the redemption accomplished by Christ for His people, is nothing other than the perfection of His atonement. As is said, Heb.10:14, as contrasted with the deficiency of the atoning sacrifices under the law, that "by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." And; "We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all." See verse 10, same chapter. If then we are perfected by the one offering by which we are sanctified or cleansed from sin, I think the atonement and redemption in the work of Christ, and in reference to the price of redemption, is one; and, that perfecting us, we need nothing further on that score. As to the carrying out of this redemption in the complete salvation or deliverance of His people, that is by His life at the right hand of God. See Rom.5:10.

There is one objection more I ought to meet: that is, an objection to publishing this in the *Signs*. For I shall probably be considered, by some of the readers, as treading on their toes. I can only say, in obviation of it, that I will promise not to reply to anything it may draw forth, leaving what I have written to stand by itself, unless the remarks may be written in that candor which shall evince a simple regard to truth, and shall call for something from me in the same spirit. Here I close chapter 1st.

Chapter II

The particularity of the Atonement, as shown by the Old Testament Types.

As Atonement and Redemption are set forth in the Scriptures, as so intimately connected, and one in substance, in the offering of Christ, one would think that no reflecting person could entertain the idea that atonement was any other than for particular designated persons. It is absurdity itself to talk of a redemption price being paid, and that for no specific object; no designated persons, or persons not designed to be redeemed. Yet the ideas of indefinite atonement, or atonement for sin, general atonement, and universal atonement, are so prevalent, and that among the learned and wise of the world, that even the minds of honest enquirers after truth are

frequently so difficulted therewith, that there is propriety in presenting for their consideration the testimony of Scripture on this head.

I propose, in this chapter, to bring forward some of the types of the Old Testament in proof of Particular Atonement.

I will commence with the Passover lambs {Ex.12}. That these lambs were typical of Christ is evident from what is said, I Cor.5:7 - "For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us," as well as from the direction, "Neither shall ye break a bone thereof"{Ex.12:46}, being quoted and applied to Christ. John 19:36. This appointment presupposed that the Israelites, in themselves considered, were equally obnoxious to the plagues about to be inflicted, as were the Egyptians, and therefore that both were equally sinners before God, and equally subject to the curse of the law. The sacrifice, therefore, of the paschal lamb, more fully represented both atonement, or a covering over of sin, and redemption, {for it was a redemption from the plague} than perhaps any other type of the Old Testament. So Peter seems to have understood it when he said, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold, &c. 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." I Peter 1:18-20. Here he evidently refers to this and applies it to Christ, in speaking of Him as a *lamb without blemish*, as the paschal lamb was required to be; and as being *foreordained before the foundation of the world*, showing the design of the type in requiring that the lambs should be taken out on the tenth day of the month, and kept up until the fourteenth day. Ex.12:3-6. These five days seem very clearly to prefigure the period of Christ's offering. The tenth pointing to His foreordination or being set up before the foundation of the world; the eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth, to the four thousand years before the coming of Christ, and the being slain in the evening of the fourteenth, to His being sacrificed at the close of that period. In this important type there was nothing like indefinite atonement or general provision. It was as particular in its provision as in its application. It was appointed alone for the families of Israel, and to be according to their eating. If one family were too small, two must join in one lamb; while the Egyptians were left exposed to the plague. It must be special in its application to each family. The blood of each lamb must be by the family who ate it, put upon the lintel and sideposts of the door of the house in which they were, as a covering from the plague. Could this type in any way have more fully shadowed forth a particular and definite atonement? Was there

anything in it like a common or general stock for everybody?

We pass to the redemption of the first born, being males. Ex.13:12-15 & 34:19. This type is full of instruction on the subject of redemption. 1st. The special claim which God made upon these first born, being males, on account of having spared them, when He slew the first born of Egypt, shows the claim He made upon His elect in common with others, through the law, as His creatures. 2nd. The firstling of clean animals might not be redeemed: showing there was no redemption for his son from the curse; and that there could have been no redemption for the elect had they not become unclean by transgression. 3rd. The firstling of the ass must be redeemed with a lamb. This relates to the natural stupidity and uncleanness of the elect; and nothing but the sacrifice of the spotless Lamb of God could redeem them. Or, as asses are in some other scriptures, made to prefigure ministers of the gospel, it may show the necessity of their being redeemed, as well as the heirs of promise to whom they minister. The injunction that if they would not redeem the ass, they should *break its neck*, that is, kill it without shedding its blood, shows that, as *without shedding of blood is no remission* {Heb.9:22}, so without redemption there is no remission of sins, or atonement. 4th. The first born of man, being a son, must be redeemed. There is a particular discrimination as to who were the subjects of redemption. The first born son, according to the usage and law of Israel, was the special heir, entitled to peculiar privileges. See, among other texts: Gen.25:31-34, 27:29-37 & Deut.21:15-17. We have then here a particular correspondence of this type to the redemption of Christ; those redeemed by Him being heirs, as shown {chapter first} in our remarks on Gal.4:1-6. The heirs redeemed by Christ, are made such by the predestinating purpose of God. Eph.1:5, Rom.8:29. These predestinated heirs, according to this type, and according to Gal.4:1-6, were those whom God specially sent His Son to redeem. So particular is redemption, and of course atonement, according to this type, that, as this law concerning their redeeming their first born was not to go into effect until they came into the land of the Canaanites, {see Ex.13:11} the Lord designing to take the Levites instead of those already born, thus showing redemption by substitution; He had the Levites and the first born each numbered, and there being an excess of *two hundred three score and thirteen of the first born* over the Levites, He required these to be redeemed at *five shekels apiece by the poll*. Num.3:12,13, 39-51. Does not this show that everything like an indefinite or general provision transaction is excluded from the work of

redemption?

To avoid tediousness on these types, as far as I can, I will notice but one more: that of the great day of atonement. Lev.16. By the contrast which is drawn {Heb.9 & 10}, between the order observed on this day of atonement and Christ's *entering into heaven with His own blood, now to appear in the presence of God for us*, there can be no doubt but the atonement made yearly for Israel on this appointed day, was typical, or, as there said, a *figure* of that *eternal redemption* which Christ obtained for us. It is true, as is shown, {Heb.7}, Christ is a High Priest of a far higher order than that of the Aaronic priesthood, He being after the order of Melchisedec; yet it is, I think, equally evident from what is said of Christ's offering and blood, &c., as contrasted with the offerings of the high priests under the law, that they were typical of His priesthood; for there is no account of Melchisedec's offering sacrifices, &c. Thinking this will not be disputed, I will not stop to argue the point, but will in proof thereof simply refer to Heb.5:1-5; 8:1-6; 9:1-14 & 10:1-23. In the first place, it was only the high priest that might enter into the most holy place, that is, within the veil; and that but once every year on this day of atonement, and *not without blood*, Lev.16:1,2. Heb.9:1-7. In order to his lawfully officiating as the high priest Aaron and after him his son, must be consecrated. See Ex.28 & 29. Lev.8:1-12. To be consecrated he had to wear the holy garments, among which was the ephod having two precious stones engraven with the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, six on each stone, fastened in the two shoulder pieces thereof, so that he should *bear their names upon his two shoulders for a memorial*. Also there was the breast plate containing twelve precious stones, engraven with the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, that Aaron should *bear their names in the breast plate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth into the holy place for a memorial before the Lord continually*. Thus showing that in officiating as the high priest, in going into the holy place to make atonement, he represented the twelve tribes of Israel, as a designated people, and none other. And thus typifying Christ as officiating in making atonement in behalf of a designated people known by name, {for He calls His own sheep by name, John 10:3} whom He bears upon His heart as the objects of His love. Rom.5:8 & John 13:1. And also whom He bore with Him as upon His shoulders, when He entered into heaven, there to *appear in the presence of God for us*, not for anybody, everybody, and nobody; but *for us* a present and known people; {See Eph.2:4-7.} As well also as showing that they were a people whom *He bore and carried all the days of*

old; and in all their afflictions He was afflicted. {Isa.63:9.} So on the day of atonement, the high priest in making atonement for Israel, was to take two kids of the goats one for a sin offering and the other for a scape goat, in order to show the perfection of Christ's one offering of Himself, which He should make, that in bearing the sins of His people in His own body on the tree, and in suffering the penalty due thereunto, He should conquer death, *finish transgression; make an end of sin*, and accomplish a complete redemption. The one for a sin offering could not have showed this, being burned to ashes it could only show the wrath of God against sin; but the scape goat in bearing the sins, after the sacrifice of the other, away to a land uninhabited, showed the perfection of Christ's atonement that He buried the sins He bore, in the depths of the sea. In sending the scape goat away, to carry out the type, Aaron must lay his hands on its head, and *confess over all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat*. And it was said, *the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities to a land uninhabited*. Lev.16:21 & 22. Aaron, in thus officiating as a type of Christ, did not lay upon the head of the goat, sin in general, nor the sins of all nations, but specially and only, the sins and iniquities of Israel. Thus whilst there is a full and perfect atonement prefigured for all the iniquities and transgressions of God's Israel, a peculiar and special people; there is no representation of an atonement and redemption for any that God did not design should be redeemed and delivered thereby. I here close chapter 2.

Chapter III

A brief view of New Testament testimony relative to Particular Atonement, with a notice of certain texts relied on as standing in opposition to it.

In turning to the New Testament we find, no less than in the types of the Old, a specific purpose declared in the birth and death of Christ in the flesh. Thus, in the declaration of the angel to Joseph, {Mt.1:21} "Thou shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins." Here is a special purpose declared in reference to Christ's coming into the world, namely: that He should be manifested as a *Saviour*; for He "shall save His people from their sins." Here is, therefore, a special people, the antitype of national Israel, a people whom He already knew as His, that are to be saved, and a special

salvation with which they are to be saved. Hence here is nothing to warrant the idea of a general salvation, which is no salvation unless persons make it such by *delivering themselves from their sins*. On the contrary, everything is positive. He *shall save His people*, and shall save them *from their sins*; and He has His name *Jesus*, or *Saviour*, because He shall save this special people with this special salvation. Hence any one that says that Christ's being Jesus or a Saviour, warrants the conclusion that any one may be saved by hitching himself to His atonement, sets aside the purpose of God, as declared in this text. The idea is entertained by some learned men, that there was sufficient value in the blood or atonement of Christ, as they speak, to save the whole world, if applied, and therefore, though only the elect will be saved, yet others might be saved if they would make an application of His blood to themselves, by believing. But, learned as they may be in other things, they manifest great ignorance in this, in supposing that atonement consists merely in blood being shed, without any reference to the object for which that blood was shed, as an expiatory sacrifice or otherwise. According to this there was as much virtue in the blood daily shed by the Israelites in killing animals for food, as in that shed on the day of atonement.

Let us look back to the Passover. Suppose a spirit of sympathy and universal charity had got hold on the Israelites, at that time; such as pervades the religious world at this day, and they had sent out their missionaries among the Egyptians to say to them: "That the Lord is about to pass through the land of Egypt; and He has given us directions to kill certain lambs this evening, and to sprinkle the blood upon the side posts and upper door posts of our houses, and to eat the flesh roast with fire, and He will pass by us and not suffer the destroyer to enter our houses. Now it is true you Egyptians have no sheep, as the keeping of sheep, or shepherds, are an abomination unto you, {Gen.46:34} but we shall have a great deal more blood than we shall need to sprinkle the door posts of our houses, and if you will come and get for yourselves and sprinkle the posts of your doors, you will be saved. It is true that if Moses was here he would say that something more is necessary than a mere self application of blood, but he is one of those stiff old fellows that will not allow the human mind to have any scope in religion, but holds that everything must be limited and bounded by a *Thus saith the Lord*. Now, our life for yours, if you will try it, the blood will protect you, for here it is, in Moses' own words, "For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians, and when He seeth the blood upon the lintel and two side posts, the Lord will pass over the door, and will

not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you." Now here we have a general declaration on that when He *seeth the blood, &c.*, without any specification of one man's house more than another's. It is true, when we notice the expressions *your houses* and *you*, and the general connection, we must admit that something might be made out of it to seem to confine it to the Israelites; but we do not think God to be any such partial being as not to give everyone a chance, and therefore we do not stop to enquire about connections, but catch a text where we can find it." Now if some of the Egyptians had been persuaded to try the experiment, is there a candid reflecting person even among those who are at this day practicing the very chicanery above described in reference to the blood of Christ, that will venture the supposition that they would have been spared, and God's declaration concerning their destruction have been falsified? No; and why? Because, they would say, God had never directed it and He is not to be deceived in that way, and that the protection was not in the simple sprinkling of blood, but in the purpose of God, made known and carried out in the type, in the obedience of the Israelites. As typical of Christ as a redemption price, those lambs were appointed as a redemption price of Israel from the destroyer. So specific was the appointment, as heretofore shown, that each family must have its selected lamb to be slain and eaten by the family. Here was the redemption of the family in the lamb being made to represent the family: the blood on the door posts was but a *token to them*, {Ex.12:13} - a token of what? Why, that a substitute had been beforehand appointed and slain for the first born of the family, and that they were living by its death as expressed in their eating its flesh. Here were the appointment, the promise, and the direction of God, all uniting in reference to the Passover. These, and these alone, gave efficiency to the blood of those lambs. So of Christ's death; it was of God's appointment. If so, it must have been for a certain object. God would not have made the appointment without an object. We believe in the infinite value of Christ's blood, and of course we believe that, being of such value, it could not fail to accomplish the object for which it was shed. It was shed for the expiation of sins. Whose sins? He had none of His own. It would be absurd to talk of His dying as an expiatory sacrifice or satisfaction for sins, when no sins were charged to Him, and He made accountable for them. His being thus accountable could only be by His representing sinners as a Surety. So says Paul, "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." II Tim.1:9. So Gal.1:4: "Who gave Himself for our sins, &c. according to the will of God and our Father." And so I Peter 2:24: "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree," &c.

Thus examine the New Testament through and we find that it was a particular people whom Christ died for, a people given Him of the Father, whom He represented, and that according to the will and purpose of God. Just so far then as the purpose of God in the premises extended, so far the atonement extended; and as we showed by the types of the Old Testament, and now by the New, it can be made to extend no further. All for whom Christ's blood was shed are redeemed and of course cannot suffer under the penalty of the law, but shall be saved. Can men or angels make any person a redeemed one, whom Christ has not redeemed?

As we have extended our remarks so largely on this point, it seems not necessary to quote other texts proving the particularity of the atonement, only as we may name a few. But in passing we will notice John 10:15, where Christ says: "I lay down my life for the sheep." In the connection He shuts every avenue for a general provision to come in. 1st. He contrasts Himself with, as distinct from, the hireling whose own the sheep are not. Hence He was not hired to make an atonement for sin by the promise of a certain portion being given Him. They *were His already, given to Him of His Father*, and because they were His, He laid down His life to protect them. Jn.10:14,16,29. But that which I wish particularly to call attention to, is, the striking personification there is in this hireling shepherd, *whose own the sheep are not*, of the saviour of the general atonement holders of the present day. They will not admit that their Christ has any claim to any part of the human family as His while in a state of nature, though they perhaps admit that believers are His, in a special manner, when they believe and give themselves up to Him. So that the *hireling* is the *saviour* of the day. As to his *fleeing*, this is much like their representation of Christ as standing back and not interfering to *save* any, according to their notions of salvation, that is, to convert, lest He should destroy free agency and make machines of men. No: he fleeth; and if any choose to follow him and give themselves up to him, he will save them. Is not this the religion of the day? And if so, is not the hireling shepherd the saviour of the day?

Again, as a further proof that everything relative to the atonement is according to the fixed purpose of God, as Jesus says, *He came down from heaven to do the will of Him that*

sent Him, {John 6:38,39} we are assured that *He was raised again for the justification of those for whose offences He was delivered*, {Rom.4:25.} And Paul is very confident that those who were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, will be saved by His life. Rom.5:10. If then all those for whom Christ was delivered, and who were reconciled to God by His death, shall be assuredly justified and saved, if any others could be saved it must be independently of Christ's suffering for them, or of their being reconciled by His death. They must then abandon their hopes built simply on the infinite value of Christ's blood, and seek some other subterfuge.

It appears to be proper to notice one or two classes of texts touching this subject. I will first notice this class: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." John 3:14,15. Again, verse 16, John 6:40, and others. A special purpose of God in Christ's death is no less positively declared in these texts than in those we have been noticing, showing a sure salvation. But here is a difference, salvation or eternal life is not here predicated as of the elect, but of whomsoever believeth in Christ. Hence those who know of no faith but that which is the act of the natural mind, lay hold with avidity of those texts to support the idea that faith is a condition of salvation, and of course that the atonement is general, subject to this condition, losing sight of all those texts which declare a specific object in the death of Christ. But, what is more, they appear to be ignorant of the testimony of God concerning faith, that it is spiritual and not a natural act - that "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God," and that *It is not of the flesh, but of the Spirit: it is not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man; but of God.* John 3:3,6 & 1:13. What advantage then can Free Will derive from these texts, when it is thus testified that there can be no spiritual discernment without a spiritual birth; and this not of man's will, but of God? In accordance with this view, *Faith* is declared to be a *fruit of the Spirit*, {Gal.5:22} - to be *the gift of God*, {Eph.2:8 & Phil.1:29} and to be *of the operation of God*, {Col.2:12 & I Pet.1:21.}

Hence those who have in experience been taught the spirituality of the religion of Christ, would as soon be persuaded that they could atone for their own sins, as that they could believe in Christ of their own power; that their faith must be as special an operation of God as is the atonement. While to *those without*, *all these things are done in parables*, &c.

It may be asked why this mode of expression was used in the texts above referred to, if it was not to countenance conditional salvation. That it could not have been designed to countenance such an idea, is evident. 1st, from the testimony the New Testament bears of faith, or believing, as being of God, and not of the creature, as we have shown: 2nd, there is nothing in the expressions to countenance in the least the idea that conditions are thereby proposed. It is not that whosoever *will* believe, &c., nor anything like it; but, as before noticed, the declarations are *positive and absolute*. But the reason is obvious why these texts are so absolutely free in their declarations, to the characters designated and those characteristics drawn from christian experience. If there had been no declarations given but such as that: "He gave Himself for the church"; "laid down His life for the *sheep*" or "gave Himself *for us*," as it is frequently expressed, what would the poor lambs of Christ do with all their doubts, and their deep sense of their own unworthiness? They could not pry into the counsel of God's will, to see whether their names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. While Satan would have emboldened thousands to claim to be the elect and the favorites of heaven, the child of grace would be the last to make any such claims, or to feel worthy to make them. How good and how kind then the provision which has brought down the test of individual salvation to one single point, and that an infallible test. *Whosoever believeth in Him*, without any exception, or any other limitation. Wherever it has been given it will show itself, and will produce hope. The individual may not know, nor be willing to acknowledge that he has true faith; but he knows that he believes in Christ as once he did not; that he once had no conception of that fulness and suitableness of Christ as a Saviour for lost sinners, as he now believes Him to be. In a word, he knows Him to be full and sufficient and the only Saviour, or the only Way in which a sinner can be saved. Knowing this, hope springs up in his breast that he may be saved, and sticks there in spite of all his efforts at times to shake it off. Thus we see the peculiar use and suitableness of this class of texts, to the children of God, though others may wrest them as they do other scriptures, to their own destruction.

There is another class of texts which, according to the construction which the advocates of a general atonement put upon the letter of them, must involve universal salvation. It will not answer to intrude upon the readers of the *Signs* to notice more than one of them; but I have selected the one they think the most direct in their favor, namely: I John 2:2 -

"And He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." While the Arminians of every grade make so much reliance on this text, to support their system, merely from the expression "the *whole* world," there is not another text in the Bible whose instruction they so completely turn their backs upon, and whose direction and authority they so completely trample under foot, as they do those of this text. Its declaration is that, *He is the propitiation for our sins, &c., and for the sins of the whole world,* and if He is *the propitiation*, He is the only one for the whole world and for every part of it. What is the import of the word? Its import appears to be that which *pacifies* or *makes peace*, or, rather, through which the sinner can approach God in peace. The text informs us that Christ Jesus is that propitiation provided of God, or the way in which the sinner may approach in peace; not for a part of the world only, but for the whole world: that is, there is no other propitiation; no other way in which any individual of the human family can approach in peace; and the way in which any individual who feels the weight of his sins, as separating between him and God, so that he cannot approach in dependence on any effort or offering of his own, and has faith given him so to enable him to behold Christ as having by the one offering of Himself so removed sin and taken the curse of the law out of the way, in behalf of guilty, helpless sinners, that he can with confidence rely on the work of Christ for acceptance, - I say, any such sinner, whoever or whatever he may have been, may approach thus and find peace. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." As certain as that the religion of Christ is a spiritual and experimental religion, and a religion of faith, so certain is it that spiritual experience and faith have as much to do with this very point as with any other point. But persons are apt, when their minds become confused by the wiles of men in handling such texts as these, to lose sight of that important fact. Does the text say that the whole world rely on the blood of Christ as their propitiation? No. Do we find the whole world thus relying on it? No. Look around you. The Catholic, if he sins to wound his conscience, goes to confession; has his penalty or penance prescribed; pays it, and that is his propitiation. The Protestant of the stricter and more legal class, if he thus sins, resorts to fasting and to increasing his tasks of praying and reading; and that is his propitiation. Those of the looser classes, when they thus sin, go to the next protracted meeting and get converted over; and that is their propitiation. Those who make no profession, instead of being pointed to Christ as the propitiation, are told that they must

make their peace with God. So they trample under foot the declaration and authority of this text. But still perhaps some one is ready to say, there must be something more general in this text than you have admitted, as it speaks of the *sins of the whole world*. It is true it speaks particularly of the *sins*, for that is what propitiation has to do with. But here is the mistake: you do not distinguish between the import of the noun, as here used; and what would have been that of the corresponding verb, had it been used. Had it been written, *He has propitiated for our sins, and not our sins only, but for the sins of the whole world*, there would have been at once a positive declaration of *universal salvation*, and of a salvation of that kind that would have excluded from it all idea of the necessity of faith or spiritual experience. But it is not so written, at all. Christ is the one *propitiation*, as He is the one *way*; but no man will come to the Father by Him, nor trust in His blood as that which alone can be his peace with God, till faith is given him so to apprehend and trust in Christ.

But I must close this lengthy chapter and subject. If I have written anything that will be profitable to the honest inquirer, or any whose minds may have been puzzled with the cavils of men on the subject, I shall be satisfied, not having any expectation, or aiming to convince the opposers of this doctrine.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, March 4, 1848.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.16 {1848}

Is Love the Bond of Union?

Brother Beebe:—As we sometimes hear some of our ablest preachers say that love is the bond of union between Christ and His church and people; I have presented the above query hoping that some who thus assert will show us by good authority and argument that it is so; or failing, become convinced that they have been asserting for revelation, a traditional or self-invented notion. But in proposing the query for the consideration of others, I presume I may be allowed to accompany it with a statement of some of my objections to the idea. It is true, the advocates of the idea that love is the bond of union sometimes say in proof of it that love constitutes the union of husband and wife. But the proof fails from its own falsity. Love may unite a couple in affection, but it is not that which unites them as husband and wife, neither legally or

scripturally. Not legally; for many couples have loved each other who have never legally become man and wife; whilst other couples, it is apprehended, are legally united as one flesh who never loved each other. Scripturally, it is a becoming one flesh that constitutes the relation of husband and wife. Hence Paul after exhorting "husbands to love their wives as Christ loved the church" goes on to say, "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife, loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh." (Eph.5:29) In the case of Adam and Eve, in which is the true representation of the union of man and wife, and a true figure of union of Christ and His church, the ground of their union as assigned by Adam was that she was "bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh." (Gen.2:23,24) One more remark I will make before assigning my objection, viz. that the life in which Christ and His people are one is love, it is the spirit of the law, it is love to God, and therefore the union in this defined sense I admit is one of love. If brethren in speaking of love as the bond of union were thus to explain and define their meaning as characterizing the holy nature of that life in which Christ and His people are one, I should not object to the idea. But in speaking of love as the bond of union, persons are generally understood as conveying the idea that the exercise or feelings of love each toward the other is what constitutes the union; and in fact it is mostly so represented.

My first objection to the idea that love is the bond of union as generally understood is that, as the love must be mutual in order to constitute the union between parties, this doctrine represents Christ, if a head, a head without any existing body until man was created, and as even now having but parts of a body united to Him; many predestinated members not yet being brought to love Him. For though Christ's love may have gone forth from eternity to His members as existing in purpose, yet it is evident His people never love Him until born of God. A loving head without a living body united to it would be a monster.

My second objection to the idea that love constitutes the union of Christ and His people is that it represents love as a distinct existing principle, contrary to every authorized conception we ever had of it; for according to such authorized conception love is but the acting of a pre-existing living principle, toward an existing object, or is the characteristic of such a living principle; it also contradicts the doctrine generally understood by Old School Baptists to be taught in the Scriptures concerning God's love toward His people and their love to Him. It is written, "God is love;" but it certainly is not

understood by this that He who is revealed as God is only love in the abstract. I understand it as representing the distinguishing characteristic of Him who is the living God, the almighty and self-existing Spirit. His being love presupposes His existence as God. God's special love to His people even when they were dead in sins, has always been understood by consistent Baptists, as extending to them, not as in themselves considered, but as in Christ, not through Adam but through Christ; this implies that they had a previous existence in Christ which was the special object of God's love; and if a previous existence in Christ, then of course a previous union with Him. Consequently according to this, God's love to them, instead of constituting their union to Christ, was the fruit of such union. Again, consistent Old School Baptists, do not admit that our Adamic nature, prune it and cultivate it as you will, can truly love God; our loving God, then presupposes the implantation in us of a distinct principle of life capable of loving God, whence is this new life derived but from Christ as the head and is therefore the Spirit of Christ in us? If then that living principle by which we love God is derived from Christ as the Head it must have previously existed in Him, and thus in that life we must have been one with Him before ever we loved Him. But if love is the bond of union, we had no union and therefore no existence in Christ, previous to our loving Him. And if we love God we must love Him with the powers of our Adamic nature.

The third objection I have to the doctrine that love is the bond of union between Christ and His people is that, it contradicts the apparent import of many texts of Scripture which speak either directly or indirectly in relation to a union of Christ and His people. I will notice a few. John 3:3-6 represents a new birth, and that a being born not of the *flesh* but of the *Spirit*. Are we to understand that here being *born again* means nothing more than a change of the current of the affections to a loving of God? Or are we to understand by it what is plainly expressed in the word, a being brought manifestively into a distinct state of existence? If the latter, then we must remember that to be born is distinct in idea from being created. To be born implies a previous creation in a head, as our natural birth implies our previous creation in Adam. As this new birth is not a fleshly birth, it cannot be from the fleshly head Adam; and as the Scriptures reveal no other head but Christ and Him as a spiritual head, it must imply a spiritual creation and therefore a previous actual spiritual existence in Him. So in the texts where Christ's people are spoken of as His *seed* (as in Psalm 22:30; Isa.53:30) the same

idea of a previous existence in Christ is fully conveyed, and consequently a created living union with Him. Again, Col. 3:3,4, "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life shall appear....", plainly declares a *oneness* of life in Christ and in His people and that Christ is this life. According to this text, the union of Christ and His people consists in life and must be as old as the existence of Christ as such. May we not then with confidence proclaim the *eternal union* of Christ and His people as a revealed doctrine? Hebrews 2:11, "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," I will lastly notice under this objection. I presume it will be admitted that Christ is here intended by the *He that sanctifieth*, and His people by the *they who are sanctified*. If so, the expression *all of one* ought to be admitted to express something more than a union between them formed by love; it positively declares a perfect unity, a one, and that in the very origin of their existence; all of one; that is, in the sense in which they are each here spoken of; their existence in a brotherhood, according to the latter part of the text, is the sense in which they are spoken of. It therefore neither refers to Christ's essential Godhead, nor to His people's creation in Adam. The expression *all of one* is so unlimited in the declaration that we may not confine the oneness to any one idea connected with the existence of a brotherhood without being guilty of limiting the declaration of God. According therefore to the declaration, they must have existed in Christ's existing as their brother and from the same source; as Adam's posterity existed in his existing and from the same source, the creating power of God. So we shall find this unity in relation to the brotherhood carried out in the Scriptures. Does brotherhood imply the idea of father, here the Father is one? Says Christ, "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God and your God." (John 20:17) Does the idea of brotherhood imply a begetting; if Christ is the Only Begotten of the Father, (John 1:14) they must have been begotten in His begetting for they are born of God, and as showed, He is their Father? Does it imply a birth, and is Christ the first born *of every creature*; (Col.1:15) His people must have been born in Him, for they existed in Him before the foundation of the world, were the *chosen in Him, had grace given them in Him*, etc.? Does a birth as before showed presuppose a creation, and is Christ the beginning of the creation of God (Rev.3:14), here the unity also is found, for they are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus, etc.? (Eph.2:10) Does the brotherhood imply sonship,

here the unity continues? Is He a Son, so are they sons, and in their sonship have the Spirit of God's Son *sent forth into their hearts*, etc.? (Gal.4:6) And does sonship imply heirship, and is Christ *appointed heir of all things*, (Heb.1:2) His people *are joint heirs with Him*. (Rom.8:17) If then the union of Christ and His people is a oneness of life and of existence, how can love be the bond of union?

A fourth objection to the idea that love is the bond of union is that Paul plainly teaches that the headship of Christ is not the bond, but the source or fountain of union of Him and His people, and charges some with a defect in this thing. See Col.2:10, "And 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." Here the Head is that from which the body has its increase, its nourishment and is knit together, etc. In a word, I object to the term *bond of union*, as not being Scriptural in idea nor in expression. In the text just quoted, whilst there are joints spoken of indicative of the distinct action of the several members of both, and bands, showing the binding together of those members, all is from the Head as the fountain. We might as well talk of binding a stream to its fountain, as of binding the church and people of God to Christ their Head. The church is not something bound to Him to make Him full, but is the *fulness of Him that filleth all in all*. (Eph.1:23) The grand mystery of the gospel is not that we are bound to Christ, but it is "Christ in you the hope of glory." (Col.1:27) And Christ, in speaking of the unity of believers, does not speak of binding them more closely by eternal bonds, but says to His Father, "I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." (John 17:23)

I will here leave these objections for the consideration of those who preach that *love is the bond of union*, hoping some one or more of them will let us hear from them on the subject.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, July 21, 1848.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.16 {1848}

Son of God & Godhead.

Brother Beebe: - As in the 7th number of Signs, for this year, there are two communications which call for some reply from me. I presume you will indulge me in such reply. But also on further investigation, I think, brother Clark's previous

communication requires some more extended notice than I took of it in my recent letter, I must therefore request the permission, to thus notice it previous to replying to the other. From the unaccountableness of the circumstance, that it is fifteen years or more since I first published through the Signs my views relative the sonship of the Son of God and to the popular idea of three persons in the Godhead, and that I have had repeated occasion to argue these subjects since through the same channel, and have uniformly preached in accordance with those views; and that brother Clark, during all that time, has been holding social and brotherly intercourse with me, preaching with me, &c., without any intimation that he considered my views heretical - and from the fact that during that period he has been a reader of the Signs, and must have known that the very ground I occupied was that of sustaining the doctrine of the essential, self-existing Godhead of the Son of God, in opposition to the apparent denial of that doctrine by some of the positions of the popular system; and that he has now without showing any direct ground for it, come to the conclusion that *I deny the divinity of the Son of God*, I am led to enquire, Whence this new born zeal and these conclusions in opposition to my views? From its connection with Rappahannoc Association, and the *formal dissent contemplated* as he says *in that body from those points* on which we differ, I am led to conclude that something is designed; and lest this should be a separation from me and any with whom I may accord on these points, I have thought it desirable that our distinct views on these points might be presented to view in connection, that they and others may know about what they are aiming to make a split. It is for this that I ask this indulgence of you and the readers of the Signs. There is a preliminary point on which we appear to differ, which I will first notice.

I hold that the Scriptures, being the revelation of God, must be true in all their parts, and therefore wherein they mark distinctions, by words or by connecting circumstances, those distinctions should be strictly regarded in all our consulting of them. Brother Clark will contend for the observance of such distinctions in some things. He will not admit that sprinkling or pouring is baptism because the words used and the circumstances mentioned in the Scriptures, clearly point to immersion distinctively as baptism. But in reference to the subject before us, there are distinctions definitely pointed out, as between a *father and a son*, which they disregard. Further, I believe that no contradiction can exist in pure truth. As the Scriptures are the pure truth of God,

there can be no real contradictions in them. Hence, whenever we hold a system which involves the language of the Scriptures in contradictions, we ought to remember the injunction of Paul, "Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar." {Rom.3:4} May this injunction have weight with us and lead us to reject our system as false rather than by implication represent the Scriptures as containing falsehood. Brethren, are not these positions consistent? If they are, please bear them in mind as we proceed.

Now to come to the points of difference. They contend that God exists as *three persons and one God, that these three persons are alike equal and alike the self-existent God, but that they exist by distinct modes of existence, that the Father exists of Himself, that the Word or Son exists by the generation of the Father, being begotten of Him, and that the Holy Ghost exists as He proceeds from the Father and the Son.* This I presume will be admitted to be a simple and candid representation of their views. Now to this system I conscientiously object, that it presents palpable contradictions, and that as they represent this as the revelation of God, they charge Him with these contradictions. They say that the three are alike eternal, self-existent and independent, and yet that the Father alone has an underived existence, and that the other two exist by a derived existence and depend on the existence of the other; the Son on the existence of the Father, and the Holy Ghost on the existence of the Father and the Son. Can they then be alike independent in their existence? If I say of two persons, one is the father and the other is the son, do I not distinctly convey the idea that the one existed as a person before the other, and that the latter's existing as a person is a consequence of the previous existence and action of the former; and hence while the father's existence did not depend on the previous existence of the son, the son's existence did depend on the previous existence of the father? Now when they say there are three persons in the Godhead, and of these three, as persons, one of them is the Father, and of another, He is the only begotten Son of this Father, what reason is there, that the same declaration made concerning these two divine persons, does not tend to convey the same idea, as to the previous existence of the one, and the subsequent and dependent existence of the other, as in the case of two men? When therefore they contend that the one is the Father, and the other His Son in relation to their personal existence in the Godhead, how can they without a plain contradiction to that declaration, say in reference to the same personal existence, that they are alike eternal and independent

in their existence? Is this *letting God be true, but every man a liar*, in charging these and several other contradictions in this system, to God's Word? Again, I object to this system because that by making the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost three persons in the Godhead, they make them to be three distinct individuals, for what less does the term person mean, than an individual being? This I think at best is dividing the Godhead more than I believe the scriptural revelation of the one God will admit. But when we carry it out, that they contend that, each of these persons is distinctively God, as each is a distinct individual, there must be three individuals existing by distinct modes of existence, and of course three Gods. Brother Clark says of the Apostles, that they were not *afraid of making a plurality of gods by maintaining that the Son of God was Jehovah*. Neither am I; but the Apostles never taught that the Son of God in His Godhead was a *distinct person* from the Father, so that his remarks are altogether out of place. When I was led to look at these inconsistencies, and contradictions in the *Nicene* system, I turned to an examination of the Scriptures on that head, and I found that they by no means sustained that system. I found that God has revealed Himself as three, and so as three, that distinct things are affirmed of each; but not so as three as to infringe upon the unity of God. Hence it is said, "These three are one." Hence, whenever God is spoken of He is spoken of as the one God, that is absolutely God, whether in reference to the Father, the Word or Son, or the Holy Ghost. Therefore, I conclude that each in His distinct relation, is the one God, having all the fulness of the Godhead in that relation, whether as Father, as Son, or as the Holy Ghost.

I found that the Son is declared in the same person in which He is spoken of as Son, to be absolutely God and one with the Father, yet that as Son He is uniformly spoken of, as personally distinct from the Father, and subordinate to Him; as that He is begotten of the Father, and which as before noticed conveys by the expression clearly the idea of a priority of existence in the Father. And things are affirmed of Him as Son which cannot consistently be affirmed of the Godhead as such. He says of Himself, "The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do," &c. John 5:19. Could it be affirmed that as God, He could do nothing of Himself? Again, it is written, "God sent forth His Son, made of a woman," &c. Gal.4:4. Could it be said consistently with the unity of God, that God sent forth God made,&c.? Yet these and many like things are said of the Son. I therefore believe that the Son possesses in Himself such a distinction from the Godhead as is

thus marked by the declarations of Scripture. Not that He as Son exists distinct from God, but that as I have said and as the Scriptures affirm abundantly, that in His Person He is God, whilst He possesses that which is begotten of the Father in personal union with His Godhead as the Word, which constitutes Him personally distinct from the Father and the Holy Ghost. This distinct and begotten or produced existence, which constitutes Him as Son in distinction from the Father, I find not only revealed in the declaration that He is the Son of God, but also in that *life* which is declared to be in the Word in the beginning, for it reads, "In the beginning was the Word," &c. John 1:1; and in verse 4, "In Him was life, and that life was the light of men." The declaration that this life was *in Him* certainly conveys the idea that it was something distinct from His essential existence as the Word or God. And if thus distinct it must be a produced existence; and as a produced existence it could be in Him and not destroy His Godhead. In turning to Col.3:3 & 4, we find it said of the saints, "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." Is not this the same life which is the *light of men*; said to be hid in God as that life was in the Word? And this life *is Christ*, and Christ is the Son of God. Mt.16:16. Hence it is said of the *Word*, when He *was made flesh*. John 1:14. "And we beheld His glory," what as the glory of the invisible God? No, but "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." Thus, the believer's life is identified with Christ, and Christ with the Son of God, the only begotten of the Father. Consequently the Son of God as such is the life of the saints and the head of them in that life. How else could they be born of God, seeing He is the *Only Begotten* of the Father, unless they were begotten in Him as a head, as we are the creatures of God and being created in Adam. As brother Clark says, Is there anything *like grandsons about this*? Whilst we have in the Son the Godhead in all its fulness as existing in the Word, we have also the life of His people, thus constituting Him one with the Father, and one with His people, and yet possessing a personal distinction from each, in distinction from the Father, He is begotten of Him and is the life of His people, in distinction from His people, He is God. He is therefore just such a person as could act as Mediator between God and men. Without His being thus distinct, in person, from each, He could not sustain the office of Mediator. "Now a Mediator is not a Mediator of one, but God is one," says Paul. Gal.3:20. And again, I Tim.2:5 - "For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" - not the *man Jesus*, but the Christ as well as the

Jesus. Hence, as He had an existence in the Beginning which was distinct from Him as God, and this existence is the Christ, we see that from the Beginning we had an existing, living Mediator in the Head of the church. As Paul represents, as above, that the Mediator must be a person distinct from the *one God, and from men*; according to the system of our brethren, which represents Christ as existing only as God, and therefore as the one God, until about eighteen hundred years ago, there was no actually existing Mediator until them. If for four thousand years God could hold gracious intercourse with many of the fallen posterity of Adam without an existing Mediator though whom they were to commune with Him, I cannot see why such communion might not still be continued without a Mediator. But such a thing could not be. 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.*" II Tim. 1:9. How could this be if there was no *life* of believers, no Christ in existence until about eighteen hundred years ago?

The views which I have advanced have been charged with *Sabellianism*. But any candid reader of what I have written will see the falsity of such charge. They will see that I believe just what the Scriptures say, that "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one." I John 5:7; that is, that God exists as *three*, but so as *three*, as to be absolutely *one*, and therefore, not three persons or individuals.

I have been charged with *Arianism*, so brother Clark charges me with denying the *divinity of the Son of God*. He says he has made it, deliberately, but I must say he has made it wantonly, I cannot view it in any other light, though I presume he designed no such looseness. What I have written, will, I think, show the entire incorrectness of the charge. I will, however add, that brother Clark, I think, will admit that the Word was made flesh, or became a perfect man, without in the least destroying His essential Godhead. Why then could He not exist with the life of His people, and therefore a begotten life in Him, and as personally one with Him without destroying His divinity? However, it is enough to sustain me against such a charge, that, in the same declaration of Him, in which it is said, "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men," it is also said, "The Word was with God, and the *Word was God.*" John 1:1 & 4.

Again he appears to think there is nothing in the Scriptures to warrant the idea of Christ's being anything else

than God and man. Strange! Does Brother Clark harbor the idea that God in His word has carelessly used descriptive and distinctive names and terms, where there are no distinctions designed? Is not the Lord Jesus Christ in the Scriptures declared to be God and Jehovah, and the Son of God, and man? Are not these three distinctive names, and is there nothing distinctive intended by them? Does not the name Jehovah imply absolute, independent, and self-existence? Does not the term Son, as used among men, and generally in the Scriptures, distinctively imply a begotten, and therefore dependent existence? And does not the term, man, imply a fleshly existence? Was He not a Son before He was *made of a woman and made under the law*? I cannot believe that our Lord is revealed to be what He is not. Why then are these three distinctive terms so often used of our Lord if He does not possess the three distinct existences thereby designated? Can brother Clark answer these enquiries so as to make them harmonize with the truth of Scripture declarations and yet so as to deny His distinct existence as the Son of God? In John 1st, as already noticed, we have the three natures, "The Word was God;" again, "In Him was life;" again, "The Word was made flesh," verse 1,4 & 14. In Isa.9:6, we have *A child born and a Son given*, are not these distinct? And again, His names are *The Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace*. Are not these names descriptive? I presume brother Clark could not say that the name *Everlasting Father* being given to the *child born and the son given* implies He is distinctively the Father in the Godhead. Brother Clark will probably shuffle these queries off, by saying the subject of God's existence is a mystery. True it is a mystery, but does this imply that we should by our constructions put upon God's word, involve it in contradictions? There is a material difference between mystery and contradictions. It is nowhere written, *great are the contradictions of godliness*. Contradictions in his system I have already pointed out, the above hint therefore will be sufficient. I have thus presented my views as contrasted with the popular system, by which it will be seen that I, in common with the advocates of that system, hold that God exists as three, and that these *three are one*, and so *one*, that either of the three, is in His distinct relation, the one God. They hold that there are three persons in the Godhead, I deny that, but say that the Son is a proper and distinct person from the Father and the Holy Ghost, in relation to His sonship; but that He does not exist in His sonship separate from His Godhead, any more than He does as man, so that in His distinct personality He is God, Son of God,

and Man. They hold that His sonship relates to His Godhead, so that He is no otherwise God than as He is begotten of the Father; I deny this as contradictory to His being equal with the Father, and to His being the independent and self-existent God; and in distinction, I hold that His sonship consists in His being begotten of the Father as the Head of His church and life of His people and that they thus, in their spiritual life, were begotten in Him and proceed from Him, and that He is the "first born among many brethren." Rom.8:29. And now brethren is there anything heretical, anything anti-scriptural in those points wherein I differ from you, anything contradictory to the Son of God's being absolutely the Jehovah, whilst He is the Son of God, and Man, possessing these existences distinct from His Godhead, yet inseparable from it, and personally one with it; any diminishing of His capacity to act as the one Mediator between God and men? If there is, then clear yourselves from the heresy by separating from me. But beware how you encourage splits among us, when that from which you would separate, is sustained by the word of God. I am willing to join issue with brother Clark in an *appeal to the saints of the most high God*, which it is that denies that the Son of God is the Jehovah, he who says He is begotten of the Father as God, or I in contending that He is unbegotten, unproduced in His Godhead; and whether I any more diminish His essential Godhead by contending that He exists as the life of His people as well as man in His personal union with His Godhead, that he does in admitting that He exists as proper man in like union with His Godhead. Whilst having joined in this appeal to the saints I would not forestall their decision, but wish them to consider and speak candidly if they are disposed to do so, and say which more denies the idea of absolute self-existence, he who contends that it is an unbegotten, underived existence, for this is the point; I would beg indulgence to lengthen this communication by stating what I believe to be the actual difference between me and brother Clark and other brethren whom I could name, and that reduced to the shortest span. It is simply this, that I believe that Christ actually existed from before the foundation of the world, in union with His Godhead as the Head and life of His people, and they deny His so existing, and therefore in effect, deny His actual existence as the Christ and Mediator until He was born of Mary. Also, we differ in the reference of His sonship, they referring it to His Godhead and I referring it to His existence as Head and life of His people. This is the amount on this subject; it to be sure extends itself to the subject of regeneration as to what constitutes that. Whether

this be a sufficient ground for a split I leave them to judge for themselves. My opinion and my feelings are that it is no cause for a split or for hard feelings; but as I do not wish to intrude upon their fellowship after what brother Clark has developed by crowding myself upon their churches, or associations, I shall stand aloof, till invited.

There are one or two other things in brother Clark's communications, which I wish to notice. He charges me with having *proscribed all the saints from the apostles' days down*. How have I proscribed them? By making my views on this subject a test of fellowship? I deny the charge. The first instance of my publishing my views on this subject, through the Signs, was to defend them from the charge of heresy, which certain brethren had made against them, as advanced in conversation and preaching; and in most cases since, in which I have discussed the subject through the Signs, it has been in self defense from similar charges. In these communications I have protested against making our different views on this mysterious subject, a test of fellowship, or a charge of heresy; so long as the essential Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ was maintained. If by the charge he means that I have been too harsh relative to the views of others, I probably am guilty. I feel that I am deficient in the graces of meekness and humility as well as in every other christian grace. There have been some occasions for producing excited feelings. When the subject of the sonship of Christ as I now view it was first opened up to my view, the revelation of Him in the scriptures seemed so to harmonize in relation to His being the Jehovah, and to His subordination as Son, and in reference to His relation with His church and people, that I thought surely Old School Baptists would receive the scripture testimony on the subject. But what have I met with from them, as a general result, but charges of heresy, and of bringing forward *new things* to make a split and lead a party, &c. Again, when I consider the origin of the system, as such, of three persons in the Godhead, and of the sonship of Christ as generally received by Catholics, Protestants and Baptists; for brother Clark is not correct in saying I have proscribed all the saints from the Apostles' days. The Apostles never taught that there are three persons in the Godhead, nor that it was as God the Son was begotten. Mosheim says, speaking of the affair of Arius, and of the council of Nice, A.D. 325, until then "nothing was dictated to the faith of christians in this matter, &c. Hence it happened that the christian doctors entertained different sentiments upon this subject, without giving the least offense, and discoursed variously concerning the distinctions between

the Father, Son and Holy Ghost." {See in his church history his account of the Arian affair and the council of Nice.} When I say, I consider the character of the majority of the Bishops composing this council, the decrees they established, as well as the creed; that they sanctioned Constantine's assuming as emperor an authority in religion, and that from this council, emanated the first professed christian persecution against christians; first against Arians, and then against Donatists and Novations, with whom was evidently the true church, I am led to the conclusion, that here was developed the Beast in his first assuming the seat and power of the dragon; and therefore that the creed and decrees of this council will go down with the Beast. See also Jones' account of this council, and remarks in his church history. Hence, I have felt impatient at seeing Old School Baptists holding so tenacious to the creed of that council, and in its spirit branding all as heretics, who dare to differ from it. I may therefore have spoken too severely on this point. I give not the above account to reflect upon brethren, but as a matter of well authenticated historical fact, to show brother Clark that he was too brash, regardless of candor and of facts in his sweeping charge.

Brother Clark also admonishes me relative to the effects of my discussions. How many have been edified by them, is not my province to decide. But I know that the multitude are not always on the side of the truth. I have probably as great an itching, naturally, for popularity as others; and I do highly regard the fellowship of brethren, and of brother Clark and those who appear to have been with him in this stand against my views. But I have not been trained in my experience to a popular course. In my early experience I was constrained by a regard to scripture testimony to break off, from my connection with the most numerous and influential denomination in New Jersey, and to hunt up a few despised and scattered members of a Baptist church in that vicinity, before unknown to me, and ask them to admit me to baptism and connection with them. And as they had no preacher, I had to go to the city of New York, {thirty miles,} and request a preacher to visit them and baptize me. My travel ever since has been in the same course. Again and again have I had to leave the many, to go with the few; but it has not been my lot to leave the few and adhere to the many. And does brother Clark suppose that at this time of life I am to be induced, unless by being convinced of error, to cease to advocate what I have conscientiously received as revealed truth for the sake of being with the majority? With Jeremiah I may conclude, that I was *born a man of strife and a man of contention*. Jer.15:10.

Brother Clark on I Cor.15:45, and brother Williams, I will, if permitted, attend to in another communication.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, April 17, 1850.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.18 {1850}

Prayer of the Unregenerate.

Brother Beebe: - The following letter, I had written in a private answer to brother Erastus Maynard of Penn., but having occasion to write to you, and thinking that others besides brother Maynard had objections to the *conclusion*, I mention, in the 1st Number of the relation of my experience, being led to by certain circumstances, I have concluded to address it to you for publication in the Signs, if it does not over step your bounds. S.T.

Brother Maynard, Yours of Feb.24th came to hand, in which you object to the conclusion I arrived at from my experience in a certain case, and you ask further explanation relative to it. That to which you object is the idea that unregenerated persons may supplicate God's throne and be heard in cases of providential needs. The conclusion I consider a legitimate one from the circumstances I related. I had myself at that time no spiritual faith, and knew nothing of Christ as the way of acceptance with God. I had, as thousands of other unregenerated persons, no doubt have, a rational faith in the providential government of God. Hence the conclusion, that if I could be heard, other unregenerated persons who were under similar circumstances might be heard. The circumstances I related, are to me known facts; and they may be, to you, my brother, facts, so far as you have confidence in the truth of my statement. My being involved in difficulty, my being led to look to God by prayer for deliverance, and my being delivered, must all alike have been under the control of God's providence; or all must have occurred by chance. I leave you to choose which position you please. For myself I prefer acknowledging God's government in the whole affair. You say, *you cannot see how persons can pray acceptably to God unless they have faith*. I say in substance the same in reference to everything relating to the great matter of salvation, in connection with that to which you object. But since you have led me by your letter more to reflect on the subject, I think perhaps I went too far in saying in reference to salvation, *No person can approach God with acceptance, but through faith in*

Christ. I will now say, no person can have the assurance of being heard in reference to any of the blessings of salvation, excepting as he is enabled to pray in faith, nor can he receive and know those blessings, but through the faith of Christ. But the Publican's cry of, *God be merciful to me, a sinner*, I think was accepted, though he had not, when he uttered it, faith in Christ. And the similar cry of thousands since have been accepted before they had faith to behold Christ as the way of acceptance. They had faith in God, and in their just condemnation as transgressors of His law.

To return to the explanation you request. I understand from the scriptures, that God is the God of creation, of providence, and of salvation by grace; and that although creation and providence are subservient to the great purpose of salvation, yet in many points they are distinct from it; are subject to a different law from *the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus*, to which salvation is subject. Many persons were created in Adam, who have not spiritual life in Christ, and who have never therefore by the *law of the spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus* been made free from the *law of sin and death*. Yet, these are subjects of God's providential goodness; for *He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain upon the just and on the unjust*. Thus also He is "the Saviour of all men, especially of them that believe." That is, as I understand this text, He saves temporally all men from some calamities and evils to which they might be exposed. It is said, Acts 14:17 - "Nevertheless He left not Himself *without witness*, in that He did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." I do not see any inconsistency with the purpose of salvation, in supposing that as a *witness* of God's providential goodness to the children of men and of their dependence on Him, He should, in many cases like mine, where He has purposed to make manifest His delivering hand, first bring the persons to cry to Him for help. Thus in the 107th Psalm, while there is in it a spiritual reference to God's wonders of salvation, there is also a literal reference to God's providential goodness in delivering persons, *when they cry unto Him*, out of their temporal distresses. See verses 13, 19 & 28 - with their connections. There is nothing there said about their crying in faith; yea, one class is denominated *fools*. So Nehemiah, whilst he gave to the children of Israel, a character very different from that of believers in Christ, speaks of their crying unto God in their distresses and of His *hearing and delivering them*. Nehemiah 9:27, 28, and following verses. Look at Jacob fleeing from the consequences of the fraud he had practiced

upon his brother Esau, and of the deception upon his father Issac. He is met by a vision at night, in which he is assured of God's providential care and protection over him as the son of Abraham, through the ministry of angels. I have no idea that he then had faith in Christ as the way of acceptance with God; nor had he this faith until he wrestled with the angel, and received the name of *Israel*, or a *prince having power with God and men and having prevailed*. Gen.32:24-30. Hence in the instance above referred to, {Gen.28:12-22} we find Jacob bargaining with God by a vow, that if God would do so and so to him, then God should be his God, and on his return he would give to Him the tenth of all God should give him. I know it has been generally understood that the *ladder* which Jacob saw prefigured to him Christ as the medium of communication with God. This is inferred from what our Lord said, John 1:51. I do not so view the matter. I understand Christ's remark to Nathanael to be a *contrast* to Jacob's vision, and not as a *comparison*, as of the type and the antitype. Nathanael and the Jewish nation had seen for ages past the angels of God ascending and descending upon the ladder which Jacob saw in a vision; that is, they had seen God holding intercourse with that nation through the provisions of that covenant which He had established with Abraham. But says Christ to him, "Thou shalt see greater things than these." Hereafter, ye shall see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." That is, ye shall see God holding communion with His people through Christ Jesus and His atonement; a medium in which there are no rungs or steps to climb.

In conclusion I would say, we shall more clearly expose the delusions of men by which they suppose they are authorized by the scriptures to believe they can climb to heaven by repentance, prayers &c., as so many rungs of Jacob's ladder, by observing and showing the distinction between the dispensations of God's providence and His grace, than by blending the two together, and thereby denying His providential goodness towards those that are without. Hoping that this may be satisfactory, or if it is not, you will again write me and show its defects, I subscribe myself affectionately yours,

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, March 12, 1851.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.19 {1851}

The New Birth.

Brother Beebe: - I received, a short time since, a letter from brother Davis S. Woody, of Missouri, in which he makes the following request:

"Dear Brother: For the satisfaction of some of my dear brethren, who I think do not understand you and brother T.P. Dudley, on the subject of the new birth or regeneration, I would like to have your views on that subject, and what it is that is born again. Dear brother, the reason in particular that I ask your views on this subject, is that some of the brethren think that brother Dudley laid down premises which would justify the non-resurrection principle. If you see proper to give your views, I would rather have them through the *Signs*."

In accordance with brother Woody's wishes, I forward my answer to you for publication in the *Signs*, if you think it proper to publish it. If you have any objection to doing so as tending to revive controversy, please to enclose this in another envelope, and direct it to brother Woody, Mexico, Osage County, MO. If he gets the answer in manuscript, he can probably show it to such brethren as he pleases.

Brother Woody, in replying to your enquires, in order if possible for me to make my views plain, I wish first, if I can command language to do it, to explain myself on one important point connected therewith. The point is this: that a person, one who exists as an individual being, may have a distinct nature from what he before existed in, superadded to him, so as to be made to exist in that distinct nature, without destroying his former personality, and yet changing his personal relations into conformity to his new nature, or new birth; for since the creation of Adam and Eve, I know of no way in which an individual existence in nature is produced but by a birth. Many brethren seem not only entirely indisposed to admit the correctness of such an idea as the above, but also to allow me and others to believe it. But if the above position, in substance, is not correct, I am ignorant, and must remain so, of the testimony of Scripture concerning both the *new birth* and the incarnation of Christ; as well as concerning His spiritual headship.

As I understand the Scriptures, the correctness of the position I have above laid down, is fully demonstrated in the testimony given concerning the incarnation of Christ. According to the testimony of Scripture, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John 1:1. Again in verse 14, it is said, "And the Word

was made flesh and dwelt among us." And according to Gal.4:4, "God sent forth His Son, made of a woman and made under the law." Now I presume, no Old School Baptist will understand by the declaration, John 1:14, that the Word, the Godhead, was changed into flesh, nor by that of Gal.4:4, that the pre-existence of the Son was destroyed, and that He was made the Son of God of the woman. Yet the declaration, "made of a woman and made under the law," is affirmed of the *Son*, as in the other text, the affirmation is, "The Word was made flesh." What is it then but that a fleshly nature, in which He did not before exist, was superadded to Him personally, as the *Word*, and as the *Son sent forth*? Here then my position is fully proved. Christ is made to exist distinctively in a fleshly nature, or as man, in being born of the Virgin, yet this fleshy birth in no sense destroys His personal identity as the Son, or as the Word, but He remains the *Son sent forth to serve*, and to *learn obedience by the things He suffered*, is still the *Word made flesh*, is *one with the Father*, is God manifest in the flesh, and brings into His servitude under the law, and in the things which He suffered, all the majesty, power, dignity, and even all the fullness of the Godhead. Yet while His original personality is not changed, His personal relation is changed; from being the giver of the law, He now in *being made of woman is made under the law*, made subject to its demands; and we behold Him in the flesh of a *servant* under it, a *minister of the circumcision, come to minister, and not to be ministered unto*. So I understand Christ's existing in the beginning, as the *only begotten of the Father*, as the production of God, or the beginning of the creation of God, in that *life which is the light of men*, and which constitutes Him the *Head of His church*, the *life of His people*, and their *elder brother*, to be His existing in that superadded life to His Godhead, and which in no sense destroyed His personal identity as God, but that He remains, whilst thus personally related to, and one with His people, to be the Jehovah, the self-existing God. The reason why some have charged me with being an Arian for holding Christ to exist in this near relation to His people, is that they will not allow, notwithstanding the proof I have presented of the fact, that a distinct nature can be superadded, of God, personally to Himself, without destroying His personal identity as God.

I now come, brother Woody, to give you my views, briefly, on the new birth, as to what it is. Regeneration, as I hold it, is the implanting in an individual, or adding to his mind, that *incorruptible seed* which Peter speaks of, even the spiritual seed of Abraham, which is Christ, *Christ in you*, and

which is that *life* that was in the Word, *which is the light of men*; for Christ is the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. John 1:9. Hence this individual sees his relation and accountability to God and to the law, and sees his sinfulness as he never saw or felt it before, for *by the law is the knowledge of sin*. He sees this as the natural man cannot see it, for the law is spiritual. And he so sees and knows the reality of these things, that he cannot shake off or drive them from him as he could former impressions, which arose from mere fleshly views, or a natural conscience. The reason of this is, that whilst the implantation of this seed is of God, and of God only, and not through any instrumentalities of men, the seed itself being life and light, quickens the mind and conscience to such a sense of the reality of these things, that the individual feels himself as standing before a heart searching and rein trying God; and in the ultimate view of this, and of the purity of the law, all his goodness and doings are turned to corruption, and he falls helpless at the footstool of mercy, or at the feet of that God against whom he has sinned. Being thus stripped and killed by the law, he is prepared to be married to another, even Christ, or brought to view in his relation to a crucified and risen Jesus.

The new birth I understand to be, the *being born again of the incorruptible seed by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever*. Whether by the *word of God* in this text is understood, the essential Word, who is God, or as is frequently intended by the *word of God*, that which God directly speaks or communicates to a person, is immaterial, for both ideas are true. For Christ said, "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 person being as we showed dead, killed by the law, is now made to hear the voice of the Son of God, the proclamation of pardon and salvation through Christ's atonement. And every child of grace knows that it took something more than the power of man to make him hear; that it came with the power and as the word of God; and he already having Christ or the seed of life in him, he is enabled to receive, believe and rejoice in that word, and feels himself standing in a new relation to God, no longer a condemned and banished one, but a pardoned, justified one; has peace with God, and is enabled to cry Abba, Father; that is, he feels that God is his Father. Thus in the new birth there is a striking correspondence to the natural birth; to each there is a seed implanted, and then a quickening by which life is manifested. And when the natural child is brought to the birth, the sorrows of the woman in

travail, the fetus being broke loose from that by which alone it had been hitherto nourished, strongly represents the agonies and the killing by the law belonging to the second birth. But then there is a contrast in the births. In the first birth the child comes into the world in the image of Adam, an alien from God and subject to pain, disease and death, as the fruits of depravity and condemnation. In the second birth, he comes into the kingdom of heaven, where *grace reigns through righteousness*, has communion with God as a Father through Christ; stands manifested as one with Christ, and having a common interest with all the members of Christ's body, in all that Christ accomplished by redemption, in all the promises of God, and in that inheritance which is reserved for the saints in light.

I now come, brother Woody, to your second point of enquiry, namely: "What it is that is born again?" If by this enquiry, you mean what is the production of the new birth? I answer, the "New man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Eph.4:24. This *new man* I believe to be Christ in you the hope of glory; for Paul said, It was *Christ that lived in him*. See Col.1:27 & Gal.2:20. But I presume that your enquiry relates to that which has been the matter of discussion in the Signs formerly. I therefore answer, our Lord said, "Except a *man* be born again;" and I know not what right I have to suppose he did not mean as he said - did not mean the man. In conformity to this, I say in reference to brother Woody's being born again, that it is brother Woody himself in his whole person that was *born again*. And here is the application of the position with which I started, namely: That a distinct nature may be superadded to a person so that he shall actually exist in that new nature, without destroying his former personal identity, or his former existence. This I illustrated in the case of the Word *being made flesh*. So I understand that a spiritual nature called *life* has been superadded to brother Woody by the spiritual seed being implanted, and he being brought to the birth, by his being brought to live the *life he now lives in the flesh, by the faith of the Son of God*, that is, as before God. Yet his individuality is not changed, it is Davis S. Woody, his old man or nature is the same as it was before, his rational powers the same. And yet his personal relations by the new birth are altogether changed. He no longer belongs to Adam's family, but to Christ's; is a living member of Christ's body; is not under the law, but under grace; is not of the world, as Christ is not of the world; is not under condemnation, but in a state of justification; although he feels the workings of depravity in all he does, it is no more

he that does it, but *sin that dwells in him*. He is in a word, a son of God, and a joint heir with Christ to glory; although he has in the old man all the elements that would constitute him a child of hell if still standing in his relation to Adam and under the law.

In reference to the idea that the principles laid down by brother Dudley favoring the non-resurrection notion, I will say that so far as I have understood brother D., I know of no material difference between his views and mine in relation to the new birth. And the views I have above advanced as to what is *born again*, are the only views in my estimation consistent with the idea of the resurrection of the bodies of the saints to glory. For I cannot believe that whatever is not born again of God can ever enter heaven to participate in the glory of Christ. Whilst what ever is born of God through Christ, the only begotten of the Father, must partake with Him in glory. Hence if I believed that only the souls of persons were the subjects of regeneration and the new birth, I must believe that only their souls enter heavenly glory. But believing as I do, that it is the *man* that is born again; that after the second birth he exists personally in a spiritual life, whilst he retains all that in which he before existed as a natural person, and in which he still exists in his fleshly life, and therefore believing that his whole person was represented by Christ in His atonement, I must believe that in his whole person, soul and body, he must enter glory, as a member of Christ's body, and as a trophy of Christ's redemption and of His conquest over death. And I can see nothing in this sentiment concerning the new birth, that can favor the non-resurrection notion.

Thus, my brother, I have tried with plainness to give my views on these points; it is for you to examine the Scriptures for yourself, to judge of their correctness. Yours with kind regards,

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, July 27, 1853.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.21 {1853}

Exposition of Col.1:12.

"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."

Dear Brother Beebe: - Having had my mind somewhat impressed for some time past, with the text, Col.1:12, and having some more distinct views than formerly of its import I have thought of offering a few remarks on the passage. Although the subject and my remarks, may be considered controversial, as differing from the opinions of some others, yet my object is to present for the consideration of the brethren, my view of the subject. Whether they be correct, or whether they be of any importance, they may judge. Brother Dudley has anticipated me on some points of my subject, but there are other points not in contradiction to what is contained in his excellent communication in the fourth number of the present volume, which I wish to notice.

The text reads thus: "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." The expression, "Giving thanks unto the Father, which, &c.," clearly shows that the making meet, &c., is the work of God and not of the creature. But that on which I wish particularly to remark is the *making meet to be partakers of the inheritance*, &c. By the expression, "the inheritance of the saints in light;" whether we understand by the *saints in light*, the saints in glory, or believers in general, I think none will dispute that we are to understand the inheritance to be that inheritance *which is incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for them*; and therefore that it must be entirely distinct from that inheritance which was given to the natural seed of Abraham through the lineage of Issac and Jacob. That was a natural inheritance and the nature derived by their natural birth as the posterity of Abraham, and certified by their circumcision made *them meet to be partakers* of it, their nature being suitable to the enjoyment of it, and they being known as the legitimate posterity of Abraham, see Gen.17:1-14. But the inheritance of which our text speaks, is not earthly, but heavenly; not corruptible, but incorruptible, not natural, but spiritual; it is not given of God merely as the sovereign disposer of events upon covenant obligations and conditions, but it is bequeathed

of God as a Father, for an inheritance for His children. Hence it appears to me that to those who have ears to hear what the Spirit saith, it is an easy task to describe what is requisite to make any meet for this inheritance. We must possess a nature that is heavenly, incorrupting, and spiritual; for without a nature corresponding to the inheritance we cannot enjoy it. And further we must have the witness that we are the children of God, "and if children then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together." Rom.8:16,17. The question may be asked, whether adoption with its necessary accompaniments: redemption, and emancipation from the law, would constitute this *meetness* for the inheritance? It might make us *partakers of the inheritance*, but not *meet* to be partakers of it; and our text speaks of being meet to be partakers, &c. Adoption and redemption have an important place in our being made heirs, because as the children of Adam we are bond servants under the law, until redeemed, emancipated and made partakers of the spirit of adoption. But redemption and adoption give no new nature. They only make us as we were the children of Adam legally partakers of the inheritance, without giving that heavenly, that spiritual nature, adapted to the nature of the inheritance. Hence the declaration; *ye must be born again*, sounds as emphatically from the word as does the doctrine of adoption or redemption. It bears as prominent a place in the gospel revelation, is as important a point in the plan of salvation. I see not why the declaration, "Except a man be born again," &c., is not as definite in its import, as are the declaration concerning adoption and redemption; or how a person can speak loosely of the nature of the new birth any more than he can of the nature of redemption, consistently with a correct view of gospel doctrine.

The question may be asked, whether, if we understand by the terms *regeneration*, and *born again*, *born of God*, &c., - *a washing*? We do not form an adequate idea of what is intended to be conveyed by those terms in the scriptures? I answer, No.

1. Because the idea conveyed by the terms being born, in their uniform use is very different, from that conveyed by the terms being washed.

2. Because no washing can give to an earthly person, a new and heavenly nature. No washing will change the *Ethiopians skin*, or the *Leopards spots*. No washing will change the *sow* into a sheep, but after being washed she still retains her old nature, and will therefore *return to her wallowing in the mire*. But do not the terms *washing of regeneration* found

in Titus 3:5, convey the idea that washing and regeneration are one and the same? Will any say the terms *renewing of the Holy Ghost*, found in immediate connection convey the idea that the renewing and the Holy Ghost are one and the same? Yet both expressions are similar in construction. The plain manifest import of the one expression is that the renewing is the result of the operation or communication of the Holy Ghost; so that of the other, is that the washing is the result of regeneration. The one is the Holy Ghost's renewing, or a renewing which is experienced only where the Holy Ghost is given, {John 7:39,} the other is regeneration's washing or a washing which is experienced where regeneration takes place. There is an experience of washing, both of the water and of the blood, resulting from regeneration. But I think I have said enough to show any true inquirer after truth that this text does not convey properly the idea, that a washing is regeneration; and I know of no text of scripture that does.

But the question returns. What do the terms regeneration and born again mean? I cannot conceive that anyone has a right to say that they do not mean just what they say; that *regeneration* is not a regeneration, that being *born again* is not a being born again. If then no one has authority to say that the meaning of these terms do not correspond with the word used; I think I may safely say they do mean what the words import. And this is just what is needed to make us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. For as showed, the inheritance is not earthly or fleshly, but spiritual. In our first birth we were born of the flesh, and that which *is born of the flesh is flesh*, and will remain till death does its office to return it to dust. That only *is spirit which is born of the spirit*. In our first generation we were generated as the seed of Adam the *living soul*, but *earthy man*. Those who are regenerated are generated a second time; generated as the seed of the second Adam, who is the *Lord from heaven* and a *quickenning spirit*. In the first birth persons are brought into manifest existence, in a nature that is of the *earth, earthy*. In being born again they are born of a nature, that is spiritual and heavenly; capable of receiving the things of the Spirit, and enjoying that which is heavenly. So that those who are *born again* exist in an *old man* and in a *new man*, in the same person, exist as the seed of Adam and as the seed of Christ, as the children of Adam and the children of God. Hence notwithstanding their *old man*, clinging to its mother earth and corrupt; yet they are made meet to be partakers of the incorruptible inheritance; for who so meet to partake of the inheritance laid up by a father as his own

children? Hence the declaration of Paul before quoted: "If children, then heirs of God." &c. I have above represented this second birth to be of the seed of Christ, and I think I have truly so represented it according to the scripture. But our text reads, "Giving thanks unto the Father who hath made us meet," &c. How is this? It is even so. The believer is born of life and *Christ is their life*; {Col.3:4,} he is born of the Spirit and the Lord is the spirit of the New Testament, II Cor.3:17. The second Adam was made, not a living soul, but a *quickenig spirit*. What is it that quickens a dead body, but life imparted? So what will quicken a dead soul but spiritual life imparted? Christ is that spirit and is that life. Hence that which is in the believer, the hope of glory according to the scriptures, is not the old soul new formed, but it is Christ in him. Col.1:27. That Christ is the seed, the life of which the children of God are born, I have contended, {if brother Beebe, you will allow me to glance a little at old things} heretofore as now; but though charged with it, I never have said that Christ as the quickening spirit was the *regenerator*. I have said that I knew not from the scriptures, or to what effect, that the Holy Ghost, as such, was the regenerator. And I have said that the Scriptures, ascribed the work to God, but whether as Father, or Word, or as Holy Ghost, they did not say. Here according to my present construction of this text, I was mistaken. For what does the text say? "Giving thanks unto the Father," &c., not unto the Word or the Holy Ghost. But how has the Father made us meet? 1. The *new man* which I understand to be the production of the *new birth* is said to be *after God created in righteousness, and true holiness*. Again it is said, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works." &c. If then we were created in Christ Jesus, we are in our second birth the seed of Christ, as our being created in Adam constituted us the seed of Adam; but in both cases it was God that created us, in the one case as servants, in the other as sons. In the second place it is God, even the Father, that regenerates. For it is written, "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God." &c. God's shining in the heart to give the light of the knowledge, &c., is His regenerating, by imparting that *life which is the light of men*. Hence Christ said, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." If Christ is that *eternal life which was with the Father*, {see John 1:2} and that life is the light of men, then God shines in the heart to give the light of the knowledge, &c., by regenerating with that life.

I have thus given my view of what it is to be *made meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light*, and who it is that makes meet. It is not for me to say that God could not in any other way meeten heirs for His inheritance, but I think I may say, this is the standard which God has revealed, "If children then heirs;" and that these children are born children by a second birth; born not of the flesh, but of the spirit; born *not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God*; born not as the seed of Adam, but as the seed of Christ. I think also from the view I have taken of the scripture testimony on the subject, that although there is a *washing of water by the word*, and a *washing from our sin in the blood of Christ*, connected with salvation, yet that no washing can constitute the regeneration and new birth spoken of in the scriptures, or can change one from a natural person to a spiritual born child of God. You may wash an African slave until you rub the skin off and yet you cannot make him a free born son of his white master.

I do desire that our brethren would examine this and other subjects of like importance, carefully in the light of the Scriptures; and be careful that they look at it in the scripture light, and not in that of the theories of men. If the Scriptures do not sustain the views I have given, I hope any discovering the error will point it out in the spirit of christian love.

I remain yours; the same poor sinful wretch as when younger.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, March 8, 1855.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.23 {1855}

Enquiries concerning the Sabbath and the Lord's Day.

Brother Beebe: - I received a letter a short time since from brother Thomas M'Coll, of Canada West, requesting my views on Rev.1:10, with a general reference to the observance of the first day of the week as a Sabbath. I have thought to address him, in answer, through the *Signs*; but if you think I am crowding too many communications upon you {as I have recently sent you several} for the prosperity and usefulness of the *Signs*, will you be so good as to enclose this in another envelope and send it to him? You know his post-office address; if otherwise, you will please publish it in its course.

Brother M'Coll, you mention in your letter having been accustomed to the observance of the first day of the week, as so strictly observed in Scotland, as the Sabbath, and the influence of custom on the mind. As I was in early life brought up among the New England Puritans, and was afterwards among the English Presbyterians, I know how to sympathize with you in reference to the influence of educational prejudices on the mind. But I have, I trust, as well as yourself, been led by Divine teaching to look away from all traditional teachings to the Scriptures, as the directory God has given for all religious observances. To the Scriptures therefore it becometh us to look, and to them alone, for our authority for observing the first day of the week. But in order to meet your former educational prejudices, it may be well first to enquire as to what the Scriptures teach concerning the Sabbath. We will come first to the fourth command as it stands in the decalogue, and inquire into its nature and design.

First; As to its nature in the letter of it, whether it is to be viewed as a *positive* or a *moral* command. I use the term *moral* here, not as relating to common morals, but as denoting that which has an obligation arising from the nature of things; or, in other words, that which is necessarily obligatory in consequence of our obligation to love God, and to love our neighbor. From our Lord's teaching on this point, I am led to the conclusion that this fourth command, in the letter of it, is *positive*, and not *moral*. That which is moral must alike be obligatory upon all who are obligated to love God and their neighbor. So the Jews seemed to view this command. Hence when the Jews complained of the disciples doing that which was not lawful on the Sabbath day, Christ said to them, Mt.12:5 - "Have ye not read in the law, how that on the Sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are blameless?" That is, in their kindling the fire on the altar, and offering the continual burnt offerings, &c. Now if this command was moral, it would be equally obligatory upon all. None could transgress the first command, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," and be blameless. He further adds, in the same connection, "For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath day," thus showing that this law of the Sabbath in its letter, instead of arising necessarily from man's obligation to love God, depended altogether upon His sovereign command, and hence obligatory only on those whom He had commanded to observe it. And as it was given to national Israel, distinctively from the other nations of the earth, it was only obligatory on them. Again, Christ said to the Jews, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."

Mark 2:27. But man was made to honor and love God; hence it is manifest that the keeping of the Sabbath is not essential to man's loving God only as he is especially commanded to do it. Other texts might be quoted to the same effect, but the above are, I think, sufficient to convince you or any candid inquirer that the fourth command, concerning the seventh day Sabbath is *positive* and not moral, and therefore binding only to those who are directly commanded to observe it. And as there is not a text in the whole Bible to show that any but the nation of Israel were commanded to rest on that day, no others are obligated to observe it. Again, a *positive* command must be *positive* in the very wording of the command, and as this command particularly specifies the *seventh* day as the day of rest, we see how futile is the reasoning of those who would represent that the spirit of the command is observed by keeping the *first* day as a day of worship.

A second inquiry, relative to this command, is - Why, if it is not moral, was it placed in the decalogue among those that are moral? I answer, Paul tells us that *the law is spiritual*; meaning, evidently, the whole ten commands. Again, by showing us that *Love is the fulfilling of the law*, {Rom.13:8-10,} he shows us that the law in its spirit is all moral. So is the fourth command in its spiritual import. Let us consider it in its parts. First: *Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work*. There is manifestly a reference to the curse with which God cursed the ground for man's sake. Gen.3:17-19. In this, connected with his labor, or the *sweat of man's face*, is the *sorrow* with which he shall eat of the ground, and the *thorns and thistles* which it shall bring forth. Would not love to God, with all the heart, lead us patiently and cheerfully to endure the labor and to bear all the sorrows, the thistles and the thorns He has appointed to us in this world? The second branch: *But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, &c.* For in six days the Lord made the heavens and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day, &c. Here is the reason assigned for the command, namely: That the heavens and earth and all that in them is, are God's *finished* work; and therefore all that we are, all that we possess, and all with which we are surrounded, is God's, as being made of Him, and therefore rightfully subject alone to His government and disposal. Hence love to God would lead us to rest entirely in God, satisfied with what He has made, and for Him to dispose of us and all around us at His pleasure, and to seek to serve and glorify Him in all that we are and in all that we enjoy - not only for one day in seven, but, as *seven* and *seventh* signifies, and is used

frequently to denote, a fullness and completeness, so this teaches that all our time should be the Lord's and all we do be for His glory. "By the law is the knowledge of sin." And I know of no command more fully calculated to show us our depravity, our selfishness, our want of submission to God's government, and our propensity to choose for ourselves, than is this fourth command when viewed in its spirituality. But all this is lost, by confining it down to a seventh day rest. Truly, by their traditions the Gentiles, as well as the Jews, have made void the law.

A third inquiry is, Whether the seventh day rest or Sabbath is not typical, and of what? It is written, Ex.16:29, "See, for that the Lord hath given you the sabbath, therefore He giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days." As to the bread here spoken of, the *manna*, it was typical of that true bread which the Father giveth from heaven, so the Sabbath must be typical of a gospel rest, in which those to whom it is given shall not have to labor for the bread then to be eaten, but it shall be given them beforehand. God says to Ezekiel, "Moreover, also I gave them" {that is, Israel} "my Sabbaths for a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctifies them." Ezkl.20:12. This must be typical of God's dealings with His spiritual Israel. But the apostle in his epistle to the Hebrews {4:1-11} shows from a reference to the 94th Psalm that there is a rest remaining to the people of God, both after the rest which Joshua, here called {verse 8} Jesus, gave to Israel in the land of Canaan, and also God's rest on the seventh day; and further showeth it is by faith, and by that only, any do enter this rest, which was shadowed forth by the other two. This then is that rest which the believer finds in Christ. For this the reason is assigned: "For he that is entered into his rest hath ceased from his own works as God did from His." - {verse 10.} Many of our brethren understand by the *He*, who is entered into his rest, in this verse, the believer. It is true that when any by faith enter into this rest in Christ, they *cease from their own works*, but not, I think, as God did from His, as having finished it, and pronounced it all good. When Christ entered into rest in His glory, it was that He had ceased from the work of redemption, having finished it, and it was accepted as good, as well as pleasing to the Father. To the believer the fourth command and other commands concerning the Sabbath, apply with full force antotypically, and find a ready response in his heart. This work is all done beforehand. Christ has performed the whole six days work, and the curse with its thorns is removed; and he therefore rests in a finished redemption; he goes no more

out to *hunt sticks to kindle his fire* - no more to look for bread beyond that he finds in Christ crucified. Why, then, my brother, should we cling to the typical rest, when the substance is already come, and we find it all in believing in Christ?

A fourth inquiry is, Have we scriptural authority for considering the first day of the week as particularly pointed out as the day for the meeting together of the churches? I think we have. I do not say for worship as is commonly said, because if we do not feel led to reverence and worship God daily, I fear our hearts are far from Him. Some, in their opposition to a legal Sabbath, may have denied that any particular day is specified as a day for the church to meet together. I differ from them on this point. I cannot think there would have been any regular meetings of the churches kept up, if there had been no particular times or days set apart by apostolic custom and authority, for the churches to meet to observe those ordinances and that order which the apostles by the authority of Christ had enjoyed. In those times of severe persecution after the apostles day, if the meetings of particular churches had not from time to time been broken up so as to prevent their making appointment for any future day of meeting, they would have been tempted not to make any regular appointments to avoid persecution, and thus their regular meetings would have been broken up, and they would have had to depend on some particular notice to get together again. Take away any regular day of meeting, and you take away all regular appointments of meeting. But if you suppose that the apostles by their institutions established a uniform custom in the churches of observing the first day of the week in commemoration of the resurrection of Christ, as the day on which they were to come together, then it is evident as that day from time to time occurred, they would be reminded of their obligation *not to forsake the assembling of themselves together*. When we examine the New Testament on the subject we find not as much said in reference to the observance of the first day of the week as might be expected, from the confidence with which it is asserted that it is substituted for the Jewish Sabbath. From the Acts of the Apostles, it would appear that the church at Jerusalem was daily together and engaged in that which appertained to the gospel and its ministry. The apostles as they went from place to place preaching the gospel, went, of course, where the gospel had not been preached, and where churches had not been planted. There they embraced, in the first place, the meeting together of the Jews in their synagogues on the Sabbath, for preaching

Jesus; and then other places of public resort, and even went from house to house preaching the gospel. In Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, he repeatedly speaks of their gathering together and coming together in one place as a church. This, of course, implies that they had stated times of coming together, but he, in these cases, gives no information in reference to the time of their coming together. Where, then, it may be asked, do we find any intimation of the first day being the day on which the disciples met together? First, we know that it was on the first day of the week that our Lord arose from the dead; that He showed Himself to certain women and to Peter, and afterwards to two of His disciples, and then at night, when the disciples, with the exception of Thomas, were together, it being as expressly said, *the first day of the week* He met with them. {See Luke 24, John 20:19-23.} We are again told that after *eight* days His disciples were within and Thomas with them; then come Jesus, &c. {John 20:26.} It has been said that the expression *after eight days* would carry this second meeting to the second day of the next week; and so it would, according to our mode of computing time. But the scriptural mode is different; according to that, the day from whence a period commences and the day on which it terminates are both computed. I need but refer to two instances to establish this position; the first is found in Lev.23:15-16: "And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering, seven sabbaths shall be complete, even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days," &c. From the morrow after the Sabbath to the morrow after the seventh Sabbath would make but forty-nine days, unless we reckon both the morrow after the first-mentioned Sabbath, and the morrow after the seventh Sabbath in. Yet it is expressly said to be fifty days, and the feast is called Pentecost; that is, the fiftieth-day feast. The other is the declaration of Christ: "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." {Matt.12:40.} It was about the ninth hour of the sixth day that Jesus gave up the ghost, and He arose early on the first-day morning. So that we have to reckon the sixth, seventh and first days to make the three days and nights. According to this mode of reckoning, an eight days after would bring us to the next first day at evening. Our Lord met His disciples at other times, but no mention is made of which day of the week it was. Hence we have a two-fold testimony of His meeting with them on the first days of the week, but none that He met with

them on any other days than the first days. Again the day of Pentecost, when the baptism of the Holy Ghost ushered in the kingdom of heaven in its full light, was on the first day of the week as we have seen from Lev.23:16; that is, the morrow *after* the Sabbath. As on this day was the first establishment of New Testament order, it would seem to designate it as the proper day of the week for the church to meet together to observe that order. We find, also, that when Paul came to Troas on a certain occasion, he waited seven days, until the *first* day of the week when the disciples came together to break bread. {Acts 20:7.} Again, in 1st Cor.16:2, we find Paul in giving directions concerning the collection for the poor saints, tells them upon the *first* day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, &c. The incidental manner in which the *first day* of the week, {or the *first of the week*, which is the same thing,} is spoken of in these two instances, seems to me clearly to show that it was the custom of the disciples in those days to meet together in their church relations on that day. We have thus a double precedent of Christ's meeting with His disciples on the first day of the week, and a two-fold testimony of the apostolic churches meeting together in conformity to that precedent, as well as the clear testimony that on that day of the week, the morrow *after* the Sabbath, the apostles received their power from on high and commenced their witnessing to the resurrection of Jesus Christ in the preaching of the gospel, and that with great success.

We have thus ample testimony, as in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established, to establish the order of the disciples meeting together in their church relations, and of course for the churches attending to those ordinances and order, as directed in other parts of the New Testament, on the *first* day of the week. And nothing beyond this. It would seem that the Holy Ghost in inditing the New Testament was particularly careful that nothing should be written, not an apostolic injunction, to give any countenance to that legal observance of the day as especially holy, which he foresaw would be the case by legalists. There is no authority to show that wherein disciples are in any way providentially prevented from assembling together with the church, they should observe the day as a special day of rest, any more than there is for their eating the Lord's Supper by themselves, when prevented from meeting with the church to do it. The practice of the churches meeting together on the first day of the week, is marked in church history and other writings up to the apostles days. But I know of no account of its being observed as the Sabbath, until Calvin instituted the observance of it as

substituted for the seventh day, Sabbath, under the law. Mosheim, in his church history, speaking of the internal history of the church in the fourth century, says: "The first day of the week, which was the ordinary and stated time for the public assemblies of Christians, was, in consequence of a peculiar law enacted by Constantine, observed with more solemnity than it had formerly been." This shows how the first day of the week was observed previous to Constantine's time, merely as a stated time for the assembling of churches. And even Constantine's law does not seem to require its observance as a Sabbath. But Calvin taught that the Abrahamic covenant was binding on the gospel church and that the law was a rule of life to the believers. Hence the Presbyterians have observed the first day as the Sabbath, and from them the Independents or Puritans of New England regard it as the Sabbath. And from them this view of the first day, has been adopted by other denominations who are by no means favorable to Calvinism.

I now come, my brother, to your text, Rev.1:10 - "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." The term *Lord's day* in this text, has been considered by some as designating the gospel dispensation. The gospel day is in a peculiar sense the Lord's day; it is a day enlightened by Him as the Sun of Righteousness, and is the day of His reign, as the Mediator, having all power in heaven and in earth. *It is one day that is known* to the Lord, and is a day to be observed by His subjects, or spiritual Israel, as a day of rest, as noticed in the view of the anti-typical Sabbath. But John, I think, certainly intended to designate by this term the particular day, or point of time, in which the Lord Jesus appeared to him, to make known to him the things written in that book. And I think it altogether probable that the first day of the week was intended. But I cannot think that this name was given to it to denote that the Lord claimed this day as especially His out of the seven days of each week. For, as noticed above, the whole gospel day is peculiarly His, in which He exercises His kingly power, and in which He requires His Israel to rest from all their works, and to honor and obey Him. If this name was designed to designate the first day of the week, it was evidently designed to mark it as the day observed by the saints for assembling together in commemoration of Christ, as the other days of the week were named after certain heathen gods, and probably to denote the times of their worship.

There is one point more in connection with this, which it seems proper to notice. It has been contended that for the good of man, and of society, men should rest from their worldly labors one day in seven; and there are evident traces

of such weekly rest being observed by other nations beside the Jews. To all this, in itself considered, I do not object. And I have no doubt that God in giving laws to Israel as a nation, had in view their natural good in giving them the seventh day Sabbath, as well as their other holy days and sabbaths. But when these things are brought forward as arguments to support the idea of a first day Sabbath as belonging to the religion of Jesus Christ, I do seriously object to it. According to the argument, this *rest* belongs to national or worldly policy; but the religion of Christ belongs to a kingdom not of this world. As our Lord has in His revelation of the institution and order of His religion, severed it from all connection with worldly governments, not intermeddling with their laws and policies. They have no business to intermeddle with His religion, or to hitch any of their policies or plans on to it. If civil governments think that custom, and public opinion are not sufficient to protect the dependent laborer in the enjoyment of his weekly day of rest, it might be proper to pass laws requiring the release of minors, servants, &c., from their regular daily labor one day of seven, on the same principle with the ten and twelve hour systems of daily labor adopted by some States. But they have no right under pretense of authority from God, to connect anything of religion with it, any farther than to have those whose religious views would lead them to observe the seventh instead of the first day, to do so.

I have thus, my brother, given you what I think is, and what I believe you will on examination find to be, a scriptural view both of the Jewish Sabbath and of the New Testament practice of meeting together on the first day of the week. I have been lengthy, because I wished to take in review the whole subject in its various connections. I shall probably be thought too tedious on the subject, but I hope you will bear with that. - With brotherly regards, Yours,

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, March 21, 1856.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.24 {1856}

Views on Eld. Parker's Two-Seed System.

Brother Beebe: - Having been requested by a brother in Missouri to give him my views on the TWO SEED System, as also on a part of the ninth chapter of Romans, I have

concluded to send my answer through the *Signs of the Times*, if you will publish them.

Dear Brother: You say that some believe that when God created Adam and blessed him, &c., there were *none but the elect stood and died in him, and that after the transgression, God multiplied the woman's conception, and this brought forth the people of God's curse*. Now can any rational man believe that - with the exception of Mary in the case of the birth of Jesus - any woman from Eve down ever conceived and brought forth children, without the immediate agency of man as the cause of such conception? If there was any increase of posterity intended, the multiplication must have been in the man, as all are the seed of the man. Thus, in the case of Cain who was accursed of God, it is expressly said: "And Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord." Cain and all the non-elect must be creatures of God, for God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the earth. For we are also His offspring, Acts 17:26-29. But God rested on the seventh day from all He had created and made, the heavens and the earth being finished and all the host of them. Gen.2:1 & 2. The non-elect, therefore, in common with all that proceeded from Adam, must have been created in Him in the six days creation, and have stood in Him, when "God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good." And thus Paul ascribes the origin of the sin and death of all men to the same source, namely: "By one man sin entered into the world and death by sin." Rom.5:12. Thus the origin of sin in the world, not in the elect, is ascribed alone to Adam, leaving the woman out of the question. Consequently, if all were involved in Adam's transgression, all must have been represented by him, and therefore, have been created in him. Let us take a faith's view of this subject.

You, I presume, will admit that faith in receiving and resting upon the teachings of God leads the mind to the knowledge of truth. If so, I will ask you, my brother, to point to a single instance of one, who gives evidence of being a subject of grace, ascribing his salvation to his possessing any better or distinct nature from his neighbor who is without faith; that is, that he was originally created in Adam, and pronounced good, and therefore, is a subject of grace, whilst his neighbor was the production of God's curse? On the contrary, does not each subject of grace believe and feel that his nature is as vile, as depraved and as justly under the curse of God's law, as that of any around him, and that it is nothing but God's sovereign and distinguishing grace that has made

him to differ from others in having hope of salvation? And that this grace reigned not through Adam, but through Christ? That it is because God *will have mercy on whom He will have mercy* independently of all distinctions in nature that he has hope. If then God's teachings does not lead our faith into error, our experience establishes the fact that we are not saved because we are any better in nature than others, or of a different production from them, and that all boasting in the creature is excluded. The above could not be the experience of God's teachings, if we are made to differ from others in being subjects of mercy because we were created in Adam and they were not.

Let us now come to a faith's view of the Scriptures, and a faith's view is necessary in order to know the Scriptures. That there are two distinct seeds brought to view in the Scriptures, both in the type of the Old Testament and in the substance of the New, is manifest to all who spiritually know them. Elder Parker's idea, if I understand him, was that the one seed was that which was created in Adam, and is the elect; the other seed is the multiplied conception of the woman, and is the seed of the devil. You express the idea differently, but to the same amount. God, according to this idea, instead of choosing some of Adam's posterity or seed and leaving the rest, appointed the whole of His creation in Adam to salvation, and the rest of mankind are an after production for the display of God's wrath. This certainly does not correspond with the scriptural idea of election. There is no choice in it. Christ said to His disciples: "I have chosen you out of the world." John 15:19. Again, it is said: "Thou was slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred and tongue, and people, and nation." Rev.5:9. The people created in Adam must be and ever remain one kindred according to Elder Parker's view, however much they may be mingled with others, and the distinct seed produced by multiplying the woman's conception must be another kindred. If then those around the throne were redeemed out of every kindred, they must have been redeemed then out of both of these kindred's. This will not accord with the idea that the whole of one was appointed to salvation, and the whole of the other to the curse of God. Whatever is implied in the declaration, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception," it is evident that if it meant that God would produce a distinct seed from those created in Adam, these must be as directly God's production as the other; for God says expressly, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception." Hence the devil could have no more claim to this

class than to those created in Adam. God, therefore, according to this system must have determined to produce this class from the woman expressly for the devil, or for making them the subjects of His curse. But certainly this idea cannot agree with that revelation which God has made of Himself as a God of justice and of love, and is one which I cannot receive without direct proof from the Scriptures. I think I am willing to go as far as others in acknowledging the absolute sovereignty of God as consisting with His holy, self-existing and independent Being; but when this sovereignty is extended to God's denying Himself or any of His holy attributes, which would be the case, by making Him the author of sin or the direct cause of any of His creatures being accursed, I cannot admit of its correctness. God's predestinating sin to come into the world, or the human family being made sinners by Adam's voluntary transgression, and His predestinating to leave part of Adam's posterity to go on in sin, and thereby entail upon themselves the curse of the law, whilst He predestinated others to salvation by Christ Jesus, are very different from the idea that sin directly emanated from God, that pure fountain of love, or that He produced a class of beings for the express purpose of showing upon them the power of His wrath.

The woman has a seed brought to view in the Scriptures distinct from Adam's seed; but this seed which should *bruise the serpent's head*, is very different from the seed of the serpent; for this seed was no other than Christ Jesus. The woman has no other seed spoken of in the Scriptures distinct from Adam's, and Adam was created with his seed in him, like everything else. It is true the devil has a seed spoken of. Christ said to the Jews: "Ye are of your father, the devil." And Cain is said by John to be of that wicked one. But the Scriptures nowhere represent the devil and his seed as contrasted with Adam and His seed. The devil and his seed are uniformly contrasted with Christ and His people. Thus the devil or Satan and his interest is called *anti-christ*. So Paul draws the contrast between Christ and His ministers and Satan and his ministers. See II Cor.11:13-15. Thus also John in his First Epistle, 3:8-12, contrasts the children of God with the children of the devil. So in the parable of the wheat and tares, as explained by our Lord, it is not God that sowed the good seed, but the Son of man; the good seed is not the creation of God in Adam as such, but the children of the kingdom, and the tares are the children of the wicked one, not God's multiplication of the woman's conception; the field is the world. Consider the wheat and the tares as the two religious interests set up in the world, the kingdom of heaven or of

Christ, and the kingdom of anti-christ or of the devil, and all harmonizes in the parable, and in the history of the world. Thus it is as religionists, and not in their natural existence that the one class are of the kingdom of heaven, and the other belong to the anti-christian interest. Hence, in reference to the kingdom of heaven, it is not as the seed of Adam, that they can enter it, but they must be *born again* or they cannot see it. So of Cain and Abel, it was not because of Abel's natural birth that his offspring was accepted, but because he offered in faith, thus showing that he had been born again, see Heb.11:4, and Cain's anger against Abel was wholly because Abel's offering was accepted and his own rejected. So that it was altogether as a religionist that Cain was of that wicked one, and manifested his spirit in slaying his brother. This I think, taking the whole verse in connection, John 8:44, is the sense in which the devil is said to be a murderer from the beginning; the beginning of his religion being a murderous one. I think, my brother, if you will carefully examine these several portions of Scripture on which Elder Parker so much relied to support his two-seed theory, you will find that they afford no direct testimony to support the idea of two natural seeds. It seems strange that Baptists, like Protestants, whilst they profess to take the Scriptures as the rule of their faith, should reject and in so many ways attempt to hide from view the revealed truth of Christ's headship of a spiritual seed, as Adam was the head of a natural seed. Many, indeed, instead of receiving the Scriptures as God has given them as the rule of their faith, attempt to make their belief rule the Scriptures, and therefore wrest them to suit their notions. The plan of making Adam by creation, the head only of the elect, and the making the devil by tempting Eve, the head of the existence of the non-elect, is only one among the many devices to set aside the actual headship of Christ to the elect as a spiritual people. Another device which formerly prevailed extensively, and which is being revived by certain professed Old School Baptists, that of Adam's being created a spiritual person, and dying a spiritual death, &c. This, in effect, makes him a double head. The head of spiritual life, in that what the Scriptures calls regeneration is only a restoring to men the life they lost in Adam, and hence regeneration is only a quickening. And the head of the natural life of the human family, and by transgression the source of their depravity. But by examining Rom.5:12-21, we shall see the two headships of Christ and Adam distinctly marked - Adam as the natural head of the whole human family, through whom flowed to them sin and death - and Christ as the head of the spiritual family, through

whom flowed to them life and righteousness. Take, for instance, the 18th verse, "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 unto justification of life." By the offense of one - one what? Certainly one man, Adam. Even so by the righteousness of one - one what? Correspondingly one man, Christ Jesus. See verse 15. It is manifest that if the non-elect are men, condemnation came on them through Adam's offense, and not through the woman or the serpent; because by the offense of one, judgment came upon *all men* unto condemnation. Hence, all men must have been in Adam, and thereby become partakers in his transgression and condemnation. So on the other hand, the elect must be considered as men in their relation to Christ, distinct from their manhood derived from Adam, and in the sense in which Christ is distinctly the second man, that is a spiritual man, or universal justification unto life must be considered as passed upon all the human family; for if there be but one class of men, or men only as they flow from Adam, the all men in the latter clause of the text must correspond with the all men in the former part, for in both parts the declaration is full and absolute without any reserve. But do the Scriptures in other portions sustain the idea of this distinct manhood of Christ other than in His being made flesh, and of the elect in Him? They evidently do. First. In reference to Christ, it is said, I Cor.15:47, "The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven." The declarations in the following verses show that each of these men or heads has his distinct seed bearing his distinct image, the one an earthy, the other a heavenly seed. "As is the earthy, such are they also, that are earthy; as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly." It is also evident from the Scriptures that the believer has been the subject of a second birth, as distinct from the first as spirit is distinct from flesh. Being the subject of two births, he of course has two existences, he is two men; the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts and the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Eph.4:22-24.

If we turn to Rom.9, to which you referred me, we find the two seeds of Abraham brought to view. Paul says, "Neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children, but in Isaac shall thy seed be called; that is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." Verse 7,8. Thus the one seed is they which are born after the flesh,

the other seed is supernatural; it was God's promise that produced the birth. "For this is the word of promise, at this time will I come and Sarah shall have a son." Verse 9. The birth of Ishmael was the natural result of Abraham's fleshly intercourse with the bond woman, but the natural fleshly powers of both Abraham and Sarah were dead, at the time the promise was made concerning Isaac, see Rom.4:19,20, so that it was not by nature but by faith that Abraham had power to communicate seed, as it was through faith Sarah received strength to conceive. See Heb.11:11. Paul expressly declares that these two births were an allegory of the two covenants, or the mothers were an allegory of the two covenants under which the earthly and heavenly Jerusalems exist; consequently, the two births were figurative of the children of the two covenants, under which the national and spiritual Israel exist. Now, my brother, these figurative persons were both Abraham's sons, so the two Israels are both called his seed. The one is Christ, and they that are Christ's, see Gal.3:10-29, not the creation in Adam. The other were his natural seed, for Isaac was his son born of his body, though it was through faith he received strength to beget him, and as the natural seed of Abraham, through Isaac and Jacob they inherited the land of Canaan, and were subject to the covenant of circumcision. It was the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, not as the seed of their wives, that national Israel inherited the land of Canaan. Now, if you receive the idea of an extra production as a people of God's curse, distinct from His creation in Adam, how will you account for any of this seed of the devil being blended in the persons of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? seeing they were persons of God's special choice and blessing, especially in Isaac who was altogether a child of faith. And if, as natural men, they existed only as the creation of God in Adam, how could they transmit any other than the seed of Adam to their posterity? I think you must see that Elder Parker's system of two seeds cannot be carried out in this case, and that although the Jews were peculiarly a people of God's curse, yet that being the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, they must have been a part of God's creation in Adam. But when we view the one seed of Abraham natural, and the other being Christ and Christ's people, as spiritual, we find the whole New Testament supporting the idea of two such seeds. Those who have faith, find in the idea of this spiritual seed existing in connection with the creation of God in Adam, a harmony with the declaration, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness;" and of Adam's being the figure of Him that was to come, and that the seed of the woman should bruise

the serpent's head.

If we pass to the case of Esau and Jacob, verses 10-13, and inquire into the reason why the elder should serve the younger, we find nothing said of their being originally of two distinct productions as of one's being God's creation in Adam, and the other of an extra production; but on the contrary, we find it asserted expressly that it was, *that God's purpose according to election might stand*. We have already noticed that there could be no election, where God created one class of people expressly for salvation, and produced the other expressly for His curse. But every connecting expression goes to point out the sovereignty of God in personal, individual election in this case. 1. It ascribes the choice as being between the children. 2. That it was not from any personal distinction, they being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil. So that there was no respect of persons with God in this case - but simply that *God will have mercy on whom He will have mercy*. And this is the doctrine of election, as held by Old School Baptists, and as we believe fully, taught in the Scriptures, namely, that God is not influenced in His choice of persons to salvation by any consideration whatever arising from a difference in the subjects of this choice from others, or from anything else, save His own sovereign purpose.

I now come to that portion of Romans, chapter 9th, to which you more particularly refer, namely: verse 21-24. Paul asks in reply to those who would cavil at the sovereignty of God in election, as he had set it forth, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump, to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" No doubt some have inferred, because man was originally made of the dust of the earth, that Paul meant by this figure to convey the idea that God created some part of the human family for happiness, and some for misery. But the apostle is not treating in the connection of the original creation of man; this figure, therefore, which he uses in defending his position, was not designed to apply to creation. Paul was treating of God's dealings with men as they exist, in having mercy on whom He would, and whom He would He hardened. To this the figure applies. The potter does not make the clay, he finds it ready made, and after softening and preparing it for his use, puts it on his wheel and shapes it into whatever vessel he chooses. Open to the view of God from the beginning were all His works, and all events on to the end. He saw man as the production of His hands, and saw him fallen by transgression; and thus fallen, *dead in trespasses and sins*, He saw him as fit material from which to form a vessel of mercy or a vessel of

wrath. As vessels of wrath, God need but to leave as far as He sees fit, men to act out their depravity, and to choose their own course of open sin, or of depending on their own works and ways for acceptance with God, and they are fitted for destruction. This you know by experience, if you are what I hope you are, a subject of grace. Men, also, by transgression, became fit material for vessels of mercy or of honor. For, without being sinners, men would not be objects of mercy; and without being just such ruined, helpless sinners, as they are in themselves, fitted to destruction, they would not be objects on which God could display the *riches of His grace and mercy*. Here then was present in eternity to the view of God the whole lump of clay out of which to make both the vessels to honor and to dishonor. And if a potter has power over clay of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another to dishonor, has not God the right and power, when all had alike sinned and come short of the glory of God, and therefore justly deserving His wrath, to choose within Himself whom He would make the objects of His mercy, and to decide whom He would leave to their own destruction? Verse 22 reads thus: "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." *What if God willing*, that is designing and determining to *show His wrath*, His opposition to sin in finally punishing the transgressors, and *make His power known*, that is to vindicate His law, and to bring the transgressors to judgment in His own time; *endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction*. In the vessels of wrath is evidently meant those left out of the election of grace, and therefore left to meet the demands of the law in their own persons. If the question is still farther asked, how are these vessels fitted to destruction? In addition to what I have said already on this subject, I will refer to the testimony of scripture on the point. We are told, in Rom.5:19, that "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners;" and in verse 18, that, "By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men unto condemnation." In Eccl.7:29, we read, "That God hath made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions." In Rom.1:28-32, it is written, "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind," &c. In Rom.2:5, Paul speaks of man thus: "But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God." Now from these testimonies we learn, that *God made man upright*; man universally, of course; and that by one man's disobedience

many were made sinners. Now there is no room left here to bring in an extra production from the woman in order to find a people fitted to destruction, nor for a supposition such as some have entertained, that the election of God was that which made the rest of mankind vessels of wrath. It was "by one man that sin entered into the world, and death by sin." Rom.5:12.

Verse 23: "And that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy which He had afore prepared unto glory." We are told, Prov.25:2 - "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing." Surely God's purpose of mercy was concealed from the view of Israel and the nations of the earth, whilst He permitted the Gentiles to go on in their ignorance, folly and vile idolatry, whilst He was long suffering toward them and did not suddenly cut them off. But behold the riches of His grace in all this, in that, through His longsuffering, He in His own good time has brought forth from them a seed to serve Him, an innumerable multitude of vessels of mercy. From the Gentile nations being so universally left, and that for ages, to their ignorance and idolatry, we must suppose that if any people came into existence as the seed of the devil, they were universally that people, seeing that from age to age they were left to worship devils or idols; yet from one of the expressly accursed nations of God - the Canaanites - the harlot Rahab was taken; and out of Moab, another cursed nation, Ruth was taken, to be mothers through whom the Messiah was to proceed from Judah. Thus, blending in the man Jesus the blood of both of these accursed nations. In view of God's overruling the unbelief both of the Gentiles and the Jews to the making manifest the vessels of His mercy, well might Paul exclaim, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God; how unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out." Rom.11:33. Not only is the riches of God's glory thus displayed in making those nations and individuals who were the objects of God's wrath, the progenitors of a people who should be the objects of His mercy, but also in the riches of His mercy on those vessels of mercy, in that His mercy toward them was made to override not only their individual sins, but also the provoking sins of all their ancestry, so that that ancestry was so spared as to secure their descent from Adam and Noah down to their own birth, and after their birth in sparing them until they were called by God's grace. How divinely glorious is that mercy which can and does cover over all our sins without having found either in us or in our ancestry one redeeming quality to induce the exercise of that mercy towards us. I understand

this to be the apostle's meaning, that whilst He was willing, or purposed to show His wrath and make His power known on the vessels of wrath, endured them with much long suffering, that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy.

I will proceed to notice the import of the declaration, "Which He had afore prepared unto glory." Paul does not say afore prepared to mercy; for, as before showed, transgression alone fitted them to be objects of mercy. It is true the preparation was *afore* made for their being recipients of mercy, consistently with justice, by having life given them in Christ, being created in Him, and therefore *chosen in Him before the foundation of the world*, whereby Christ was one with them as they were one with Adam; and therefore as the law could inflict its penalty on them in consequence of Adam's transgression, so the law could take hold of Him when he came within its power, by being made of a woman and made under the law; and did demand of Him the suffering of the penalty due for their sins. His Godhead gave that divine value to the offering of Himself as the spotless Lamb of God; that by that one offering He forever perfected them that are sanctified, and became their redemption from under the law. Persons having eyes to see, must, on looking at the subject, see the necessity of just such a Mediator as the scriptures reveal and we contend for. If there had not been a life oneness of Christ and His people, so that their transgressions could be accounted His, as Adam's transgression was accounted ours by virtue of such oneness, the law could never in justice have inflicted its penalty on Him for those sins. If He had not been made flesh, or made under the law, the law could not have inflicted the penalty on Him; and if He had not, in His same one person, been God Almighty, He could not have borne that penalty so as to have exhausted it, and triumphed over death and the whole curse. Let others ridicule this idea of a Mediator, as they can bring no real argument against it, but we rejoice in such a Mediator as could bring honor to the law, and perfect redemption to His people.

But this preparation for the elect's being recipients of mercy, did not of itself prepare them for glory; for neither in any higher sphere than he originally occupied before he transgressed or was charged with transgression. And Adam and his family were originally created of the earth earthy, and therefore could occupy no higher sphere than that for which they were created; that is, as the subjects of that creation. Hence the redemption by Christ only cleared away those legal barriers which stood in the way of the elects being made

manifest as sons of God and heirs of glory. Hence the force of the truth, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." It is as absolutely necessary that we should be partakers of the spiritual or heavenly nature, or life, of the second or heavenly man or head, in order to our enjoying the heavenly inheritance, as it was that we should be partakers of the rational and earthly life of the natural man in order to our occupying the station of men on the earth. No separate creation in Adam could therefore have prepared any for glory, for that which is born of the flesh is flesh.

The term *afore* shows that this preparation was before the manifestation either of the vessels of wrath or of mercy, and therefore before Adam's dust was fashioned into man. And it must have been in Christ the spiritual man as head. It must have been by their being created and *chosen in Him before the foundation of the world*, and being *predestinated to the adoption as children by Him*. As Christ in being set up as the Head and life of His people was brought forth as the Son of God, they were in that life brought forth as sons in Him, and therefore *afore* prepared unto glory, or as heirs of glory. Wherefore it is written, "If children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ." Being thus *afore prepared*, they are in time made manifest as heirs of glory, or personally prepared unto glory, by a second birth, being born of the Spirit, or as the seed of Christ, the *spiritual man*. I Cor.15:45-47.

Thus, my brother, I think I have showed clearly that the two seeds spoken of in the scriptures, are the seeds of the two men or heads - Adam and Christ - and that like their two heads, the one is *fleshly*, the other *spiritual*; the one *earthy*, the other *heavenly*. I think every {I do not mean professor, nor every professed Old School Baptist} child of grace has the evidence of the existence of those two distinct seeds in himself. He is conscious of a living principle in him, that is heavenly in all its aspirations and desires, that finds its delight in communion with God, and would cast the world behind its back; and when its influence is felt in the exercise of faith, the reproaches, wants and afflictions of the world sink into insignificance in comparison with the enjoyment of the presence of God and the glory had in view. At other times, and that more frequently, his whole mind seems absorbed in the world and its concerns; not only his fleshly feelings, but his reason and judgment tell him it is right and proper to attend to the world and its concerns and are as earnestly engaged in arranging his worldly business, with discretion, as they were while in a state of nature; so that he has the evidence of its

being the same rational soul it ever was, and therefore that in its nature it is not changed. But when faith, as before noticed, is in exercising and presenting spiritual things to view, the soul with all its faculties enters into the love of the truth, and into the enjoyment of the hopes and consolations of the gospel. Here, then, is decisive evidence that the soul, though unchanged in its nature, is prepared under the enlightening and quickening influence of the new or spiritual man to enter into the enjoyment of heaven whenever it shall be released from its relation to this world, by laying aside this fleshly tabernacle.

I will here leave the subject with you, hoping you may search the scriptures for yourself, and be established in the truth as you find it there revealed, without being influenced by the teachings of men for or against it. Yours, affectionately;

S. Trott

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.25 {1857}

Remarks on Gen.6:6.

Dear Brother Beebe: - I see that sister Ball, in the 1st number of the present volume of the *Signs*, has requested my views of Gen.6:6, "And it repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart." I presume an explanation of this text can be given satisfactory to sister Ball, and other honest enquirers after truth; but to give an exposition that would stop the mouths of gainsayers is perhaps difficult. That God possesses such perfection, that there can be no repentance, or grief at heart, in His essential mind is evident, from the general revelation which He has made of Himself, as well as from positive declarations in His word to the point. James says, speaking of the Father of Lights, "With whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning," ch.1:17. Job says, "He is of one mind, and who can turn Him," ch. 23:13. God says, "I am God, and there is none like me; declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient time, the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure." Isa.46:9,10. Even Balaam is compelled to say, "God is not a man that He should lie, neither the son of man that He should repent;" Num.23:19. Samuel says, "The strength of Israel will not lie nor repent, for He is not a man that He should repent." I Sam.15:29. These texts as clearly show that God's perfection of mind is such that

He cannot be subject to any such change as repentance, implies in man, as do the Scriptures, that God is a Spirit, and therefore that when bodily organs and limbs are ascribed to Him, the expressions are not to be taken in a literal, but in a figurative sense. Even those who are so ready to think that God can be made to see such imperfections in His past course, as to repent of it literally, will admit that when God speaks of His arm, His feet, &c., that the expressions are not to be taken in a literal sense, that they are figurative expressions, used to convey more forcibly to the comprehension of weak man, a sense of God's power and presence, &c. Those who are so disposed to contend that repentance, when ascribed to God, is to be taken literally, as implying a change in the divine mind, thereby making the Scriptures contradict themselves, and contradict the immutability of God, may think to relieve their minds of any restraint from the Scriptures; but they are not aware that if they could succeed in destroying the absolute immutability of God, in His purpose, they would destroy the whole ground on which man's safety and preservation on earth rests. If God could be induced to change His purpose one way, it could, with equal ease, be changed the other way. Hence, if we can believe that God has been induced, by anything in us, to change His purpose of cursing us to that of blessing us, we ought to believe that He would, by our acts of ingratitude and sin, again be provoked to change His purpose back, and at once to cut us off. Hence, to relieve His people from such a gloomy idea as this, God says, "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Mal.3:6. Thus showing that their preservation and safety, instead of being subject to their changeableness, rests upon His own unchangeableness. Viewing the terms repent, repentance, &c., when spoken of God, as figurative, we shall find them strikingly illustrative of God's dealings with men, under the law dispensation, and upon legal principles, whilst no ways effecting the immutability of God's mind or purpose.

According to the legal dispensation, God's dealings with men were made to depend on their conduct, they were blessed or cursed, prospered or afflicted, that is, in a worldly or outward sense, according as they did good or evil. There were those in Jeremiah's time, that said, "Where is the word of the Lord?" intimating that God said, and did not; that His mind changed. Wherefore, after giving to Jeremiah the figure of the potter, to show His sovereign right to deal with nations as seemed Him good, He declared to him the principle upon which He dealt with nations, saying, "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up

and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them." So also, in the event of their changing from good to doing evil, God would repent of the good He thought to do unto them. See Jer.17, 15, 18:1-10. God thus shows that His doing good or evil to a nation, depended on their obeying or not obeying His voice, according to the nature of the legal dispensation. This also, shows that God's repenting, does not imply any change of mind with Him; that it is only a change of His course towards them consequent upon their change of conduct, according to His sovereign right to deal with nations, as they did good or evil. Again, in the days of Ezekiel, there were those who complained that God's ways were not equal.

But, God shows that the unequalness was with them - that His ways were uniform and just - that "when the righteous turneth from his righteousness and committeth iniquity, he shall even die thereby. But if the wicked turn from his wickedness, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall live thereby." Ez.33:12-20. Then the Lord shows that His dealings with individuals, in their national or worldly relations under the legal dispensation, were the same as with nations.

Thus when the Ninevites repented at the preaching of Jonah, God repented, that is, turned from the evil He had threatened them with, in accordance with the principle by which He governs nations. Jonah 3:10. So God's repenting concerning the pestilence, and staying the angel's hand from Jerusalem, evidently was not that He was sorry for having sent the pestilence; but it was that having visited His designed chastisement upon Israel, that sufficiently humbled David's mind, He stayed the sword which threatened destruction to Jerusalem. II Sam.24:15-17. Having thus allowed that God is not like man, subject to change of mind, but is immutable in His purpose, and that His repenting or changing from threatened evils or promised good, according as men repented of their evils or turned from their righteousness, was but the result of His equitable dealings with nations and men according to the nature of the legal dispensation under which they were, we are prepared methinks for understanding the expressions used in Gen.6:6. It is true the expressions used in this passage are much stronger than those we have been noticing, but not more so than was the destruction thereby intimated greater than others with which He has visited the earth. For as a man having formed something for which he truly "repented and grieved at heart," would seek to efface it and the remembrance of it from existence, so God by the use of these

expressions showed that it was His purpose, although He had created man and by His benign providence caused him to greatly multiply upon the earth, now to turn and destroy that whole race of men, and wash the remembrance of them and their evil doings from the earth, by a flood and re-people it, directly from another, through an intermediate head, Noah, who had found grace in His sight. Thus, in accordance with the general testimony of the Scriptures concerning God and concerning His government, I understand the expressions used in this verse as figurative and as designed more strongly to impress upon Noah and others, the fixedness of His purpose to destroy that race of men from the earth, and at the same time to show that this signal judgment was an expression of His abhorrence of, and the opposition of His nature to, the wickedness of man, though He had permitted it upon earth. The construction I have here given of this passage, is confirmed by a similar use of the term "repent" in I Sam.15:11 - "The word of the Lord came unto Samuel, saying, it repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king." And yet in that same chapter, verse 29, as quoted before, Samuel says: "The strength of Israel will not lie or repent, for He is not a man that He should repent," thus showing that he did not understand the expression, "it repenteth me," as implying anything like sorrow or change of mind with God, such as is implied in men's repenting. We must therefore understand these words as merely expressive of a change of God's providence toward Saul, consequent upon Saul's sin in disobeying the command of God, and showing God's displeasure at such disobedience.

I have gone into a lengthier examination of the Scriptures upon this subject than perhaps others will think was necessary; but I wished to show, and I think I have showed that the uniform testimony of the Scriptures concerning God and the general use of the word "repent" by Him, proves that when God speaks of "repenting" in reference to Himself, He speaks in a figurative sense, the same as when He speaks of "His hand - His arms," &c.

I have thus complied with sister Ball's request. Whether what I have written is sufficiently instructive or interesting to justify its publication, I know not. I leave it with you, brother Beebe, to dispose of it as you think best, and subscribe myself yours,

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.25 {1857}
S. Trott.

Views on II Pet.3:12-13.

Dear Brother Beebe: - I see in No.21, sister Dutton requests my views on II Peter 3:12-13. "Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

I somewhat regret being called on for my views on this text; because, in the first place, I think I have in some of the earlier volumes of the *Signs* expressed my views of it, and, secondly, I am aware that my views of this text differ from those of some of the brethren whom I have quite as much reason to believe are, in their general views, subjects of God's teaching, as I hope that I have myself been thus taught. Still, as I am not convinced of the error of my views, I will give them.

The first point of enquiry is, What are we to understand by the heavens and earth which are to be burned, and what by the *new heaven and earth wherein dwelleth righteousness*? The opinion of some is, that by the former we are to understand the covenant of circumcision and legal dispensation, as being appointed of God a fixed residence for national Israel to dwell in; and that by the latter is intended the new covenant and gospel dispensation. I admit that the terms heaven and earth are sometimes used to denote the old covenant and legal dispensation; as in Is.13:13 & Hag.2:6-7, compared with Heb.12:26-28. I also admit that in the gospel covenant and kingdom there dwelleth righteousness. But the heavens and earth spoken of in these texts were to be shaken and moved from their place - not *burned*, that I am informed of. This, as I understand, according to the prophecy of Haggai, was by the coming of Christ, when He gave up the Ghost, having taken the hand writing of ordinances out of the way and nailed it to His cross. Hence the veil of the temple was then rent in twain, showing that God no longer dwelt in the holy place of the temple, and was there no longer to be worshipped by legal rites. And from the day of Pentecost believers have dwelt under the dispensation and blessings of the new covenant, and received that *kingdom which cannot be moved*. But the *old heavens and earth* of which Peter speaks were yet reserved unto fire, when he wrote A.D. 65, thirty-two years after the gospel dispensation or kingdom of heaven had come and taken the place of the legal dispensation. And the new heavens and new earth of which he spake were yet looked

for as something yet future.

But, secondly, taking the context as a correct criterion by which to judge of what Peter intended by the heavens and earth that were reserved unto fire, we must conclude that he spake of the natural heavens and earth, which still exist. For in verses 5 & 6, he speaks of the heavens of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water, whereby the world that then was being overflowed with water perished; meaning, evidently, the antediluvian world which perished. Consequently, the heavens and the earth, which, he says, verse 7, are now by the same word; that is, which still exist by the same word of God, are kept in store reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men, must be the same natural heavens and earth. However slack God may appear to some men to be, in thus destroying this world, yet Peter assures us that "the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burnt up." - Verse 10. Hence I understand the apostle to mean what his language so definitely expresses, that these material heavens are to pass away, and this earth with all the works which belong to it are to be burned up. Hence also by the new heavens and new earth, which, he says, is looked for, I understand him to refer to a distinct place of residence where the saints being raised and changed when this day of the Lord shall come, shall forever be with the Lord.

The idea has been entertained that these heavens and this earth being dissolved and burnt up, they will only be burned over and purified by fire. Whether Peter's strong language will admit of such construction, I will not stop to enquire. To me, it is of no importance whether the new heavens and the new earth are to be formed out of these old materials, or whether they will be altogether new. The revealed change of the bodies of the saints at the resurrection, from natural to spiritual bodies, would favor the idea of a change of the present heavens and earth, corresponding thereto, for their future residence. The saints, though their bodies will be raised spiritual bodies, must still occupy some locality, because they will not be omnipresent. The same is the case with the glorified body of the Son of God. Where He is, there will be the heaven of the saints, there they will behold the brightness of God's glory and the express image of His person, for such is the Son. But of whatever the new heavens and new earth may be composed, there are important differences between them and the present heavens and earth,

some of which I will notice. 1st. In the heavens which John saw, there was no more sea; consequently there will be there no water needed, but the fountain of the water of life; no materiality there. Rev.21:1-6. 2ndly. There will be no temple there, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. They will truly worship God as they will see Him in the Lamb, in spirit, without any need of external forms to express their worship. They will be wholly swallowed up in and filled with the love of God. Rev.21:22. 3rdly. There will be "no need of the sun nor the moon there, for the glory of God and the Lamb, will be the light thereof. And there will be no night there. Rev.21:23-25. As the saints will be wholly changed from natural to spiritual, in their bodies, there will to them be no natural darkness and no need of natural light. And as the Lamb, who is the light thereof, will be constantly present with them, and the brightness of the glory of God constantly shining upon them, there will be no spiritual night or darkness there.

Again, Peter informs us that *righteousness* dwelleth therein. In this world dwelleth sin, making it a sin-defiled and sin-disordered world. There is no purity, no truth in it; look where we will within ourselves, or without, we behold corruption, and that which maketh a lie. But because in the new heavens and earth dwelleth righteousness, according to the pure law of love, there "shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither that worketh abomination or a lie." Rev.21:27. Hence, there shall be there "no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor pain." Rev.21:4. What a glorious and happy residence the saints will have in their heavenly inheritance!

I will now pass to notice Peter's exhortation to the saints in view of those things of which he wrote. In doing this, I will also take the 11th verse in connection. "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness. Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God," &c. I do not understand Peter here as intending to shake the minds of, or trouble or terrify, the saints to whom he wrote any more than did Paul the Thessalonian brethren by writing to them that: "the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night," &c. I Thes.5:1-3 & II Thes.2:1-10. It is not much to be wondered at, that persons who view the Scriptures as an instrument of terror to drive people to a servile religion rather than as a revelation of *peace and good will to men*, should, in view of such declarations as this of Peter's and the one of Paul's just noticed, do as did many in the latter part of the tenth century,

who, thinking that the millennium or the thousand years of Christ's reign on earth was about closing, and therefore that the world was about coming to an end, gave up their possessions to the Catholic Church, and became monks and hermits; or as did the Millerites a few years back in running into all their wildness, manifesting, in both these cases, and in many others, that "God had sent them strong delusions that they should believe a lie." But you, my sister, I trust, are not left to that delusion which would lead you to suppose that, to maintain a holy conversation and godliness, you must neglect to fill with fidelity your station in society and in the world, or that you must *neglect to provide things honest in the sight of all men*. The truth is, we manifest more of a holy conversation and godliness by a proper attention to the wants of our families, and to the several affairs of this life appertaining to our station, than by neglecting them. A holy conversation and godliness, are a deportment corresponding with our profession of not being our own, but the Lord's, and of being governed in all things by His revealed word. The consideration that all worldly relations and things are perishing and hasting to dissolution, should keep us mindful that our inheritance is not here, and lead us to live as those who are looking for another and better country. Such a sense of things would prevent our being covetous and grasping after the world, and from hoarding it up. If we are entrusted in Providence with this world's goods, whilst as faithful stewards we shall not waste it by extravagance or neglect, we shall hold it as not our own but the Lord's, subject to be taken from us if He pleases, or to be used for the good of His cause and people where the duty is pointed out by His word. If in providence we are destitute of this world's goods, we shall still manifest a cheerful and thankful spirit, knowing that a destitution of these things is no evidence that we are not heirs of God or objects of His love and care. Hence also, in our holy conversation we shall not suffer these perishing things of time, nor reproaches, nor persecution to hinder us from attending upon our ministry, if in the fellowship of the church we have been called to minister, nor from assembling ourselves together with the saints to whom we have given ourselves to walk in fellowship; nor from connecting ourselves with the poor and despised followers of the Lamb, if we have a good hope of being saved through grace.

Looking for and hasting unto the coming; or, hasting the coming day of God, as it reads in the margin. Not that we are to look for or hasten the coming of that day by practicing the devices of men for hastening on what they call the millennium;

nor that we are to expect its coming before the whole purpose of God, revealed in the Scriptures to transpire in the world, shall have been accomplished; nor that we are to hasten its coming personally, to ourselves, by dissolving our connections with the world by suicide or by secluding ourselves from it - but by habitually looking for the coming of the day of God wherein all these earthly things and relations shall be dissolved, we shall hasten the coming of that day in our experience, in that we shall thereby feel less tied to the world and less solicitude and anxiety about its affairs, and live more in the anticipation of the new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Could we thus live in anticipation of that glorious residence which is in reserve for the saints, the warfare within, temptations without, poverty, and other afflictions, reproaches and persecutions, and the commotions in the world, would have less effect upon us to disturb our peace than they now do with many of us.

In answer to sister Dutton's request, I have given such views as I have on this portion of Scripture. Happy would it be for many of us {I speak of such as, with myself, have reason to complain of our coldness and want of spiritual enjoyment} if we might be enabled, by grace, to give more heed to Peter's injunction, in view of the day of darkness and trouble which seems fast coming upon the church; we should then find, according to Paul's declaration: "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." That is, the new heavens and new earth which the day of God shall reveal. With Christian regards,

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, Dec.15, 1856.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol. 25 {1857}

The Sin against the Holy Ghost.

Dear Brother Beebe: - I see by some of the recent numbers of the *Signs of the Times*, that being asked, you have given your views on the "Sin against the Holy Ghost," and that your friend Mott objecting to your views has also given his. From your mutual criticisms, each of the others views, I am inclined to think that the readers of the *Signs* will think the subject is left about as much in the dark as before. For my own part, I think

each of your criticisms just. According to your friend Mott's view of this sin, I am confident that many of the subjects of grace in their first exercises, as you showed, have committed it. I did, and Satan charged me with it, on the spot, which threw me into a distress of mind, as nigh to absolute despair as I think a person could be, in this world, which lasted me perhaps fifteen minutes, when I was relieved by a suggestion being applied to my mind, with as much force as Satan had made the charge. The suggestion was this, that if my exercises were from the teachings of the Holy Ghost, God had begun a good work in me, and, therefore, I could not be left to commit the unpardonable sin; and if it was not God's work, then I was correct in saying that my exercises were from the devil. Besides, I can see no reason from the Scriptures to suppose that a sin against the Holy Ghost, in His distinct relation, can be any more heinous than against the Father or the Word. God is holy, either as Father, as Word, or as Holy Ghost. As to your views, I have two objections to them. First: God has certainly revealed Himself distinctly as Father, as Word, and as Holy Ghost; although I am not able to define these distinctions any farther than the Scriptures make them, yet they are there marked, though not as distinct persons. This marked distinction our Lord clearly makes in mentioning the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost as distinct from other blasphemy. This distinction you destroy by blending this sin as common with sin and blasphemy in general. Second: According to your exposition of this text you make, if I understand you, the ground of condemnation - rather, the final perishing of the wicked, different from what you and other Old School Baptists would make it, on other occasions. I do not think we need to go beyond the law and the transgression of it, as the ground of the sinners final condemnation. Where any have not the written law, they are a law unto themselves, Romans 2:6-16. But I think that persons will infer from your argument, whether you meant so or not, that the ground of the unpardonableness of the sins of the non-elect, was that they were not born and expiated by Christ, and hence they will infer that these perish, not because of their transgressions of the law, but because they were not redeemed by Christ. But, my brother, I cannot see any special meaning or propriety to our Lord's words in this case, unless He meant to point out a special sin, a sin that is an exception to the *all manner of sin and blasphemy* spoken of in the connection. In giving my views on this sin, I may probably lay myself as liable to criticisms as you and your friend Mott have, yet as I have had for years fixed views on this subject, which I have not

hesitated to declare, I will present them for your consideration and review. First: I will say I have no objection to the idea which you ascribe to the learned, as involving in the committing of this peculiar sin, *light in the head*, {not heart,} and *malice in the heart*, when properly defined. But I do not believe that any but Jews, nor any but Jews of that generation, ever did or could commit this sin - that is, that no others were ever placed in circumstances to commit it. Christ when He came in the flesh, came peculiarly and exclusively to *His own*, to the Jews, as His national people. Hence, His disciples in proclaiming His coming were not to *go into the way of the Gentiles*. In thus coming in the flesh, He came as pointed out by Moses, and the Jews, therefore, were subject to that injunction given by Him when He said: "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee." &c. Deut.18:15-19. Hence, because of their not hearing, God would *require it of them*. He came also in accordance with prophecies going before as spoken by inspiration of the Holy Ghost. And when He came, He performed by the Holy Ghost those miracles which incontestibly bore witness of Him that He was that prophet whom Moses spoke of, and that Messiah who was prophesied of. Hence, the people were constrained to say, "Is not this the Christ?" Hence, Stephen charges upon them., "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost, as your fathers did, so do ye." See Acts 7:51-53. Hence, their rejecting Him was peculiarly a sin against the Holy Ghost. That this sin in persuading the people to reject Jesus by representing that those miracles which He performed by the Holy Ghost, He did by Beelzebub, was against light, is, I think, evident from the following Scriptures. Jesus testified, "The works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father has sent me." See John 5:31-36. Again He says, "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin; but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father." John 15:24. In a preceding verse He says, "But now they have no cloak for their sins." Consequently, they must have known that the works He did proved Him to be the Messiah. So Nicodemus said, not *I know*, but, "We know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." John 3:2. So that it was against the clear light of the testimony of the Holy Ghost that they rejected Jesus. It must, therefore, have been because they hated Him when they saw Him, that is, from *malice in their hearts*. That this sin was confined to those who were eye-witnesses of the miracles of Christ, is evident not only from those texts above quoted, but also from the case of Paul. He

speaks of himself as a *blasphemer* and a *persecutor*, &c., and then says, "I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief." I have never been able to reconcile this declaration of the Apostle with his doctrine that *God will have mercy on whom He will have mercy*, only as understanding him as speaking in reference to the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. That is, instead of understanding him, as assigning his *doing it ignorantly in unbelief* as the *cause* of his obtaining mercy, he assigns it as a reason why notwithstanding his blasphemy and rage against Christ, he could consistently with the declaration of our Lord concerning the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, obtain mercy. Paul was a native of Tarsus of Silicia, a province of Asia Minor, and although brought up in Jerusalem, at the feet of Gamaliel, that is, educated in his school, yet it is not likely that he saw any of the miracles of Christ - for he was a young man at Stephen's death, and not many of our Lord's miracles were done in Jerusalem. And being prejudiced by the Pharisees against Christ, he did not believe the reports concerning His miracles. So that he *did it ignorantly in unbelief*. Besides the only account we have of Paul's persecuting spirit was after Christ's kingdom was set up on the day of Pentecost, and, therefore, after He had finished His ministry under the law, and to the Jews as a nation. Persons are apt to lose sight of the peculiar relation in which Christ stood to the Jews as a nation, whilst He was a minister of the circumcision, and hence they try to find an application under the gospel, not only for our Lord's declaration concerning this sin against the Holy Ghost, but also for other declarations which were made with a peculiar reference to the Jews and to His disciples while they remained under the law previous to His death. But in reference to this sin against the Holy Ghost, or any other unpardonable sin, rest assured that from the gospel revelation we have no authority for believing that under the gospel there can be any such sin in itself considered. For we are assured that "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." And the declaration is that, "Through this man {that is through Christ} is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him all that believe are justified from *all things*, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." These views I leave at your disposal. Yours in love,

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, Nov. 19, 1857.

S. Trott.

From: *SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol. 25 {1857}*

The Sin unto Death.

Dear Brother Beebe: - As the sin unto death mentioned in I John 5:16,17, has been referred to in the late discussion on the "blasphemy against the Holy Ghost," and as I have had some reflections and views recently on the text, I will give them to you for what they are worth. It has been a prevalent idea that the sin unto death here spoken of, was some extraordinary sin, and hence the notion has been general that it is the peculiar sin spoken of by our Lord, Matt.12:31,32. But really, as I now look at the passage in John, the most remarkable part of it seems to be his saying, "There is a sin not unto death," seeing he has told us in this epistle - 3:4 - that "Sin is the transgression of the law," and that the law saith, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them;" and again, "The soul that sinneth it shall die;" and so that death passeth upon all men, for that all have sinned. Sin therefore, must reign unto death in all that are under the law. How is it, then, that there is *a sin not unto death*? Paul told the saints at Rome, Rom.6:14, "Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace." This text has, no doubt, puzzled many of the children of God, sin having such a control in them and over them, they have concluded that they could not be subjects of grace, or its power over them would have been killed. What is *dominion*, but the power of sin? And what is the *reign of sin*, but unto death? {See Rom.5:21.} Break then, the dominion of sin, and its power of reigning unto death is destroyed. How is this dominion destroyed? By a redemption from under the law; for the strength of sin is the law. I Cor.15:56. The word here rendered *strength*, signifies power and dominion as well as strength. As Christ came to redeem His people from under the law, He was manifested to destroy the works of the devil, I John 3:8. If we were to understand the devil, here, and also in Heb.2:14, as personating sin in its reign or dominion, I think we should be sustained by the connection of those texts. In redeeming His people from under the law, Christ also brought them under the reign of grace, which is unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord, and which secures that God will forgive their iniquities and remember their sins no more, Jer.31:34. Those, therefore, who are born again, born into the kingdom or under the reign of grace, cannot commit sin unto death, or sin as a transgression of the law, for his seed; that is, the seed of his new birth - remaineth in him, and he cannot become unborn,

or sink back under the law, or the dominion of sin. Therefore, though sin dwells in him and shows itself in outward acts, it is not unto death, for its dominion is destroyed. Whilst those who are not born again, existing personally only as the seed of Adam, remain under the law of sin and death, and their depravity and actual transgressions are unto death, and must be so while they remain under the law. Here, brother Beebe, permit me to remark, that the views you expressed on the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, are fully applicable to the sin unto death, which John here speaks of; but that blasphemy, as before expressed, I consider a different thing.

But it may be asked, how can the children of God, seeing that sin is a transgression of the law, and they being not under the law, but under grace, commit sin? I will give as an answer this: 1st. John informs us in the text, that "All unrighteousness is sin." 2nd. That the law, whilst it comes with its penal demands only against the posterity of Adam as such, is the eternal standard of righteousness in the spirit of its precepts. All unrighteousness is, therefore sin, in that it is a departure from the law as the standard of righteousness. Hence, by the law is the knowledge of sin.

We will now come to the apostle's remarks concerning praying, &c. "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and He shall give him life for them that sin not unto death." John, in the two preceding verses, had spoken of the prayer of faith. He said, "And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us," &c. Nothing short of faith, could give us to feel this confidence, and nothing short of faith could assure us that we were asking in accordance with His - God's - will. The children of God, in seeing a brother sin, in whom he has confidence as a believer in Christ, knows that it is not unto death; for says Christ, concerning His sheep, I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish. And he has the assurance that his sin shall be forgiven, for God has promised in covenant that He will forgive their iniquity and remember their sins no more. Here, therefore, is full room for his praying in faith that his brother's sin may be forgiven, and he be restored to the enjoyment of spiritual life. In thus praying for his brother, he manifests his brotherly love and sympathy for him, as well as his regard for the honor of Christ's cause. If we would more observe the apostle's injunction, in this case, and pray for our brethren when we see them sin, instead of reporting their failings abroad, it would be much more for the peace of the churches and for our own comfort.

The other case - "There is a sin unto death; I do not say that he shall pray for it." In the first place, it is to be noted here that John gives no intimation that a brother may commit this sin. Secondly, That he does not say the child of grace shall not, in any sense, pray for it. That would be to set aside the example of Christ, when He prayed, concerning those who put Him to death - "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do;" as also, contrary to the injunction of Christ, that we "should pray for them which do despitefully use us and persecute us." It is proper that we should pray for such as an expression of a forgiving spirit toward them; and to pray for our fellow men, *for kings and for all that are in authority*, thereby expressing our love and good will toward them. But these are not prayers of faith, and in truth cannot be, for there is in the scriptures no promises to the unregenerate, no assurance that God will forgive their sins, and faith must have the word or promise of God to rest upon. But John, as we have showed, was speaking of the prayer of faith; and he, in speaking of sin unto death, and saying, I do not say he shall pray for it - that is, with the prayer of faith - must have had in view the practice which would spring up in the professed church, that of inviting or encouraging persons to come to the church, or to the preacher, to be prayed for, under the idea that thereby they will obtain forgiveness and salvation, thus holding forth that they can pray the prayer of faith in their case. But John gives no encouragement for such praying. It is, in fact, an awful presumption, for men to encourage poor ignorant sinners to look to their prayers for that salvation which can come only through the atonement and intercession of Jesus Christ.

This view of this passage of scripture may be new to many, and it may not be correct in all points, though it seems so to me. You and other brethren can examine it, and if you find it not consistent with the word of truth, please to point out the error. Yours, I hope in love,

S. Trott.

P.S. - The sin unto death, which the apostle does not direct to pray for, may have reference to a sin you see committed by one who has a place in the church as a brother, but who you have strong reason to fear is not born again, but is either a hypocrite or a legalist. In this case, you cannot pray in faith for him, having - according to your views of him - no assurance from the word of God that his sin shall be forgiven. Therefore John does not say that you shall pray for it.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, Jan. 19th, 1858. S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol. 26 {1858}

Views on Luke 16:26.

Brother Beebe: - I see by the *Signs* for January 15, that brother Burritt requests my views on Luke 16:26. "And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence." Such as I have I give.

I understand Lazarus to represent the subjects of grace as existing under the law, feeling their cases to be such as described by Isaiah 1:5,6; and the rich man to represent the self-righteous Jews. Both figures also being applicable, in a great measure, to those two classes of religionists under the gospel. The dying I think must represent the actual departure of those they represent out of the world. Abraham's bosom, into which Lazarus was carried, I think represents the full state of happiness which the righteous could partake of previous to Christ's being glorified, and the way into the holiest of all being made manifest. The hell where the rich man was, I consider as descriptive of that state of torment into which the wicked enter at death.

I have thus glanced at the preceding part of the parable, in order to come at the idea intended in the 26th verse. The great gulf there spoken of as fixed, so that there can be no more intermingling of the two classes in passing from the one to the other, I understand to be the grave or death. The intercourse between these two classes of religionists in this world is only worldly or fleshly; when, therefore they depart out of the world, and the flesh is laid in the grave, all such intercourse ceaseth. The souls of the believers having eternal life implanted in them, by which they are quickened to a sense of the love of God, go to that state of happiness prepared for them; whilst the others, not having been regenerated, die whilst their minds are still enmity against God, and *die in their sins*. Hence, where Christ was in the hope of the promise made of God unto the fathers, previous to His death and ascension unto glory, or where He is in His glorified person since, they cannot come, and are altogether incapable of enjoying the presence of God. They, therefore, at death, sink under the curse of the law, to the hell described in the connection. Thus the wheat and the tares grow together in the field, which is this world, but in the end of this world - and it is the end of it to every person when he dies - the Son of Man shall send forth His angels and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things which offend and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them

into a furnace of fire, &c. That is, at death they are gathered out of His kingdom, or into bundles to be burned. See Mt.13:24-30, 36-43.

So in the parable of the sheep and the goats, Mt.25:31-46, Christ came in His glory in the setting up of the gospel kingdom, and all nations are before Him, from whence to gather His people, and through the ministry of His word He is separating the sheep from the goats; that is, drawing the line of distinction between them; pointing out the characteristics of such, and declaring the blessings which await the one class and the curses that must fall upon the other. The parable concludes with these words: "These - that is the goats - shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." When is this to take place? Not when the word is first preached to them; they are to grow together until the harvest. Not that the souls of both sheep and goats at death, are carried by angels to Abraham's bosom, or to any middle place called *Hades*, there to dwell together until Christ's second personal coming, and then to go their different ways; but at death, as the rich man found himself in hell, so all the goats will, at death, go away into everlasting punishment; and as Lazarus, at death, was taken to Abraham's bosom, so the righteous, at death, will go to be where Christ is since His ascension. So that each of these three parables tend to explain each the other, and in my estimation all unite in pointing to death or the grave, as that great separating gulf.

If brother Burritt, or any of the brethren, think they have a better view, please show it. With love, yours,

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, Jan.28th, 1858.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol. 26 {1858}

Moreover the Law entered, &c.

Brother Beebe: - I saw in a number of the *Signs* some time back that sister A.A.Ford, of Lexington, N.Y., requests my views on Rom.5:20 - "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."

It appears to me that any person who reads this text with attention, believing it to mean what it says, will be surprised at the view Paul had of the purpose of God in the giving of the law as differing so materially from the view so generally entertained of the use of the law. The idea of many

is that the grand design of the law is to make men moral and better, and to enable them by obedience to it to secure acceptance with God. No doubt the letter of the law, where it has been known, has had a tendency to restrain persons somewhat from outward sins, at any rate to establish a better standard of morals than exists among the heathen. But God had a much higher purpose than this in giving the law; and when men preach it as a way of life, and look to their obedience to it as means of their acceptance with God, they entirely pervert the law and the design of it. The law is spiritual, and as such is the standard of righteousness; and was given to show the depravity of man and to prepare the way for the manifestation of salvation by Christ and of grace. Paul said, "I had not known sin but by the law." Of course he would not have known the need of salvation by Christ, without this knowledge of sin by the law. "The law entered that the offence might abound," is a positive declaration without any reservation. We evidently are not to understand by this that man has become any more depraved, or has acted out this depravity any more since the law was given, than before. God, before the coming of the flood, "Saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." But the depravity of man was made more manifest by the law's being given, in showing thereby his want of conformity to it, as illustrated in the continual disobedience of national Israel, and the consequent repeated judgments incurred. There was everything to induce and to favor that people's obeying the law, if the heart had not been entirely alienated from God, in the repeated manifestations of His power in delivering and preserving them, and in fulfilling unto them the promises made unto their fathers, and in blessing them with an abundance of increase when obedient; yet their hearts were continually going off after their idols. But the grace of God did much more abound in their case, in His repeated and marvelous deliverances of them from those distresses brought upon themselves by their rebellion against Him, and in preserving them until the long-looked-for promise made unto their fathers of the coming of the Messiah was fulfilled. Then were they left to fill up the measure of their iniquities in rejecting Him. And then was it manifested that this grace abounded toward them, not for their sakes, but for the sake of Christ and His seed, which was in them concerning the flesh, and typical.

But I think the Apostle had more particular reference to the spiritual application of the law in the experience of the subjects of grace. Men, while in a state of unregeneracy have

all that depravity which they under God's teaching afterwards discover in themselves; but they know it not; it perhaps lays in a great measure dormant in them. So that Watts was correct in saying:

"I was alive without the law,
And thought my sins were dead."

Again,

"My guilt appeared but small before,
Till terribly I saw,
How perfect, holy, just and pure,
Was thine eternal law."

The law is spiritual, but the natural man cannot discern spiritual things; he only knows the letter of the law. And as *by the law is the knowledge of sin*, we can only know sin as we know the law. When that spiritual life which is the *light of men*, is imparted to men in regeneration, or God shines in the heart, he now sees the law in that light as it is applied of God to him; and there is a majesty, weight and broadness to it that he had not felt in the letter before. It penetrates and searches his heart, and joys open to his view as contrasted with its holy demands, the exceeding sinfulness and deceitfulness of his heart; so that his soul is by the law converted from its notions of self-righteousness, and he dies under the sentence of the law. Thus, I presume, sister Ford once thought that she had only to turn her attention to the law and observe it more closely, and she would soon purge away those sins she was then conscious of, and become very good. And probably that would have been the result in her estimation, if it had been only her turning her attention to the law. But when God spake the law to her, and caused it to enter her heart, she found the offence abounding. This is just the difference between man's teaching and God's teaching; between men's seeking God, and God's seeking them and searching them.

But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. Yes, grace abounds to the free pardon of all the multitude of our sins, and the depth of our depravity. It superabounds above all our unworthiness, poverty, pollution and guilt, to give instead of the curse we deserve, peace and joy in believing, and the hope of heavenly purity and glory beyond this world. It superabounds, in that it makes our depravity and ruin the very occasion, and I may say a *means* {though the expression may startle the *means* folks} of our being subjects

of God's grace and salvation. Without being sinners we had not been subjects of salvation. Hence without knowing our sinfulness we could not have known what it is to be saved, and without a knowledge of the depth of our depravity, we could not have known the loveliness and the riches of that grace which brings salvation to such vile sinners. The entrance of the law was a very important part in the salvation of the elect, and it was rich grace which caused it to enter in its majesty and strictness to our hearts, searching out the abominations therein, and stripping us of our self-righteousness.

Those who know not the law as spiritual, may please themselves with their goodness and with their obedience as being means of their salvation, but when they go hence they will leave behind all the heaven, they can know. The super abounding of grace over our abounding sins, is manifested, in that it has provided for the believers an infinitely better righteousness than man could have obtained by the law, a far more stable foundation for the hope of future happiness, than man could have had in his own obedience; and also has brought the believers into a nearer and far more glorious relation to God, that of sons of God, than they could have known had they not sinned, for they could only have remained servants. Lastly it has secured for them in Christ a far more glorious inheritance than they could have had through Adam had he remained in uprightness; for he was of the earth, earthy.

If these views will be of any use or comfort to sister Ford or others, I am glad to impart them. Yours, in love,

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, May, 1858.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol. 26 {1858}

Remarks on Romans 8:28.

Brother Beebe: - Brother S. Mabey, of Albany County, N.Y., in writing to me, some months since, requested me to give through the *Signs of the Times*, such views as I may have of the text: Romans 8:28 - "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose."

As this text contains independent matter enough in itself for one communication, I will pass directly to its consideration, without stopping to notice the important subjects contained in the preceding context. First: Paul's assertion, *We know*, &c. He

evidently intended in the *we*, the saints to whom he wrote with himself, therefore, the saints in all ages, for all bear the same characteristic marks. But Jacob was evidently a subject of grace, a saint, yet when Joseph had been mysteriously taken from him, and his sons would take Benjamin also into Egypt, and famine stared him in the face, unless he let him go, he did not know that all these things were working together for his good, but undoubtedly spoke what he thought, when he said, *All these things are against me*. So in reference to ourselves, there are many things we meet with in our experiences of ourselves, and in the dealings of God with us, that as men and women we do not at the time know are working for our good, but think them dark evidences against us, that we are not objects of God's love. Paul did not intend to assert, that by our natural senses we know, but by faith we know. Thus we often worry and distress ourselves because we cannot find in our natural man those characteristics which the New Testament gives of the child of grace; as though there was in the christian no difference between the old man and the new, between reason and faith. It is by faith, and by faith only, that we know spiritual things. And that faith which constitutes a person a believer in Christ is actual knowledge of the thing or truth which it receives. *It is the evidence of things not seen*. "Through faith we *understand* that the worlds were framed by the word of God." Heb.11:3. Thus the faith of the gospel is materially different from the belief which is produced by education. Well may those who have only this latter belief cry up charity for those who differ from them in religious sentiments; because the one has no more claim to being the truth than others, they are all the product of human teaching. But you may as well undertake to convince the child of grace that the sun is the source of darkness to the earth, as to attempt to persuade him that there is uncertainty about the truth of what his faith has actually received; for that which is received by faith, is not learned of men, but is received by the revelation of Jesus Christ, and comes with that power that he knows it is God's truth. See Gal.1:12 & I Thes.1:5. But it is not everything which the child of God receives and contends for as truth that he has received by faith. Hence we may all have more or less errors about us. But we may, I think, by a careful examination, distinguish between what we know by faith and what we have received as truth from men or books, or from our own reasonings. Second: *That all things work together for good*. We might prove by arguments drawn from the Scripture testimony, that all things work together for good to the people of God, and your mind may become fully satisfied of the truth

of it, but this would not be knowing it for yourself; it would not bring it to your feelings, when tried by afflictions or temptations. It requires that knowledge which faith gives, to make us feel the truth of it. Yet it is proper to notice the Scripture testimony, showing the correctness of faith's knowledge on the point, or in other words, showing that the revelation made to faith, is from the same spirit of truth who made the revelation contained in the Scriptures. The Scriptures testify that *Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us*. Yes, redeemed us from under the law, so that the children are *not under the law but under grace*, so that sin shall not have dominion over them. Hence the sin that they feel in them cannot reign unto death or to the infliction of the penalty of the law. And Christ declares these children, as He characterizes them, Mt.5:3-12, blessed. Now, where there is no curse, how can any evil come? And wherever they are blessed of God, how can anything but goodness and mercy follow them all the days of their lives? But it may be thought that this may be the case in God's immediate dealings with His people, but that events may arise from other sources, as from our corruptions, from Satan and from the world, &c., that will work evil to the children of God. But we are assured, Eph.1:11, that *God worketh all things after the counsel of His own will*. The *all things* in this text, are as extensive as the all things in the other text. The Scriptures also reveal God as infinite in wisdom and knowledge, infinite in power and goodness. All things must have been present to the infinite knowledge of God when His will counseled the disposal of them, and His infinite wisdom must have seen the direct bearing that everything would have and enabled Him to order all things so as to accomplish what His infinite goodness willed. And His infinite power certainly would enable Him to carry out His purpose of making all things work together for that good which He purposed. Herein we have the *absolute* of God's sovereign *predestination of all things*. Some will say God is infinite - O, yes, there is nothing too great for God to do. But again; they will say, There are things too small for God's immediate notice, and special providence; that He has established certain general rules and laws, and has left men and devils, &c., to pursue their own volitions, subject to the consequences. Such persons lose sight of the fact that if there are things too small for God's knowledge to embrace, or His government to control, the infinitude of God and of His attributes are as effectually denied as though it was contended there are things too large for His government. That which is infinite cannot be limited by either large or small things; God

being infinite, His knowledge and government must embrace alike the largest and smallest things. Hence it is said, "God shall bring every work into judgment with *every secret thing*, &c." Ecl.12:14. It may be asked, Are not some things evil in themselves? Truly, they are. It is not said that *all things are good to them*, &c, in our text; but that *all things work together for good*, &c. The treachery of Joseph's brethren, and of Potiphar's wife, were in themselves evil acts, but they were important parts in the arrangement of God's providence whereby He brought about good to Jacob and his posterity. Peter's denying his Lord after having made such strong assertions of his faithfulness, was in itself an evil act; yet on a little reflection, I think no discerning person can doubt its having an important effect, in connection with other circumstances, such as Christ's looking upon him, &c., in converting him from that self-confidence which he had so lately manifested, and thereby worked together with the other parts of Christ's government over him for his good. I might notice the crucifixion of our Lord as confirming the same point, but I will come, my brother, to your own experience. In your exercises under the law, did not your failing to keep your resolutions to do better, and the bursting forth of the corruptions of your nature, on every temptation, work together with the teachings you were receiving concerning the law to abase you, to strip you of your own righteousness, to make you feel how exceedingly sinful sin is, and to kill you to all legal hopes, and thus prepare your heart for receiving and rejoicing in the gospel plan of salvation? So I think, if you do not at all times know it, that you will find in the end, that,

"Temptations, trials, doubts and fears,
Wants, losses, crosses, groans and tears,
Will, thro' the grace of God, our friend,
In everlasting triumphs end."

But faith in its exercises does not stop thus to reason us into the belief of these things. It lays hold at once on the blood of Christ; presents God to us in Christ as a Father, and makes us feel that He is love. Not as the rainbow which hems the passing cloud, and gives us to feel, notwithstanding the devastations which the hail and the wind may have made around us, that we are yet spared, and that there is still hope for us; but faith burnishes the whole cloud with love, and makes us to feel that the affliction is sweet, that the temptation was needed to humble us, and gives us to praise God that we are not left to pass on carelessly without

chastisement. It is a sweet knowledge which faith gives that all things are working together for good. Third: To them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. As I have been so lengthy on the former parts of this subject, I shall try to be brief on this part. We have in these words two important characteristics by which those who are born of God and are the objects of His love, are distinguished from others.

1. *They love God.* The religion of Christ is a religion of love. Its subjects are drawn by the cords of love, not drawn by fear of punishment in their obedience to God, because they love God, they love His revealed will and the ways He has appointed. They love the children of God, when they see, and as they see the image of Christ in them, the evidence of their love to God, and see them walking in the truth, or in obedience to His word. They loathe themselves, because they see so little in themselves, like God, and so much that is opposite to Him - so little of conformity to His word. These are decisive evidences of being born of God. "For every one that loveth God is born of God." I John 4:7. And these evidences are more or less manifested in the experience and walk of the child of God. Yet the child of grace while having these evidences about him, often doubts whether it can be possible that he loves God. The Comforter, and He only can clear away these doubts. Yet, we may appeal to such to say whether amidst all the workings of their corruptions there is not evidently in them a desire after God, and to be brought more into conformity to His word and will, and whether these desires could be in their breasts, if there was there no love to God.

2. Them who are called according to His purpose. It appears then that there is a *special call* by which the predestinated children of God are called from darkness into the light and liberty of the gospel; for it is according to God's purpose. It is also an *effectual call*. *For whom He called, them He also justified, and whom He justified, them He also glorified, &c.,* verse 30. This call is internal, but irresistible - draws the subject on from step to step, though he knows not why, and though Satan and his own unbelief tells him all is wrong, that every step is leading more into sin and farther from God, until at length his astonished soul beholds the light of the gospel, and he sees that he had been called and led from Sinai to Calvary, from self to Christ as his only hope of salvation. If God has thus called us to a knowledge of His salvation and given us to love it, *He is for us*, and "if God be for us who can be against us?" - verse 31. These remarks fall far short of giving an adequate view of the subject, but they are the best I have to offer. I have written this while laboring under a cold, which indisposes me both in

body and mind, so that I have hardly energy enough to write.
Yours, I trust in love;

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.27 {1859}
S. Trott.

Remarks on Isaiah 51:1.

Dear Brother Beebe: - There is one more text which has been on hand for some time, for my views through the *Signs*, at the request, by letter, of an esteemed sister, on which I now wish to offer some remarks, if agreeable to you to publish them. I had hoped that this would have been the last request of the kind made of me; not that I am unwilling to give such views as I have of any text of scripture, or that it is not a satisfaction to me to express them when I feel like writing; but I apprehend that the infirmities of mind incident to old age must begin to show themselves in my writing. These infirmities are much sooner discovered by others than one's self. And there are younger and much abler writers for the *Signs* on whom brethren may call for expositions.

The text above referred to, on which my views are requested, is Isaiah 51:1 - "Hearken to me ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord; look unto the rock whence ye are digged." The connection shows that Zion's members are here addressed, and that the design of the address throughout is to encourage and comfort them under all their discouragements and distresses. It is true that Paul represents Israel as *following after the law of righteousness*, and the Gentiles as not having followed after righteousness. Rom.9:30, 31. The Jews follow after the law of righteousness, but do not attain to it because they seek it, *as it were by the works of the law*, that is, being *ignorant of God's righteousness they go about to establish their own righteousness*, and therefore never attain to it, nor to an obedience to the law. But the Gentiles while in a state of nature do not follow after righteousness, they do not know it. Believers do *know* it, hence in the 7th verse of the context they are characterized as knowing righteousness. And such know where their righteousness is, that it is only in Christ; that He alone is the righteousness of His people. They are satisfied with it as being abundantly sufficient for their justification; hence they want no other, or are filled, as Christ said, those who hunger and thirst after it shall be. Mt.5:6. Yet it is a true characteristic of believers that they *follow after righteousness*. They even feel

their need of it, as the ground of their acceptance in appearing before God, and therefore ever wish to be grasping it by faith as their plea. Not only this, but they are following after it, that they may grasp it more strongly by faith, and bring it more closely and more assuredly to themselves as theirs. Again, they want to find righteousness in themselves, and they follow after it {for they love the law,} with the desire to attain to it in their works and in their thoughts.

Believers also are they *who seek the Lord*. They seek Him in that they desire to know more of Him. They seek Him because they constantly desire to have His presence with them, and to enjoy the tokens of His love. In these points of view He often appears to be hidden from them, hence they seek Him. Again, they seek the Lord in seeking to show forth His salvation, in seeking to honor Him, and be conformed to His word.

But the main points on which my views are requested, are the *rock* and the *hole of the pit*. In preaching from this text some years since, I considered both expressions as having reference to that state of nature from which the people of God had been taken by grace. The rock as representing the hardness and impenitency of man in a state of nature, and both figures as representing their entire incapacity in a state of nature, their entire destitution of life or any principle of action by which they could sever themselves from their relations to the world as living in wickedness and under the curse of the law. Although I probably preached correct doctrine and experience, I am now satisfied that I gave a wrong construction to this part of the text and the import of these figures. In the first place, although the heart is represented as *stone*, yet God says He will take it away and give a heart of flesh. Whereas the hewing a piece of sculpture, or a block from a rock does not alter the nature of that which is hewn out, it remains rock still. Although Peter represents the saints as "lively stones built up a spiritual house," &c., yet this representation of them as "lively stones," evidently refers to the new man in the believer, and not to the old man, for the old man would not form a spiritual house. In the second place mankind is not in scripture represented by a rock or anything solid, but by *dust* and *ashes*, by the *grass of the field*, &c., as light and vain. On the other hand our God, or God in Christ, is represented in scripture as a rock, as is also Christ in His mediatorial person abundantly represented as a rock or stone, as in Deut.32:4-31; Ps.18:46; I Cor.10:4, and in other places. Hence in being governed by the testimony of scripture I feel bound to consider Christ as the rock spoken of in this text.

Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn. This probably will appear as a strange idea to many that Zion in her members should be represented as hewn out of Christ. But it is no more strange than that Eve in her distinct existence should have been formed of Adam, and after her distinct formation remain bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. The term *hewn* is here used to denote the distinct manifestation of the church and her members in conformity to the figure of a rock as used. It brings clearly to view, in conformity with other testimony of scripture, the existence of the saints or the church in their spiritual life in Christ before their distinct manifestation. In the art of sculpture the statue lay in its substance in the block of marble before it ever received its distinct formation. The sculptor only brought it to view in its distinct form and features by the use of his chisel. Its substance was there before and it still remains, though it may be a statue of Washington, the same marble rock it was before. So the church and saints remain in their distinct manifestation as saints, the same Christ, the church being *His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.* Eph.1:23. And the church collectively is called Christ. I Cor.12:12. Christ is in them the hope of glory, and is their life. Well, therefore, may the saints amidst all their difficulties, under all their persecutions, and their being dwindled down by divisions, and amid all their individual conflicts, be directed to the *Rock* whence they were hewn, or of which they are hewn - for the *whence* is a supply by the translator. And surely the *rock* of those who would worry and waste us by opposition and divisions, &c, is not like our *Rock*, our enemies themselves being judges. Our *Rock* is the Almighty, the only wise God, He is ever with and in the midst of His people, is and ever has been one with them, is their life, their foundation, their chief corner stone; with whom as such, no comparison can be made from human architecture; He is a living stone, and His life is disseminated through all the materials of the building, making them *lively stones*, and one with Him, so that this *Rock*, this foundation must be destroyed before the building can fall, or one stone be removed. Hence Christ says, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

"And to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged." This, as I understand it, relates to that state of condemnation in which mankind are sunken as transgressors of the law, they being as prisoners shut up in the pit of depravity. Hence it is said to the daughters of Zion, "As for thee also by the blood of thy covenant. I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein there is no water." Zech.9:11. The *hole* of the pit out of which they are *digged*, has reference to the fact that the

whole human family are in the pit, or state of condemnation in a mass together; and hence when any are digged, or taken out, there is a hole made in the mass, or evidence left of their having been in that pit. Hence the direction is to the children of grace in their difficulties, distresses and discouragements, to "Look to the hole of the pit;" look back to where you once lay in the darkness, ignorant of yourself and of God, and of the spirituality of His law. Afterwards there was light let into the pit; that is your eyes were enlightened to see your relation to God, and your condemnation as a transgressor of His law. You tried to bring yourself into favor with God; but you were shut up under the law in this pit of depravity; you found it a horrible pit, and your feet sinking deeper and deeper in the mire. Nay, you knew of no other medium to look for relief but to the law, and that demanded full payment and held you fast as its prisoner, so that you found yourself as helpless to deliver yourself as would be a clod of dirt to throw itself out of a pit that was being dug. Now, if a believer, you can look back and see this hole of the pit, that place under the law in which you once lay. And you know you was thrown, or taken out of it. You know that you was once delivered from that sense of condemnation and guilt, and brought into a state of peace, and felt a confidence in approaching God with your thanksgivings and supplications which you had not felt before; and felt a hope springing up in your breast that your sins were forgiven, &c. You may have thought very soon after that you were deceived, and wanted to get back again under the law, and again to feel that distress, that sense of guilt and condemnation which had been removed from you; but you found you could not get back under it; that you were as much shut out from it now, as you were shut up under it before. You were sensible that you were a vile sinner, but you could not feel the condemnation and wrath for it as before, and you were distressed that you could not feel it. You have never from that day to this, thought of ascribing it to anything else that you were sent forth out of that pit, but to the blood of Zion's covenant, or the new covenant. And you have never from that day to this, thought of looking to the law, or to your obedience to it, as the medium of your acceptance with God. Now, if you can see that hole of the pit where you know you once were, and know that you are no longer in it; you have the evidence that you are no longer under the law; and if not under it, then of course not subject to its curse; and if freed from the curse of the law, nothing can hurt you. You may have heavy trials, difficulties and temptations, but no evil can come to you from them.

The people of God are further directed in the following verse to "look to Abraham their father, and to Sarah, that bear them," &. In this we may see, if we will look, that Abraham's being called alone, his becoming old, nor the barrenness of Sarah, could prevent the accomplishment of God's promise to Abraham concerning a seed. Neither could the perverseness of Jacob's sons, nor the obstinacy of Pharaoh, nor the Red Sea, nor the barrenness of the desert, nor the rebellion of Israel in the wilderness, nor any other obstacle, prevent the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham's seed, that they should be put in possession of the land of Canaan. From this we may be assured that nothing is too hard for the Lord, and that all He has promised to his church and people He will assuredly accomplish.

But I have written enough to show my views of the text, and here I will leave it, as I fear I am not writing to much profit. Yours in love,

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.27 {1859}

S. Trott.

Remarks on Phil.3:21.

Dear Brother Beebe: - Some months since I received a letter from brother F.J. Beal, dated in Missouri, requesting my views through the *Signs* on the text - Phil.3:21. I think I have at some former time expressed my views on this text, but out of respect to brother Beal and his kind and interesting letter, I will, with your approbation, give such views as may be presented to my mind on the passage.

The text is this: "Who will change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself." The preceding verse reads thus: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence, also, we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ," &c.

I will offer a few remarks on the word "conversation." According to the modern use of this term it signifies a familiar talking with others, and therefore is understood by many to relate to our talk or speech. But at the time of the translation it evidently had a more extended import. The original word rendered "conversation" by the translators, signifies citizenship, and relates to that general intercourse as citizens of the same city or government, which the saints should have with each other - not as citizens of this world, but of heaven.

"From whence, also, we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ." The idea of this looking for the Saviour, clearly implies an expectation and an authorized expectation of His coming in a sense in which He had not come, and was not then present with His Apostles and Church. This, therefore, in connection with other texts of scripture which it is not now necessary to refer to, confirms me in the belief that there is to be a second personal appearing of Christ Jesus to the saints on this earth. And it is at this appearing of our Lord in the air with the trump of God, that I understand the change spoken of in our text, is to take place, according to First Corinthians 15:51-53 & I Thes.4:17.

In order to properly appreciate the change which these "vile," or earthly bodies of the saints are to experience, it will be necessary to notice the "glorious body" of the Lord Jesus, to which they are to be like. The whole testimony of the New Testament confirms the fact that Christ arose from the dead in the same body in which He died, and with it unchanged in its flesh and bone nature. Christ said to His disciples, "Handle me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." Luke 24:39. And He ate before them, {see verses 42,43.} Peter says they did eat and drink with Him. Acts 10:41.

In Christ's thus rising from the dead in the same body in which He entered the grave, and with His wounds on Him, we have the most complete testimony which could be given, not only that He had exhausted the curse that was due for the transgressions of His people, and which justice rigidly inflicted on Him as their life and head, and therefore their embodiment, so that His soul was not left in hell; but also, that in dying He had so entirely destroyed the power of death, and obtained the victory over it, that no corruption could pass upon Him. Now if Christ died for, or as representing His people, then He must have arisen in the same relation to them, and therefore in His destroying the power of death, it was that power over their bodies that was destroyed, just as much in His taking the curse out of the way so that His soul was not left in hell, was a delivering them from the curse. If the dominion of sin over the bodies of Christ's people was not to be broken, as well as the redemption of their souls from destruction by His death, I cannot conceive how His body could have been raised, seeing He *was made sin for us, and bore our sins in His own body on the tree*; for it was the power of our sins which sunk Him into the grave. If that power had not been broken by His death, it must still have held Him there. And as it was our sins which He bore in His own body, if the power of them was broken by His

death, then they can no more hold our bodies in the grave, than they could hold His body there. Hence Paul's declaration, "If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen." I Cor.15:13. And well might he ask, "Now if Christ be preached that He rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" - verse 12.

But the enquiry arises whether the *glorious body* of our Lord Jesus Christ, like unto which the saints' bodies are to be changed, is that body still remaining in its *flesh* and *bone* nature, receiving nourishment from food and drink, or whether it was changed at His ascension from a material to a spiritual body? There is no direct declaration that I know of in the Scriptures that His body was thus changed. But it appears to me evident from the general tenor of the New Testament, that His body was changed. If it remains a material body, then the bodies of the saints to be like His glorious body, must in their resurrection, remain material bodies, and what change they will experience to be *fashioned* like His, I am not prepared to say. But we are assured that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God;" and that the body though sown a *natural body is raised a spiritual body*. I Cor.15:44 & 50. Indeed, Christ's transfiguration {Mt.17:1-5} is, as I understand it, a representation given beforehand of the change which should take place in His body when He should enter into His glory.

But it is not necessary that we should dwell upon this point now. For whether we admit that Christ's body was changed from a natural to a spiritual body or not, all who admit the truth of the Scripture testimony, must admit that Christ arose from the dead and ascended in the same body in which He was crucified. And as our text assures us that the bodies of the saints shall be fashioned like unto His glorious body, it is self-evident that they must be raised from the dead in order to be thus fashioned. Indeed, I have briefly, though I think clearly showed, that the resurrection of Christ and of the saints, go together. If He has arisen then must their bodies be raised; if they are not to be raised, then He has not arisen. The questions were asked in Paul's day: "How are the dead raised? And with what body do they come?" I Cor.15:35. Paul goes on to answer these questions in the following verses to the 46th. As the same questions are asked in our day, I will notice one or two other considerations to show that Paul's use of the pronoun *it* in his description of the sowing and raising of the body, is definite and specific. Some say there is a resurrection, but deny that the material body which turns to dust, is raised. Others say that in the resurrection of the body all that ever constituted parts of the body must be raised with

it; if a person has lost an arm or leg in some foreign country, or his limb is bitten off by a shark in the ocean, and he dies and is buried in this country, in his resurrection that lost limb will be reunited with his body. By the same rule they may, and some I think do say that all the particles of matter that ever belonged to the body must be raised with it, and therefore that those particles wherever they have been extorted or dropped must be gathered to the body. But Paul's *it* in my estimation justifies neither one nor the other of these ideas. We will take Christ, *the first-fruits*, as an illustration of what is raised. It was the same Jesus, *in person*, who was born in Bethlehem, and in that identical *body* which was nailed to the cross, and died on it, that was raised up, with the wounds on it, as was showed to Thomas. John 20:27. And it was Jesus in that very body in which He had showed Himself alive unto His disciples, that was parted from them and taken up into heaven. See Luke 24:50,51 & Acts 1:1-11. Again, those that are alive and remain at the coming of the Lord, are to be changed. And the words seem clearly to convey the idea that just as they existed at the moment of their Lord's coming, their bodies will be changed from corruptible to incorruptible, and caught up, the identical persons, who, having been alive, and being changed in a moment to meet the *Lord in the air*. See I Cor.15:51-54 & I Thes.4:15-17. These cases thus illustrate what Paul means by his *it's*, when he says, "It is sown a natural body, *it* is raised a spiritual body." I Cor.15:44; namely, that it is the same identical body that is sown, which is raised, though changed from a natural to a spiritual body.

This is a mystery, and a great mystery; but that by no means justifies our rejecting or caviling at the declarations of God's word. We ought to remember that the power put forth in accomplishing this glorious work of the resurrection of the saints is as incomprehensible as is the work. It is *according to that working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself*. It is the working of God in His infinite wisdom and almighty power. When we see what God by His working has subdued unto Himself, that He subdued the chaos so as to form the heavens and the earth in their beauty and order; subdued darkness in saying, Let there be light, &c., and made Satan and sin itself in their evil workings to result in the glory of God and in the redemption and salvation of His people; surely, we cannot doubt His being able to subdue death and the grave, so as to make them give up their dead and to make them yield them back, purified from all that is earthly and sensual about them.

I doubt, my brother, if any who dispute the doctrine of

the resurrection should read this, whether they will be convinced of its truth. The Scriptures are so plain and pointed on the subject, it is useless for us to expect them to believe what we say, if they can reject what is there written. Still it is our duty to follow the pattern of the apostles, in giving witness to the resurrection of Jesus, and consequently of His saints. For I cannot conceive how we can be *co-heirs* or *joint-heirs* with Christ, seeing that in His body He has entered in as *heir of all things*, if in our bodies also we are not made to participate in the inheritance, nor how we *can be glorified together*, that is, *with Him*, seeing that He has been glorified in His risen body, if our bodies are to remain subject to corruption. But I will here leave the subject. Yours in the hope of a glorious resurrection.

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, Jan.10, 1859.

S. Trott.

From: *SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol. 27 {1859}*

Absolute Predestination.

Dear Brother Beebe: - I, a few weeks since, received by letter a request from a brother out West that I should give through the *Signs of the Times* my views of the *Absolute Predestination of all things*. I judge from his letter that this brother is sound on this subject; but I also judge his letters, as also from a copy of the Minutes of the Association with which he is probably connected, that he is surrounded by Baptists not sound on all points, and not upon the subject upon he wishes my views. I feel, therefore, disposed to yield to his request, if by any means I might say anything that would strengthen and confirm him in the truth, and instruct others who have hearts to understand. But I have in times past so fully discussed this subject through the *Signs of the Times*, and so frequently expressed my views on it, that I can hardly be expected to give anything new relating to it, yet it is a fruitful subject. One remark more: What I write on this subject I write for Old School Baptists. I do not expect others are prepared to receive what establishes the full sovereignty of God.

To come to the subject: Old School Baptists will admit concerning Him who is our God, that "All things were made by Him and *without Him was not anything made that was made.*" {John 1:3}. That all things were created by Him and for Him. {Col.1:16}. That "the Lord made all things for Himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." {Prov.16:4}. It is true the

first two of the above texts were written of Him who is the *only begotten of the Father*, and *His Son*, and of course the third applies to Him also; but the Son is the Saviour, and the Saviour of Israel is the *Lord Jehovah*, the God of Israel." - See Isaiah 43:3. Hence it is written, "For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead." - Is it not, then, evident that all things that are made were created for Himself, that He had a use for them, even for the *small dust of the balance*, and for the wicked, and for the *waster to destroy*? See Isaiah 40:15. If He created the wicked for the day of evil, and the waster to destroy, had He not, when He created them, pre-determined the use that He would make of them? God had use for the waster, Satan, to introduce sin into the world, and He certainly had use for sin in the world for carrying out the purpose which He had purposed in Christ Jesus, that of saving sinners, and bringing many sons unto glory. He had use for Nebuchadnezzar to waste Judah, Tyre and Egypt, &c. And He has use for all the *wasters* from Nebuchadnezzar down to the little insects that destroy one another, and can be discovered only by the microscope. If God made all these things for Himself, He certainly has a right to them, and to govern and dispose of them. Can it be supposed with any reason, that when God had made man for Himself, that He permitted him by sinning to take himself away from under His control and government, so that man can in anything thwart the purpose of God? Or that Satan has obtained a control of man above the control of God? But whatever men may suppose concerning this, God has said, and that settles the question, "Surely, the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." Ps.76:10. Again, David says: "Deliver my soul from the wicked which is thy sword." Ps.17:13. If the wicked is His sword, then He of course has use for them, in the day of evil which He will bring upon men. Thus God says of Nebuchadnezzar: "O, Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand, is mine indignation. I will send him against an hypocritical nation," &c. Isa.10:5,6; also verse 15.

Once more: We are told by inspiration of God that, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God," &c. - Rom.8:28. In the first of the above texts, we have it in substance affirmed that whatever wrath man shall be allowed to act out, shall praise God, and the remainder of wrath He shall restrain. This must embrace the sinful actions of men in general. In reference to the restraining of wrath, we have one instance in the crucifixion of Christ. God had said,

through the type of the paschal lamb, a bone of Him shall not be broken. Whilst the soldiers break the legs of those crucified with Him, yet when they saw that Jesus was dead already, they break not His legs; yet they would vent their wrath on Him in some way, and one of them pierced His side with a spear. There they were restrained from doing that which God said should not be done, yet in acting out their wrath they did that which was foretold should be done. - See John 19:32-37. Yet these Roman soldiers did not design nor know that they were doing the will of God.

In the quotation from Isaiah 18:5,6, we have one illustration of how God uses the wicked as a sword or staff to visit evil upon men. In the quotation "that all work together for good," &c., there must be included in these *all things* all the trials from the reproaches and persecutions of men, from the temptations of Satan, and from the crosses and afflictions of life, that His people are subject to. In the quotations I have given it must, I think, be admitted that most of the wicked actions of men and devils are represented. And it is shown that God controls them, for His praise, for accomplishing His purpose, and for the good of His people.

Old School Baptists will admit that God's foreknowledge is infinite, and therefore must have embraced from eternity every event, however minute. If God then foreknew all that wrath of men which should praise Him, and all that He would restrain, and all the use He would make of the wicked, it must have been that He purposed that wrath which should be acted out, and that use which He would make of the wicked, and the events He would accomplish by them. Hence He says, "As I have purposed, so shall it stand." - See Isa.14:24-27.

What is God's purpose but His predestination? Men in all ages charged the predestination of God with destroying the accountability of the creature. Paul knew of the prevalency of this objection, hence he said: "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth He yet find fault? For who hath resisted His will?" The answer: "Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" - See Rom.9:19-24

And here perhaps it would be wisdom to leave that point where Paul has left it. I will, however, just add that the Scriptures no where represents that God's purposing or predestinating the action and event produced by it, in any case, destroys the sinfulness of the actor.

God had purposed that Joseph should be sold into Egypt, but his brethren sinned in the transaction, doing it from wicked design. Hence Joseph said unto them, "Ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good." - Gen.50:20. So in

the case of the Assyrian, whilst God foretells that He would use him as a staff in His hand against a hypocritical nation, &c.; yet He saith, "Howbeit he meaneth not so," &c. - See Isaiah 10:5-19. Also Acts 2:23, concerning the Jews in crucifying Christ. We see the work of God in these cases. We see His purpose carried out by the wicked actions of men and Satan, yet we cannot see Him work. We cannot comprehend His ways. Shall we deny His power? Deny that He does it, because we cannot comprehend how He does it, so as to have man a guilty transgressor and Himself pure and just? And shall we, therefore, ascribe the controlling power as well as the acts to men and to devils? Every event prophesied of, both in the Old and New Testaments, concerning Israel, concerning the four great Empires, of Nebuchadnezzar's image, of the division of the Roman Empire into ten kingdoms, and of the rise of the seven headed Beast and of the two horned one - were and must have been predetermined of God, or it would not have been declared of God that they should take place. God said He would send Nebuchadnezzar or the Assyrian against Judah and Jerusalem, as has been seen from the 10th chapter of Isaiah. God named Cyrus as the man that should destroy Babylon and break the Assyrian Empire, and establish the second great Empire, the Persian, and deliver the Jews, &c. - See Isa.45:1-4. Yet He says of the Assyrian, that he meaneth not so, &c., and therefore that He will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria. - Isa.10:7-12. And He calls Cyrus a ravenous bird, that He calleth from the east to execute His counsel, &c. - Isa.46:11. It is evident, as is the case in the Assyrian above noticed, both from the Scripture accounts and from history, that Cyrus and all these kings and nations and people were actually by ambitious motives to exalt themselves: the one in the destruction of the other. Yet God says, in reference to these and preceding events, "Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me;" declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure; calling a ravenous bird, &c. - Isa.46:9-12. What can be a more full and decided declaration of *absolute predestination* than this?

There are those in this section of country who, though they consider themselves Old School Baptists, deny the absolute predestination of all things; yet they admit the predestination of those events immediately connected with the coming and death of Christ, and the predestination of the elect to salvation and to the adoption of children. And I presume,

my brother, you have the same class of Baptists around you. It may therefore be well to say something on this point.

If the coming of Christ in the flesh was predestinated before the foundation of the world, then all the events, all things connected with His coming, were predestinated. He *came into the world to save sinners*; then it must have been predestinated that His people should be sinners, and therefore that Adam, by transgression, should bring sin into the world. Rahab must become a harlot, and have a house in a retired place on the walls, that she might receive and hide the spies sent by Joshua, and thus secure her own deliverance from the destruction of Jericho, and become the mother of Boaz by Salmon, and thus secure the succession from whence Christ was to come after the flesh. See Josh.2 and 6:25 & Mt.1:5. Tamar must assume the garb of a harlot, that she might entice her father-in-law, Judah, that she might bear unto him an heir, that the succession from Judah to Christ might be preserved. See Gen.38:12-30 & Mt.1:3. So the birth of Solomon was preceded by adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah. Those were all sinful acts and were intimate in securing the succession from Abraham down to Jesus. They must therefore have been predestinated of God. But come to the crucifixion of Jesus. Satan had quite an important part to act in bringing this about; not only in entering Judas and leading him to betray Jesus, but in exciting the Jews. Satan did not this with the design of furthering the purpose of God, but to frustrate it. He was acting out the enmity of his heart against God. The act of Judas in betraying Jesus had been prophesied of by David, and therefore must have been predestinated, and of course, Satan's entering into him. Even Jesus said unto Judas, after Satan had entered into him, "That thou doest do quickly." Yea all this did not lessen his sinfulness in the act. If God can thus control and make use of Satan's enmity in accomplishing His own purpose, and yet leave him a *devil*, he can with equal ease control the wrath and wicked acts of men, and yet leave them sinners. We discover from this that Satan must be ignorant of the spirituality of the Scriptures, or he would have known that he was fulfilling them by tempting Judas. And he was equally ignorant of the spirituality of Christ's kingdom, or he would not have thought to crush it by procuring His death.

In reference to the predestined salvation of His people, Christ says to His Father, "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. What was the use of this power being given to Him over all flesh, if it was not necessary that He should have the control of all flesh, and their acts, in order

to give eternal life to His people? It is as necessary that they should experience their first birth as their second; of course, He must have the control of every event that could effect their preservation in their ancestry to their being born, that there might be no frustration in that; and after their birth till called to the knowledge of the truth. This power over all flesh is declared by Christ to be "All power in heaven and in earth." See Mt.28:18. If He has *all* power over all flesh, then there is none other that has any power over them to control their actions contrary to His purpose. I cannot think that any consistent Old School Baptist can think that God created or brought into existence any part of the human family merely to be damned; or in other words, that He had not use for in the world in carrying out the great purpose of creation, namely: the salvation and glorification of His people, either as channels through whom the elect are to descend from Adam, or through whom the wicked are to be brought into existence against the day of evil, or to compose the votaries of the false systems of religion which God has in all ages permitted to exist in the world, by which, through contrast with them, the glory and beauty of His truth may be made more manifest, and the riches of His grace more displayed in bringing His people to the knowledge of the truth, and in preserving them to glory. He must have the control of all these masses so as to secure their filling the places assigned them in the purpose of God. Indeed the term flesh in the expression all flesh, seems to be used to denote those who only are born of the flesh, in distinction from those who are born of the Spirit, as it reads, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh, that which is born of the spirit is spirit." It is true, this *power over all flesh* was given to Him as Son and Mediator - as God it could not be given to Him, and that it is as Son that He reigns, and has reigned since His glorification or exaltation, and must reign until all enemies are put under His feet. See John 17:1-2; I Cor.15:24,28. But it is not merely as the begotten of the Father, and having therefore only a derivative existence, and exercising only a given or delegated power, that He reigns. For although those around you may think that the character of the Redeemer is portrayed as truly sublime when He is represented as having no other Godhead than what was begotten and therefore derived, yet the scriptures represent Him as absolutely Jehovah, the one self-existing God. Hence whilst as Son He could say, *my Father is greater than I, I and my Father are one*. He is thus God, and the Son of God, in the same glorious personage as Mediator. Hence He said to Philip, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." If so He brings all the attributes of the Godhead into

His work as Mediator, as He exercises His mediatorial powers. Being therefore, God, He worketh all things after the counsel of His own will. Hence in the exercise of His power over all flesh, He is so controlling all that they are made to subserve the very purpose for which they were created; and therefore that which had been predestinated concerning them before they were created in Adam. Certainly it cannot be supposed that God created men for a purpose and yet had not determined what that purpose should be. It is equally absurd to suppose that He created them without a purpose. Hence we may rest assured that notwithstanding the wrath of men they can do nothing but what will be found among the *all things that work together for good to them that love God*.

Some Baptists are opposed to the predestination of all things being preached or agitated in our papers. They say that it tends to make men worse. Whether such are Old School Baptists in heart, or not, it is not my province to say. It certainly is the case that there is nothing which so directly draws out the enmity of the human heart against God and His sovereignty, as the doctrine of predestination. But if the doctrine of predestination is true, it is certain that men will act out no more wrath than God will cause to praise Him, for the remainder of wrath He will restrain. And it is true, or there is no dependence in the prophecies of the scriptures. They would be all guess work, if God had not determined just how far men should act out their wrath, and wherein He would restrain it. On the other hand it is truly consoling to the child of grace to feel assured that his God, his Saviour, has the sovereign and all-powerful control of every event, and has determined all for good. Our Saviour says, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father." Of course no shot can hit, no bird of prey can wound or kill a sparrow but as God pleases. Christ said to His disciples, "Fear not, therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." Mt.10:29-31.

I leave these remarks, brother Beebe, with you. If you think they will be of any use publish them, if not, lay them by. Affectionately yours,

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, Jan.20, 1860.

S. Trott.

From: SIGNS of the TIMES: Vol.28 {1860}

Public Fasting.

Dear Brother Beebe: - You have requested my views on Public Fasting, and by whose authority it was introduced into the christian church. I presume the readers of the *Southern Baptist Messenger* are fully aware of the difference between the legal and the gospel dispensations. The worship *under* the former, as prescribed by the ceremonial law, consisted in outward forms, based upon creaturely sacrifices; whereas, under the gospel dispensation, the worship recognized by the New Testament, is spiritual, and based upon the one sacrifice offered by Christ in His own person. Hence, under the law, mourning, affliction and contrition, were, with propriety, expressed by putting on sackcloth, fasting, &c., while joy and thankfulness were expressed by feasting. But fasting is neither commanded by Christ, or His apostles, in the New Testament, nor by God, in the law, unless the command to Israel, in connection with the yearly day of atonement, that on that day *they should afflict their souls*, be considered as embracing fasting. See Lev.16:29. So that fasting, unless the legal service of the day of atonement be an exception, was altogether a voluntary form, until it became established among the Jews, by the tradition of the Elders. The first account of fasting as a form in earnestly seeking God, is that of Israel's fasting in their war with Benjamin. Judges 20:26. After that we find occasional instances of fasting during the time of Samuel's judging Israel in the two books of Samuel; also, of David's fasting, on account of the sickness of his child. In this case David seems to have done it as an act of humiliation and supplication to God for the life of his child. But his servants seem to have viewed fasting simply as an expression of sorrow. See II Sam.12:16-23. The first instance in scripture of a fast being proclaimed by authority, is certainly not a very commendable example to be followed. It was made by Jezebel at the time she would take the life of Naboth, by false witnesses, I Kings 21:3-14; though we afterwards find Jehoshaphat proclaiming a fast as an act of seeking help from God, {and was heard of God in his supplication.} In the times of Isaiah and Jeremiah, fasts appear to have become common, and much of hypocrisy in them. In the time of Zechariah, there were two stated yearly fasts among the Jews; one in commemoration of the destruction of the Temple by the king of Babylon, the other, as appointed by Esther. But God improves them for hypocrisy in these. Zech.7:5.

But let us pass to the New Testament, and see what

authority we have there for Christians fasting. The first instance we have of instruction concerning fasting is in Mt.6:16-18. Our Lord directs His disciples that when *they fast to be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance, &c.* - "But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thy head and wash thy face, that thou appear not unto men to fast." Here our Lord does not forbid His disciples to fast, but forbids their assuming the outward appearance of it, so as to appear unto men to fast. Consequently, it forbids public fasting to His disciples, though it admits of their fasting in secret or private, as before God. But, I apprehend that many, in some measure, misapprehend much of Christ's instruction to His disciples in this discourse on the mount. It contains much instruction that applies to His disciples under the gospel, showing the spirituality of the worship belonging to His kingdom, in opposition to legal forms and outward ostentation. But, at the same time, it is addressed to them as under the law, as they were. Christ Himself, for the time He served, was a minister of the circumcision, and so were His disciples bound to observe the rites and forms of the law, until Christ, by His death, redeemed them from under the law, and *blotted out the handwriting of ordinances*, nailing them to the cross. Hence, Christ said to the multitude, to *His disciples*, "The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat; all, therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works." Mat.23:1-3. Another case is: The disciples of John came to Christ and said, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not? And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bride-chamber mourn as long as the bride-groom is with them? But the days will come when the bride-groom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast." Mt.9:14,15. The first idea here presented, is, that Christ represents *mourning* the same with fasting. The second is, that in this case He justifies His disciples in departing from the tradition of the Elders. But, what is taught by our Lord's figure? The idea of the *children of the bride-chamber*, and of the *bride-groom being with them*, is that of a marriage feast, and joy. Was this feast and joy which the disciples of Christ experienced in having with them, carnal or earthly? Certainly not. They had not much of such feasting. But they joyed in His presence with them as the Messiah, and feasted on His word. So, from that day to this day, whenever the Blessed Bridegroom is present with the children of God, they have enjoyed a wedding feast, though suffering much worldly privation; it is spiritual. So, the feeling or *mourning* which Christ intended, must evidently be spiritual. In this sense, the children of God have experienced

much of mourning, or fasting, since Christ ascended. That this was the idea intended, is confirmed by the parables in the following verse, of the old garment, and old bottles, by which Christ teaches that gospel grace and blessings are not to be patched on to the old garment of legal rites and ceremonies, nor put into the old bottles of the legal covenant. Hence, this text affords us no authority for fasting from natural food. But, the instances which more than any other, sanctions the practice of fasting among christians, are found in Acts 13:2,3 & 14:23 - because we there have apostolic example for fasting. Apostolic example is, next to command, the best authority we have for religious order. But these practices in all cases, are certainly not to be received as binding examples to the saints in after ages. Because the prejudices of the early disciples were so strong in favor of Jewish rites and customs, that even Paul, in many instances, was constrained to conform to their prejudice, differently from what he taught the Gentiles. Thus he circumcised Timothy, and by the request of the apostles at Jerusalem, he shaved his head, and went through other forms as though he had a vow upon him. See Acts 21:20-25. And I am inclined to the belief that these instances above referred to were in conformity to Jewish prejudices and customs. Seeing there is no command for it in the whole Bible, fasting looks to me so much like *will-worship and false humility, and neglecting of the body, not in any honor to the satisfying of the flesh*, that I feel like *touching not*. See Col.2:21-23. Besides, if I were to *fast twice a week*, I must rely alone on the atonement of Christ as my plea for my pardon and acceptance with God. But still, in view of these examples in the apostolic church, I do not wish to condemn such saints and churches as feel their minds led to practice fasting, provided they observe the directions of our Lord. Matthew 6:16-18.

Brother Beebe, you also requested me to state by whose authority fasting was introduced into the christian church. Bodily mortification seems, in all ages, to have been a favorite element in natural religion, both among the Jews and heathen. Hence, the early disciples clung to it, and the Catholic church, when they commenced multiplying ceremonies encouraged the practice of it as an act of penance. And Calvin also, in his blending much of legality with his system of religion, encouraged its being practiced in his church, upon the Pharisal plan. But, since the Jews nationally ceased, I know of no instance on record of fasting being observed as a national act, or by the authority of national governments, until the Puritans introduced it into New England. Soon after their

settlement there, in view of their troubles with the Indians, and on account of their severe winters, and unimproved country, the General Assembly of Massachusetts, appointed the observance of fasts twice a year, one in the spring, and one in the fall. This practice was continued for a number of years, until on one occasion, the General Assembly was about to appoint a Colonial fast for the fall, when a member arose, and with a good deal of national propriety, if nothing more, said they had repeatedly appointed days of fasting to supplicate God's protection, but had never appointed a season of thanksgiving to Him for the mercies they had received; he, therefore, moved that instead of appointing a day of fasting for the fall, they appoint a day of thanksgiving. It was carried, and from that day to this, Massachusetts, and the other New England Colonies, and States, have had appointed for them a day of fasting in the spring, and a day of thanksgiving in the fall, with, perhaps, the exception of Rhode Island. For a number of years past, New England influence, by means of New England settlers, has induced the Governors of several of the other States to appoint for their people days of thanksgiving, though seldom days of fasting. The influence has caused several of the Presidents of the United States to appoint days of fasting, and I think, in one instance, a day of thanksgiving. One of the Presidents, Jackson, I think it was, when petitioned to appoint a day of national fasting, refused, as did Governor Wise reject a like petition to appoint a day of thanksgiving for Virginia. Both assigned as the reason of their refusal, that the observance of such days must be considered religious performances, with which they, as Magistrates had not right to interfere. It may be argued that as an example of natural religion, it may be proper, on special occasions, for a nation, or people, to humble themselves before God, by fasting; and, that God has favorably respected such acts, as in the case of Ahab, I Kings 21:27-29; and of the king of Nineveh, Jonah 3:6-10. If nations observe such days without having any reference to Christ and His religion, I have nothing to say. But, this much I must say: That if rulers appoint the religious observance of such days, whether on the principle of natural or revealed religion, we as christians cannot consistently participate in the observance, because that in all things pertaining to our religion, we should acknowledge no king but Christ, and no rule but His word. In other matters it becomes us to be obedient to Magistrates.

Dear Brother William, I have given you my views, and such information as I have, on this subject. I hope I may not have written anything which will be offensive to any of the

brethren. I am not favorably situated for writing, living, as I do, within a seven mile space that divides the guards of the two contending armies, liable to be visited with scouts from Lincoln's army, as well as by our own scouts, and in daily expectation, and have been for weeks, of the advance of one or the other army to bring on a battle. But we know the Lord has the control of every move, great or small. Yours, with christian regard,

Centreville, Fairfax County, Virginia, July 8th, 1861.

S. Trott.

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THE END.