

“And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets; Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again; and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection; And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment; They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:)” Hebrews 11:32-38a.

Beloved, note right here, for a worthy supplementation to the parenthetical comment just made by the apostle; to wit: This evil, ungodly world population, this unthankful, unholy nation, this satanic, demon-possessed state, this mean-spirited, murderous city – do not deserve to have the humble souls of Westboro Baptist Church living in their godless midst and preaching the everlasting Gospel to them; to wit: *“And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven,”* – i.e., in mid-air, – *“having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of his judgment is come; and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”* Rev. 14:6,7. What a glorious passage of Scripture (!) Beloved, I have very strong feelings of sympathy – sympatico – affectionate one-ness – for that holy angel – flying in mid-air with a stark, uncompromising message from God for every human being alive on the earth. Somewhat like the message of Jonah for the men of Nineveh, in like circumstances; to wit: *“And Jonah began to enter into the city a day’s journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.”* Jonah 3:4.

Beloved, could that holy angel be us? or at least could it be that we are the fulfillment in whole or in part of that prophetic angel’s mission from God to all the world in the last days? Are we not preaching to the whole world – around the clock – from our bully pulpits in television and cyber space? Is not our message as stark and as uncompromising as the angel’s message? To wit:

“Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come; and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”
(Rev. 14:6,7)

“(Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better things for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.”
(Heb. 11:38-40)

We are so blessed to have a more sure word of prophesy, dictated by the Holy Spirit and inscribed by faithful men; to wit: Dr. Luke: *“Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to*

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write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.” Lk. 1:1-4. And, “The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen; To whom also he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.” Acts 1:1-3. “Perfect understanding of all things from the very first... that thou mightest know the certainty...by many infallible proofs.”

When launching the Old School or Primitive Baptist church paper, “The Signs of the Times,” in 1832, – (which had a substantial part in leading to the historic split between the Arminian or Missionary Baptists and the Old School Baptists) – the editor, Gilbert Beebe, said concerning the need for such a bi-monthly paper, that there were many thousands of Old School Baptist people and many hundreds of Old School Baptist churches scattered all over the United States who need to keep in touch with each other. He said, *“In their scattered situation it affords them peculiar pleasure to hear from one another. ‘As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.’ Prov. 25:25. It is certainly good news to the scattered pilgrims to hear of the numbers in different parts of the land who still adhere to the doctrine and practice of the primitive church. In days of old, ‘they that feared the Lord spake often one to another;’ (Mal. 3:16), and the exhortation of the apostle is, that we ‘exhort one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching.’ (Heb. 10:25).”*

Indeed, in those days up until the closing era of the nineteenth century (i.e., the 1800s), Old School Baptists made up sufficient numbers of the whole population here and there so as to influence the outcome of elections in America. I have seen (and at one time had a copy of) a check signed by Abraham Lincoln in payment for a yearly subscription to Beebe’s paper, “The Signs of the Times,” in amount of \$1.00. Indeed, Lincoln was brought up attending Pigeon Creek Baptist Church; and, after becoming President, Lincoln appointed one of Beebe’s sons, George Beebe, as Governor of the Territory of Kansas in 1860. A large photo of Gov. George Beebe hangs along with all other governors of Kansas in the governor’s office in the Statehouse of Kansas to this day. Gordon A. Cotton is a newspaper reporter, who has written a book entitled, Of Primitive Faith And Order, A History Of The Mississippi Primitive Baptist Church, 1780-1974.

I have spent several hours on the telephone talking Old School Baptist history with Bro. Gordon. He has a master’s degree in history from Mississippi College in Clinton, Mississippi, where my sister graduated; and he is features editor of the Vicksburg Evening Post, Vicksburg, MS. He told me the other day that he has only one copy of his book left, and doubts there will ever be another printing. He wrote at page 67 of his book as follows, – (relative to Old School Baptist numbers and influence in the 1700s and 1800s); to wit: *“Yet for a small group, they have been influential in American History and are proud of their part in the events of the past. With justifiable pride they point to the fact that George Washington, though an Episcopalian, was baptized by a Primitive Baptist minister, Elder John Gano.”* (Lee Hanks, The Church Of God [Atlanta; Dowman and Wilkins, 1915] p. 234.) *“Washington was immersed in the Potomac River by Elder John Gano during the American Revolution.”* (A major building is named for Gano at William Jewell College, an old Baptist school in Liberty, Missouri.) *“With equal pride they recall the efforts of Primitive Baptist Elder John Leland who, through his close friendship with Thomas Jefferson and James Madison”* – (see Leland-Madison monument in Leland-Madison Park in Orange County, Virginia, as further evidence of Old School influence) – *“was instrumental in establishing religious freedom in Virginia and later in the Constitution of the United States.”* (Hassell and Hassell, History of the Church, p. 576.)

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In years to come they would point to Abraham Lincoln (Hanks, *The Church of God*, p. 234. Lincoln's parents were members of Pigeon Creek Church in Indiana before the family moved to Illinois.) and Jefferson Davis as two other public heroes who had been reared in Primitive Baptist homes. (This fact is confirmed by descendants of President Davis and also by the minutes of Old Welsh Tract Church in Newark, Delaware. Davis and his mother both became Episcopalians in late years, but his father remained a Primitive Baptist until his death. Davis' family were charter members of Old Welsh Tract, the oldest Baptist church in America – because it came to America all together as a body, after having been for many years a church in the old country. [Note: The church of Roger Williams in Providence, Rhode Island, was built on these shores from scratch as they say, and hence existed a few years longer IN AMERICA than the Old Welsh Tract church.]

You may have noticed that one of the citations of authority given earlier was Hassell & Hassell, History of the Church of God, From the Creation to A.D. 1885. C.B. Hassell (1808-1880) is the father; Sylvester Hassell (1842-1928) is the son; both men were Old School Baptist pastors, and the massive, 1,000-page History of the Church of God which they produced is invaluable to any conscientious searcher for the truth who would know exactly how this evil country got this backslidden, apostate way. The Beebes and the Hassells were friends and fellow-laborers in the Gospel. They depended on each other, and they were amazing complements to each other in their respective fields of endeavor. When Beebe began his 40-year field campaign under the banner of, "The Signs of the Times," the Hassells were beginning their brilliant life's work that was to bear the title, History of the Church of God From the Creation to A.D. 1885.

Today, in our considerable experience, there are scarcely to be found any who believe and preach the truth. To the exact contrary! – everybody believes and mightily contends for Satan's lies, even to the point of persecuting us viciously for doing nothing but maintaining and defending pure Gospel truth. We have the solemn duty to earnestly "*contend for the faith which was once* (and for all time) *delivered unto the saints.*" Jude 1:3.

***"And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found none. Therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath; their own way have I recompensed upon their heads, saith the Lord God."* (Ezek. 22:30,31)**

***"Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it. And though they say, The Lord liveth; surely they swear falsely."* (Jer. 5:1,2)**

***"The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come. He shall enter into peace; they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness."* (Isa. 57:1,2)**

***"Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed."* (Isa. 6:8-10)**

Beloved, how are we to discern the signs of our times, when we as a sincere and loving people of good will and above the average intelligence lift up our eyes to examine the current religious and political landscape? What manner of people are these modern Americans in the light of the Bible?

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and in the light of history? We search the Scriptures daily. We prayerfully read the signs of the times, continuously. What level of Satanic viciousness – viciousness – must a society of human beings have reached, when a mixed population of 300 million souls of ABSOLUTELY EVERY SORT, DESCRIPTION, KIND AND NATURE, can recoil violently as one man, to the same, simple, faithful Gospel message that was once widely and warmly received and believed in that society? Step back a pace or two and view the landscape of happy hearts that loved The Pilgrim's Progress and made it a best seller, calling John Bunyan the "Heavenly Dreamer," and consulted Gill more often than Webster.

Let us take another look at relevant, ecclesiastical/political history in America. In his Introductory Preface to what we shall call his Maiden Voyage of "The Signs of the Times," Beebe wrote: *"From the early settlement of our country by the Puritans in New England, and the Church of England (Episcopalian) in the Southern colonies, whose religious supremacy was established by law in their several localities, the Baptists, and indeed all other dissenting orders, suffered great opposition by proscription and oppression from the dominant parties. The Baptists, perhaps, more than any other, were violently treated, and suffered the most cruel persecution. Disfranchisement as citizens, fines, confiscation of property, incarceration in prisons, and banishment for nonconformity, to which was added corporal punishments, public whippings at the stocks, cropping of ears, boring their tongues through with hot irons, tying their heads and feet together, and torturing them in the most barbarous manner for days and nights, and in many cases they were put to death for their persistent and inflexible adherence to the faith and order of the gospel by which they were distinguished from all other orders."* (Please don't talk to me about our wonderful founding fathers, and what a wonderful country America is, and has been since the beginning.) *"IN THOSE DAYS OF TRIAL THERE WERE NO WORLDLY INDUCEMENTS OFFERED TO ATTRACT THE WORLDLY-MINDED TO CONNECT THEMSELVES WITH OUR CHURCHES, AND THERE WAS HARMONY OF SENTIMENT AND UNIFORMITY OF PRACTICE AMONG THE BAPTIST CHURCHES THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE BREADTH OF OUR COUNTRY."*

Now, Beloved, this is an amazing thing. Hassell's "Church History" provides us with authoritative information as to the names, locations, number of members, and other vital information of literally hundreds of Old School Baptist churches, *"throughout the whole breadth of our country,"* at the time during the 1700s and 1800s when bloody persecution of the Baptists was raging as described. And, as there were hundreds of churches, so there were many thousands of Old School Baptist members of those churches. And, all this, at a time when there were but a few million Americans in our total population.

Beloved (!) What are we to make of this situation today – on the ground – at this hour – as they say! There are 300 million Americans in our population; and, although modern technology allows us to preach to the whole nation and the whole world; and, after more than 18 years daily on the mean streets of the world, with evidence that our message has saturated the world's population; we scarcely know of a baker's dozen of earth's BILLIONS who display anything but murderous hatred toward Westboro Baptist Church and her members. This is inexplicable on any other ground but the supernatural winding up of the affairs of a doomed creation.

***"And, (says our Lord Jesus Christ) BEHOLD, I COME QUICKLY; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."* (Rev. 22:12)**

I love you.

Amen.