

A CLOUD OF WITNESSES

DIED IN THE FAITH

W. J. Berry

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Tom Adams

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Table of Contents

ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.....	4
ELDER SAMUEL TROTT.....	4
ELDER ROBERT C. LEACHMAN.....	4
ELDER J. B. BOWDEN.....	5
ELDER W. L. HALL.....	5
ELDER T. C. COMPTON.....	5
ELDER H. H. LEFFERTS.....	6
ELDER FREDERICK W. KEENE.....	6
J. B. MILLER.....	7
JOHN GIBSON.....	7
ELDER J. W. GILLIAM.....	7
ELDER GEO. O. WALKER.....	8
BEN GOTHROP.....	8
ELDER J. J. COLLINS.....	8
ELDER J. P. TINGLE.....	8
ELDER J. B. ADAMS.....	8
ELDER W. L. SLUSHER.....	9
L. E. S. STEPHENS.....	9
P. J. POWEL.....	9
ELDER GEO. RUSTON.....	9
HERBERT SAWYER (England).....	10
ELDER ABNER D. WALL.....	10
ELDER SETH BYNUM.....	10
ELDER J. W. McCLANAHAN.....	10
ELDER J. G. L. HASH.....	11
ELDER J. C. SIKES.....	11
ELDER ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.....	11

ELDER GILBERT BEEBE

Elder Gilbert Beebe was born in Norwich, Conn., Nov. 25, 1800, baptized 1811, and ordained in 1823. He died May 2, 1881.

He was instrumental in bringing the Baptists together at Black Rock, and was chosen as one of the committee to draw up the Address.

Before his death he said, “My voice will soon be silenced in death, my pen pass into the hands of another, and I hope abler writer, but the eternal truths for which I have so long contended will be lasting as the days of eternity; and when all the deceptive and luring doctrines and institutions of men shall be exposed, and all who have trusted in a refuge of lies shall bewail their folly and call for the rocks and mountains to hide them from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the presence of the Lamb, those who know and love the truth shall in the truth rejoice forevermore.”

Because of the limited space we can give only a very few typical testimonies; but which are representative of that great cloud of witnesses. We had desired to reprint also from old writings, but since we could not do so, we prefer to publish mostly from those living, or of more recent date, showing that they are in harmony with that great cloud of witnesses gone before.

Elder Gilbert Beebe – “Let us now enquire whether controversy, discussion, and plain dealings among professors of the gospel faith, is in reality prejudiced to a true Christian union or not...The apostles were so far from considering a controversy detrimental to a Christian union, that they exhorted the saints to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; and this was found indispensable to the maintenance of a scriptural fellowship...That idea that we, as Old School Baptists, are to contend against the errors of the New School, and at the same time, wink at the errors of all who are pleased to call themselves Old School Baptists will not answer. One wolf in the fold, will do more mischief to the flock, than a thousand in the forest...”

ELDER SAMUEL TROTT

Elder Samuel Trott was born in 1784, and died in Fairfax County VA., Oct. 30, 1866, after an active life of over sixty years in the ministry. The late Elder Robert C. Leachman had the following to say of him: “His ministry was not with him as, alas! it is with too many, a work of convenience or of secondary importance, but regarded as the great and leading business of his faithful to his appointments, and seemed to be always laden with gospel treasure. No man seemed to feel more sensible his dependence upon God, and none seemed to be more constantly furnished unto every good word and work.”

ELDER ROBERT C. LEACHMAN

Elder Robert C. Leachman was one of the most remarkable gifts to the Church. He was bold and fearless in the proclamation of the truth.

He wrote: “This opposition will not always come from the open enemies of truth, but perhaps more frequently from its professed friends. This makes it harder to bear, and more difficult to deal with. We do not like to impute evil motives to those we have been accustomed to regard as brethren; nor do we like suddenly to discard them as enemies of the truth. We cannot convince them that they are in error, no matter how clear it may be that they are; and an attempt to do so will probably only excite their anger and make them our enemies. Whatever may be the consequences to either friend or foe, the faithful minister has no right to consider them or to swerve one hair’s breadth from what he feels called upon to contend for, for fear of some unpleasant consequences.”

ELDER J. B. BOWDEN

Elder J. B. Bowden was born July 4, 1871 in Tenn. And died May 27, 1941 at his home in Terrel Wells, Texas, making his stay on earth sixty-nine years, ten months and twenty-three days.

Elder Bowden was to his last breath a firm defender of the faith. He was a ready writer, and for fifty years contributed sound and comforting articles and letters to the *Signs of the Times*, *Lone Pilgrim* and *Sovereign Grace Publications*.

In his last days he had pastored Mount Olive and Mount Zion churches in Texas.

ELDER W. L. HALL

“For years I have been under the impression that the scriptures abundantly supply us with safe counsel and every admonition to walk in the commandments of the Lord, so there should not be so much strife, hatred, malice and confusion among the children of God what little time we have to sojourn here, and if we could only be wiling to be governed by the above laid down rules of admonition whereby one brother may not hurt another brother and hold malice against them, when we are commanded to love and fellowship one another and keep the peace that our blessed Savior left with us, and commanded us to keep, I feel that Zion would prosper.”

ELDER T. C. COMPTON

Elder T. C. Compton was born in Arkansas near Hot Springs, June 18, 1873, and died in April 1940.

Although Brother Compton was isolated from the Old Baptists much of his life he stood against all free-will and al the anti-Christ doctrines; and it is because of his suffering for this firm belief that we desired to include this brief mention of his ministry. A favorite text with him was 2 John 9: “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God.”

ELDER H. H. LEFFERTS

“I desire to follow no man only in so far as that man is loyal to the word of God. We cannot afford to let lie idle for very long, our defense of cardinal principles of divine truth. When a garden is not worked in for some time, weeds are bound to grow in it. Whenever a point of doctrine has been neglected for a generation or two, all sorts of erroneous notions obtain headway among God’s people relative to that neglected point. It is not hard to find any number of our people who have never heard a sermon preached on the subject of the resurrection of the body or on the future coming of the Lord from heaven or future coming of the Lord from heaven or on eternal punishment of the wicked. This ought not so to be. No wonder our people are startled when these old doctrines are brought to the fore by some of us, no wonder they appear to many as something new. New they certainly are not! They are as old as the oracles of God, but fearfully neglected ... I desire, I hope, the good of the cause of Christ. It means far more than my own personal ease or convenience. It is never for the good of the cause to keep silent on controverted points.”

Yours in faith and hope,

ELDER FREDERICK W. KEENE

The following is taken from the preface to Elder Keene’s book now awaiting sufficient support for publication.

Elder Frederick W. Keene was born in London, England, March 28, 1856 of godly parents, Frederick B. Keene and Hephzabah Hewitt Keene.

Elder Frederick W. Keene was greatly beloved by his brethren and sisters and had a very extensive acquaintance, having traveled and preached the glorious gospel of the Son of God in several States of the Union and in parts of Canada, but his pen, in the hand of a ready writer, and one deeply gifted both experimentally and doctrinally, under the guiding hand of divine inspiration, had contributed many of the very choicest articles appearing in the foremost Old School Baptist periodicals published in the United States during the past fifty years or more, and wrote from time to time for periodicals of like precious faith published in England and other countries. Elder Keene was a student of the Bible, and prized far above all other literature. The Bible was his daily companion, and many were the sacred times when he sought the Lord to reveal to him of its precious truths. Elder Keene was gifted in prayer, and in deep fervency of spirit he poured forth the very breathing of his soul before the Lord. His preaching was beautiful, and you were soon made to feel the sacred power of his gift. He thoroughly expounded his text, and you would soon feel that the knowledge of the subject matter was a deeply experimental truth which God had revealed in his own soul. His knowledge of the scriptures was wonderful. His memory equal to his knowledge. His preaching as pertained to style and manner was much like his writings. When he had finished, there was little or nothing to be added. The impression of the first sermon I ever heard Elder Keene preach is still sweet and refreshing to my soul today, though it has been about twenty-five years ago. It overwhelmed me with the goodness and mercy of a covenant-keeping God. I don’t believe I will ever forget it to the day of my death. His memory is very precious to me. I feel that he was an able minister of the gospel of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and was set for a defense of its glorious truth. In addition to his contributions to the *Signs of the Times*,

Zion's Landmark for a number of years, the *Lone Pilgrim*, *Sovereign Grace and Pilgrim*, and others, his pamphlet entitled "Predestination" and a small well bound book, "In places of Drawing Water", – these with others have enjoyed quite a wide circulation.**

Yours in fellowship of the gospel.
J. W. Gilliam

J. B. MILLER

"While pastors and undershepherds are responsible mostly for disseminating this false doctrine in the several churches, it must primarily devolve upon the church-body for permitting such doctrine to go out from its sacred worship in the gospel of grace. Therefore, if each sovereign church body would begin at home, clean house and determine where they stand before God, who is not mocked, - sooner or later they will find or begin to see, - if their church has not become a "lifeless, breathless carcass."...God is sending His judgments over and into His several churches on earth, for sin and the practice of sin, even nations and governments are being purged, thru bloody wars everywhere, so the churches are being punished. We are all guilty before Him, and He only can purge His different braches of the Vine; Jesus is that VINE, and we hope we are the branches."

JOHN GIBSON

"It seems to me that the times of the Gentiles are about fulfilled. The apostasy of the churches the world over, not only among the Primitive Baptists, but of others who used to hold to much sound doctrine and preach Christ alone the Way, the Truth, and the Life are now groveling in the mire of worldliness, teaching philosophy, the social gospel, and a scientific religion: dethroning revelation and setting up man as evolving to a super-man for control of the world destiny. I have studied much of their teachings, and the more I am enabled to look into their theology the more I am convinced of the fact, that the more we acquire of their scientific teachings into our heads, the less we shall have of God in our hearts."

ELDER J. W. GILLIAM

"Why not ring clear on the old-fashioned doctrine of Predestination, Total Depravity, Absolute Sovereignty, Eternal Election, the Resurrection of the body etc., and not leave our people guessing what we believe? Why not incorporate such fundamental and cardinal doctrines in our Articles of faith, and then preach them before the world? Preach them everywhere. If they are true, then why not preach them? There is nothing to be lost in preaching Old Baptist doctrine....We believe in no middle of the road doctrine, and have no compromise to make with conditionalism."

ELDER GEO. O. WALKER

“When a preacher says, a certain doctrine is true and is scriptural, but is not profitable, will make trouble etc., he is trying to compromise or suppress the truth, to weave a shining web to trap the unwary. Paul did not consider a man free from the blood of all men, if he shunned to declare the whole counsel of God.”

BEN GOTHROP

“We cannot possibly follow after two. We cannot fellowship or have order with the unfruitful works of darkness, for we have passed from death unto life, and walk in newness of life, putting away the old man with his deeds and serving the true and living God.”

ELDER J. J. COLLINS

“As we think of our condition today we are constrained to believe that the same courage with which the Welsh and the Waldenses contended for their faith in their mountain recesses is found among our faith and order today.”

ELDER J. P. TINGLE

“Dear Brother – Have received copies of *Old Faith Contender together with “Get the Cursed Things Out”*, and must say I am pleased with the principles of doctrine set forth by you and others of the paper. During the past fifty years I have witnessed many painful things which have appeared among Old School or Primitive Baptists, such as dictatorial authority and a usurpation of power by associations over local churches, even to sometimes meddling and interfering with the disciplinary transactions of churches; and churches have broken down and had to move elsewhere for their peace and safety. Most of this has been caused by unsound men in doctrine who cared very little for true discipline.”

ELDER J. B. ADAMS

“The doctrine of unconditional election and unconditional, finished salvation for the Elect only, is a stumbling block to the world, and always will be. They stumble at this truth because they cannot see it; and they cannot see it because the Father has hid those things from the wise and prudent, but has revealed them to babes.”

ELDER W. L. SLUSHER

“It is not on conditions that we are saved in time, nor eternity; no, no! for it is alone the gift of God, - first, last and all the time. I do not see two salvations. There is but one, and it is an eternal one. If this is true, and it is, where is there room for a condition? there is none; and it is blasphemy to teach such heresy.”

L. E. S. STEPHENS

“It is sad to see some that used to be considered sound taking in with the followers of the Devil and turn against the few that will not come under their bossing. I can see only two doctrines set up in the Bible: God’s and that of that old Serpent called the Devil; and when he preached the words system in the garden to Even he advocated “You shall become as gods.””

P. J. POWEL

“Paul knew that the resurrection was one of the essential principles of the doctrine of God and Savior, and he defended it with great zeal, among both Jews and Gentiles. A denial of the resurrection is an unpardonable sin in the church, as it overthrows the faith and saps the foundation of the hope of the saints. – Signs of the Times, Sept 27, 1889.”

ELDER GEO. RUSTON

“What of ourselves. Is there the zeal for the truth that here once was among us? Do we search the word to see if these things be so, or are we content to take it from our favorite Elder? which seems to say the least, in this day, to be bordering upon the worship of angels. The ways of Zion mourn, few attend her solemn feasts, and who among us lay it to heart? ** Is the name of Old School Baptist trodden under the feet of men because of our inconsistent walk? ** Let us not forget that the comfort of Zion is our comfort and their joy is our joy; equally so their sorrow is our sorrow, and we are in our right place when we are asking the Lord to undertake for us. ** Are we the cause of a decline? Are we endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace? Are we in every way expressing hate for our enemies or are we praying for them? Examine, and see if ye be in the faith, for know ye not, that Christ Jesus dwells in your hearts, except ye be reprobate? ** Now perhaps you are cold and lifeless and poor and needy, be thankful if you know this and confess it before the Lord and in your distress ask Him to undertake for you.”

HERBERT SAWYER (England)

“Judgment began in the house of God, namely, the places of truth, years ago – the Blessed Spirit’s operation having been almost entirely withdrawn, chapels closed or turned to base usages, the godly removed and seldom replaced, the spirit of discernment withheld and consequently men unsent of God allowed to fill the pulpits, confusion and strife rampant in the churches or on the other hand faithful dealing kept down for sake of a false peace, and Hitlers, full of denominational pride, raised up to replace the faithful Miciahs and Jeremiahs who have been cast out of suppressed. And judgment having thus begun at the sanctuary years ago, it is now outpoured upon the ungodly in a manner as to make one wonder whether we are entering upon Matthew 24.. And where are we to look for the remedy if confession, repentance and prayer be withheld? There are time sin the history of collective bodies such as churches and nations, as well as individuals, when prayer is an abomination to the Most High, and when He is said to “laugh at calamity, and mock when their fear cometh.” ** Certainly we have a few praying souls scattered here and there, and so had God’s ancient people, but that did not prevent His judgments from coming down.”

ELDER ABNER D. WALL

“Press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us be yet found standing as it were on the walls of good old Zion, and fear not to declare the whole counsel of God. He is God and there is no God like Him. But let us be found as Elijah crying to our God to us be found as Elijah crying to our God to let it be known that He is the God of Israel. I believe so strongly that when the last trump shall sound and the angel shall stand with feet on land and see and swear that time shall be no more there will yet be found a little flock contending for the faith of God’s elect, and the order of His house.”

ELDER SETH BYNUM

“The time is near when those that are asleep in Zion are going to be awakened, yes awakened to the truth; and there will be weeping and great sorrow on us. Then we will be made to say we have sinned in Thy sight, forgive us, O Lord, and have mercy on us for our unrighteousness. Those who are awakened to God’s truth will then desire to serve that true and living God.”

ELDER J. W. McCLANAHAN

“So my dear brethren, according to the teaching of both the Old and New Testaments, there shall be a resurrection of the dead; and what would your hope be worth to you if this precious doctrine could be set aside by the Sadducees’ denial of the resurrection?”

ELDER J. G. L. HASH

“In the last few years there has been strife, contention and division, some going out from us because they were not of us. Then these same old slanderous names continue to designate between the true and the false. So we could rejoice because we are counted worthy to suffer with Him.”

ELDER J. C. SIKES

“God’s people are not rewarded (with punishment) for their sins neither in this world or the world to come. ** Jesus received the reward of sins when He received those stripes that healed us.”

ELDER ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

“The first man Adam, that is the natural man, has no eternal life in him by virtue of birth naturally, and so cannot rise from the dead by himself. The first Adam was made from earth only, but Jesus Christ, being born of the Holy Ghost, was God from heaven in the person of the man Jesus.”

This was taken from a pamphlet entitled “Faith of God’s Elect” and published by Sovereign Grace Publications from La Canada, California. This was when Elder Berry still lived in California.