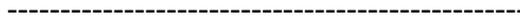




# **ZION'S LANDMARK**

**VOL. CI NOVEMBER 15, 1967 NO. 1**



**1867 – 1967**

**100th. ANNIVERSARY EDITION**

“Remove not the ancient Landmark which thy fathers have set.”



The circumstances that gave rise to the origin and establishing of the Zion's Landmark began in the years of 1827-1832, when the separation took place in North Carolina between the Old School or Primitive Baptist and the New School or Missionary Baptist. A periodical was begun about 1835 in Tarboro, N.C. and was entitled The Primitive Baptist. It was primarily supported by the Old School or Primitive Baptist of North Carolina, as well as other Baptists in the Southern States. The old issues that are yet in existence reveal the rich writings of Elders Cushing B. Hassell, Joshua Lawrence, and other Godly inspired men who were blessed to stand faithful in those years of separation in the Baptist ranks. It has been said of Elder Joshua Lawrence that he was "One of the ablest and boldest ministers of the New Testament in modern times. For more than forty years he advocated powerfully and fearlessly, both from pulpit and press, liberty of conscience, the specialty, spirituality and efficacy of God's salvation, and the unscripturalness and corruption of all the money-based religious institutions of the nineteenth century, notwithstanding storms of slander and vituperation, and threats against life, and during the latter part of his life he suffered physically debility and suffering." He died in 1843.



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The Primitive Baptist was begun about 1835, and was published by Mr. George Howard, in the Office of the Tarbourough Free Press. It was edited by Elder Mark Bennett for a number of years. In 1847, the Kehukee Association, feeling a keen interest in the continuation of this periodical, passed a resolution of encouragement in regard to this paper, and Elder Burwell Temple of the Little River Association agreed to assume the editorial control, and removed the place of publication to his residence at Raleigh, N.C. Elder Temple resided in a small community in eastern Wake County, known as Eagle Rock. Here, this paper was published by Mr. N.W. Poole. The paper continued until the Civil War, but no issues of this periodical have been seen following the war. We are told that the ravages of the war contributed to the cessation of this publication.

The ending of the publishing of this periodical left the Primitive or Old School Baptists in North Carolina and other areas without any means of Journal contact. Elder L. I. Bodenheimer, a minister of the Mayo Association, began visiting in the eastern part of North Carolina after the Civil War and in 1867, he was called to preach the introductory sermon of the Kehukee Association. This fact is indicative of his close association with Elder C.B. Hassell, who was the moderator of this association. Elder Hassell and other devout men of God in that area had passed through the painful division of 1827-1832. It was in 1867 that Elder P. D. Gold, with his family, moved to Scotland Neck, N.C., and he was baptized by Elder C. B. Hassell at Kehukee Church nearby, in 1870. Elder Bodenheimer also visited the brethren that year and in years following.

The feeling of necessity of a paper or periodical for the benefit of the members, churches and associations with the strong encouragement of his brethren, constrained Elder Bodenheimer in July, 1866, to send forth his prospectus to ascertain if enough people would subscribe to justify him to commence the publication of the Landmark. The results from his prospectus were favorable, and on November 15th, 1867, he commenced the publication of Zion's Landmark, which was a paper printed in tabloid form, (newspaper form) eight pages with four columns to the page, at two dollars per year. The paper continued in this form until 1886, when Elder Gold changed it to its present form. From the time that the paper began, November 15, 1867, and during the time of Elder Bodenheimer's editorship, the Landmark was published in Wilson, and shortly thereafter in Tarboro, N.C., by Elder C. S. McDaniel, who conducted a printing establishment in Tarboro. Elder McDaniel suffered a stroke and was unable to continue the publication.

On April 15th, 1871, the Landmark was again removed to Wilson, and was published by Col. R. W. Singletary, editor and proprietor of the Plain Dealer. We mention all of this to show the route of the paper in the early days was not a smooth, or easy one. Elder Bodenheimer, in writing of his experience with the paper said: "We have secured the services of Elder P. D. Gold of Wilson, N. C., as Associate Editor. Therefore, instead of letting our paper "Go to the wall" as some of our enemies have prophesied, we expect and hope to make the Landmark a success as a medium of correspondence and consolation to the Church of God and the weary pilgrims. This important object was the first great cause that moved us to action in originating the Landmark at first, and shall be our specific purpose in continuing the publication of it," etc.

Elder P. D. Gold became the first associate editor of the paper, on April 15, 1871, and on February 1, 1872, he used a gift of \$500.00, bequeathed to him by a friend, to acquire the sole, ownership of the paper. Elder Bodenheimer made due acknowledgement of the change of ownership in that number while giving his reasons that Elder Gold would make an acceptable Editor. In his original way, he tells the readers of the paper that every Primitive Baptist should subscribe for the paper and pay for it, because if they tried, they could save enough from unnecessary expenditures, frivolities and luxuries, to discharge that obligation. We quote an expression of his in this regard: "If you must spend your money for that which is not bread, or in other words, for foolishness, take one-fourth of it and lay it up until you get two dollars and then send it to Elder Gold, with an order to send you or someone else the

Landmark. But some are ready to say, 'A man should not receive money for any religious service.' To this we reply, that every business should be self-sustaining. If a man plows all the while, preaches or edits a paper all the while, these vocations must support him or he will starve. If this is not true, please show me how you can establish it otherwise."

Elder Gold, in writing his experience, said, "It was in 1871, contrary to any and all, my expectations, or thought, that I was requested to move to Wilson where my room has been ever since. A contract had been made for me to live elsewhere and teach school. This contract was cancelled by mutual consent. Soon after moving to Wilson, Elder Bodenheimer, who was then editor of this paper, requested me to become associate editor, and pretty soon it came into my hand. All of this was unforeseen by me, unthought of and unsought, but as the way was opened, I found myself willing, if enabled of the Lord, to serve in this way. Though feeling incompetent, yet it seems impressed on me to thus serve, and if it is profitable to the household of faith that is reward enough for me."

When Col. R. D. Singletary ceased publishing the Landmark it was published by Mr. Josephus Daniels in the 1880's and in the office of the Daily Advance in Wilson, N. C. Mr. Daniels who was secretary of the Navy during the two terms of President Woodrow Wilson and later was appointed Ambassador to Mexico, said of Elder Gold, "He was a master of logic, profoundly versed in the Scriptures and had a well-rounded education. In addition to preaching, he edited the official paper of his church, Zion's Landmark, the motto of which was, 'Remove not the ancient landmarks which the fathers have set.' I had the advantage of intimate association with Elder Gold, having the contract to print his paper, which appeared semi-monthly. He had no publication office, doing his writing at home, and bringing his copy to the Advance office and occupying a desk in my office when he was reading and proofing or superintending the make-up. He wrote with convincing clearness and was widely regarded as the great expositor of Primitive Baptist doctrine. His paper had a large circulation, going to the elect in every State in the union. He was in great demand as a preacher and visited many states on preaching tours. He was not only an able preacher and gifted writer, but a man of fine business judgment and prospered financially, sending all his sons to college. One of his sons, John D. Gold, became associated with his father after Mr. Gold had his own printing establishment, and the son established the Wilson Times, which won a high position as a daily, as the town expanded. Two other sons, P. D. Gold, Jr., and Charles M. Gold, were the leaders in the establishment of the Jefferson Standard Life Insurance Company, which has become one of the strongest life insurance companies in the south. Elder Gold had real wisdom and his counsel was sought in civic as well as religious matters."

Sometime in the latter 1880's, Elder Gold gradually grew into the printing and publishing business, and established what was known as the "Landmark Steam Printing House." He took over the printing of his own paper and also did job printing for the Baptists, such as printing their associational minutes, books, pamphlets, etc. He also received job printing for the general public. A considerable printing business developed and was incorporated in 1902 as the P. D. Gold Publishing Company. At his death in 1920, the business was carried on for the ensuing years by his son, John D. Gold, who later established the Wilson Daily Times, a daily publication that has served the City of Wilson and surrounding area for a number of years. It was during the time of ownership and publishing supervision of Mr. John D. Gold, that Elder P. G. Lester was named Editor, along with, Elder O. J. Denny and prior to the death of Mr. John D. Gold, in 1954, Elder T. F. Adams was named Editor. In 1953 Elder T. F. Adams purchased the paper from the Wilson Daily Times (previously known as the P. D. Gold Publishing Company) and is the current owner and editor.

In tenure of Editorship, Elder Gold served forty-eight years, almost one-half of the entire duration of the life of the Landmark It has been said of him that he was the oldest, continuously active Editor ever among our people. The next in length of time of service was Elder O. J. Denny with a period of twenty-

two years and Elder Adams has served for sixteen years. Elder Lester edited the paper almost nine years, and Elder Bodenheimer, the founder, almost five years.

Associate Editors who have served in behalf of the Zion's Landmark in the nineteenth Century were as follows: (This list does not include those five associate editors who later became Editors) Sister R. Anna Phillips, corresponding Editress, Macon, Ga. ; Twentieth Century: Elders J.D. Cockran, Hartsville, Va., J. C. Hurst (M.D.), Roanoke, Va., M. L. Gilbert, Dade City, Fla., C. B. Hall (D. D. S.), Hillsboro, N.C., C. F. Denny, Wilson, N.C., (Elder C. F. Denny was the father of Frank W. Denny, one of our current publishers), S. B. Denny, Wilson, N.C., Joshua T. Rowe, Baltimore, Md., Joel B. Marshall, Meadows of Dan, Va., B. S. Cowin, Williamston, N.C., E. L. Cobb, Wilson, N.C., T. R. Crawford, Cairo, Ga., R. W. Gurganus, Jacksonville, N.C., W. E. Turner, Wilson, N.C., W. C. King, Greensboro, N.C., and H. O. Nash, Atlanta, Ga.

In closing this introductory article, it is the desire, hope and prayer of its Editors, as well as all those who desire the well-being of the Landmark, that the same Father of Eternal Grace, Who established it one hundred years ago, continue to keep it within the bounds and sphere of its ancient motto, "Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set." Proverbs 22:28. – J. M. Mewborn



We wish to acknowledge the following sources of information as giving assistance in the preparation of this number of Zion's Landmark, viz:

Zion's Landmark, Vols. XXIV, LIII, LXI, and LXXXV.

History of the Church of God, Hassell

Biographical History of Primitive or Old School Baptist Ministers of the United States, Pittman

History of Toisnot Baptist Church (Courtesy of Sister Nettie R. Benson, Fremont, N. C.)

Tar Heel Editor, Daniels.

The Editors



## **A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF ELDER BODENHEIMER,**

THE ORIGINATOR OF Zion's LANDMARK

Elder L. I. Bodenheimer (M.D.) was born April 6, 1831, in Stokes (now Forsyth) County, N.C., about six miles east of Salem – now Winston-Salem – and was reared on a farm. He married Miss Nancy Beeson of High Point, N.C., August 5, 1858, where he and his family lived until 1867.

He united with the Primitive Baptist Church in his twenty-third year – 1854 and soon thereafter, he began to preach. He first established Zion's Landmark in 1867 at Salem and sometime after that he

edited it in High Point. In 1871, Elder P. D. Gold became an Associate Editor with him on this paper and in 1872, Elder Gold purchased the Landmark, and continued its publication. In later years, Elder Bodenheimer published another paper, The Naked Truth, but was unable to devote the necessary time to make it a success, so he discontinued the paper and devoted his time to the practice of medicine and preaching the gospel as long as he was strong enough. He also published an interesting account of his experience and call to the ministry.

It is said that nature had marked him well because his dress, mannerisms and general appearances caused him to be identified as an Old School Baptist and he would be singled out in any crowd as a man of extraordinary parts. His association with people, both as a minister and a physician brought him into contact with people in all walks of life. He made a strong impression on all by his marked individuality and wonderful resources of humor and narrations.

Elder Bodenheimer seemed to have a wandering mind for he moved forty-one times during his married life. He was so discontented and unstable, that he was never was a success in business, and was therefore, a poor financier. But in the doctrine of salvation by grace he was uncompromising and inflexible. He contended earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints with great boldness and power; and by many was considered the ablest man of his day in the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God.

In his early days, he had little advantage of book learning and only attended school three months, it is said, in his boyhood days; but later he voluntarily applied himself well and became an apt scholar; he then studied medicine, attended medical college and obtained a diploma. Amid all the changes of life he practiced medicine, preached and contended for the truth as it is in Jesus Christ.

Elder Bodenheimer was one of the most noted men in the State of North Carolina for ready wit and quick answers. The people in his town would speak to him just to hear his verbal retaliation and often quoted his witty sayings. He traveled many miles with his cane in hand. The writer, while a child playing by the roadside, has often seen him passing by, going to and fro from his meetings. I have known him from childhood. I was baptized by him and he was one of the ministers that composed the presbytery that ordained me to the work of the ministry. His mind was extraordinary and his health was good.

But now, the great solemnity, I am called on to chronicle or tell the history of the death of this dear old man. He died at High Point, N.C., on the 17th day of September, 1900, at the age of sixty-nine years, five months and eleven days. He was a minister for fifty years and a physician for thirty-five years, pursuing both with remarkable energy and accomplishments. He was not only well known in his own state, but was known and loved by many in the adjoining states and will be much missed. I have seen his face many times while he was preaching so beautifully and experimentally; when to me, it looked like the face of an angel.

Brother Bodenheimer was in declining health little more than eight months. He was first confined for three months, then was up and able to go for two months, and preached many times, though feeble all the time. His last sermon was preached at Abbotts Creek, the first Sunday in July, 1900. I visited him many times during his last sickness, but never heard him complain against or of His providence, but he would complain of man. I had a talk with him not long before his death. He had seemed to have a good hope of getting well until a short time before he died, when he told me that the Lord would take him home soon. He said, "I am a great sinner, but Jesus is a great Savior." He died, believing the doctrine that he had preached for so many years, holding me by the hand, and while tears were running down his pale cheeks, he said, "I have always felt that you are my son in the gospel, and have prayed that as the mantle fell from Elijah on Elisha that my mantle may fall upon you; (See I Kings 19:19) and what is said by man does not change the purpose of God but having this seal: "The Lord knoweth them that

are His.” So we believe that he had the seal of the Holy Spirit and has fallen asleep in the arms of Jesus, there to sleep that blessed sleep from which none ever wake to weep.

Now, dear bereaved companion and children, come and consider the goodness of the Lord. Your husband and father, as he said, has left his earthly family and has gone to join the heavenly. O may the Lord remember all of you, who were so devoted to your dear father, sitting by him day and night with anxious hearts, doing all that was in your power! His dear body went down in weakness, but it will be raised in power, and fashioned like the glorious body of Jesus. Oh! may you all meet him in heaven where parting will be no more.

The dear old Elder leaves a wife and six children to mourn their loss. He had great love for his children and they for him. Oh! may the people of God pray for his three sons and three daughters, as well as for his bereaved companion, who is very weak and feeble.

He will be missed much by his family and the church. We have heard him preach much and by him often been richly fed. His children request the friendship of the Primitive Baptists and say they want them to visit them in their homes as they did in their Father’s lifetime. They return thanks to all their many friends for the kindnesses shown to them in their sore distress. May we all remember the family for their father’s sake and may the Lord lead them with His own hand and bless them with every need!

P. W. Willard



Deep River, N. C.

I have been requested by his family to add what I feel inclined to, to Brother Bodenheimer’s obituary.

Elder Bodenheimer was one of the most original thinkers and of the readiest repartee, within my knowledge. He was always ready to give an answer. He could answer a fool according to his folly, and exempt himself from the charge of being at all like that fool. His argumentative power in scripture was wonderful and his illustrations of his subjects were clear. We have often regretted that he did not attend more to preaching or wait more constantly on his preaching gift. Great gifts in the scriptures should be more appreciated by our people and their bearers or benefactors should be more responsive and apprehensive of the temporal needs of these great gifts, for sometimes these needs are quite obvious. How much better it would be if our brethren and friends would minister more freely to such men. Paul said: “If the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things”. Rom. 15:27.

Elder Williard and I served at his funeral. There were thousands of people present showing the high esteem in which he was held by his neighbors and acquaintances. We miss such gifts. May the Lord remember us and send laborers into His vineyard. Elder Bodenheimer’s family resides in High Point. They are poor in this world’s goods, but they love the memory of their father and I hope they love the doctrine he preached. A friend told me the last sermon he heard Elder Bodenheimer preach, he said he would like, if it could be, that his natural life had been more consistent with good behavior, but he said his life in Christ Jesus was without fault. He died affirming the truth of what he had preached for many years. He preached what a proud, vain and wicked world hates, but that which honors Jesus; and if, when one comes to die, his last hours and moments are happy in that blessed faith, shall one not count it all joy if he is enabled by grace to preach such a doctrine?

(Elder) P. D. Gold

## **ELDER PLEASANT DANIEL GOLD**

Elder Pleasant Daniel Gold, son of Milton Gold and his wife, Martha Fortune, was born on March 25, 1833, in Rutherford (now Cleveland) County, and died on June 7, 1920, near Mebane. He grew up on a farm near Shelby and received a small amount of schooling which he improved by assiduous reading in the evenings by the light of pine-knots. At the age of twenty he left home without the parental blessing and entered school at Shelby after borrowing sufficient money to pay for his clothing, board, tuition and books. After a year of study he began to read law in the office of A. W. Burton, Esquire, with whom he practiced after obtaining his law license. He appears to have taught in the public schools prior to this date. The profession of a lawyer became so distasteful to him after two years that he entered Furman University at Greenville, South Carolina, and studied for two years before entering the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. The coming of the Civil War forced him to abandon college life and it left him with a debt covered by personal notes for over \$2,000.00 that he had spent on his education. He had been ordained to the ministry in the Missionary Baptist Church and was serving as a Chaplain by the time of the evacuation of Fredericksburg, when he was seized by one of the prevalent fevers. When able to travel again, he returned to North Carolina and soon accepted the pastorate of the New School Baptist Church, at Goldsboro, N.C.

In 1863, he married Julia Pipkin, daughter of Willis Pipkin of Lenoir County. She was born on July 29, 1840, and died on March 22, 1913. Her father had been a man of some means and had educated her at the Chowan Baptist College in Murfreesboro. Nine children were born to this union. Cora Gold died in infancy; Paul Gold died in infancy; John Daniel Gold was born on October 24, 1867; Mary Virginia Gold was born on June 8, 1870, and married Richard Winstead and died on June 17, 1943. Joseph Milton Gold was born on February 4, 1872; Charles Willis Gold was born on April 16, 1874 and died October 10, 1931; Pleasant Daniel Gold, II, was born on May 15, 1876; Julia Ruth Gold was born on October 20, 1883, and married Dr. William Spicer; and Elizabeth Bynum Gold was born on July 15, 1886, she married Gilbert Clark. Elder Gold later in life married Mrs. Eugenia Burton of Mebane, N.C. who survived him at his death.

At the end of the war Elder Gold took his family to Scotland Neck where he first became acquainted with the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists in 1867 and was baptized by Elder C. B. Hassell at Kehukee Church in 1870, into their faith. Elder Gold was baptized, ordained and preached the same day. Dating about 1865, he said a deep conviction seized him, confronting him with a sinful nature and therefore a sinful life. The justice of God in his condemnation, showing him he had and continually did sin in Adam, and therefore death passed upon him in Adam's disobedience, and it so overwhelmed him in confusion that he despaired of Mercy and felt he was lost. This wrought in him an abiding consciousness of the sinfulness of man. In this view he saw and felt the justice of God in his condemnation. In that dark hour the Lord Jesus, the Savior of sinners, appeared as his righteousness, his Savior, fully justifying him with the words, sounding out to him as if spoken aloud: "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" Rom. 8:32. This caused a great change in his views and conduct. From that time he preached Christ Jesus as the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

The doctrine of the eternal predestination of God, appointing before hand what He purposed should come to pass, was made clear to him and the electing love Of God choosing beforehand, and without regard to man's works, the people he loved in Christ Jesus, before the world began, and giving them grace in Him. He sought for a people who loved and believed that doctrine, discarding all free agency of man and rejecting all self-appointed means and measures of man's devising. This people he found, known as the Old School or Primitive Baptist, he was received among and baptized by Elder C. B. Hassell at old Kehukee Church, since such time he has been preaching among them, desiring to know

nothing among men but Jesus Christ and Him Crucified. Quoting from his experience, “It was on Saturday before the second Sunday in March, 1870, at Old Kehukee Church, that I went and told them but little, for I have never been able to express my travail in full. They received me into that church, and on the next day Elder C. B. Hassell, a most precious brother to me, baptized me. It was in the same stream of water and the same place that I had baptized many when a Missionary Baptist, and many of them were present to behold this stoop. The time had been when this would have been an intolerable disgrace. But that day it appeared to me that I was a dead man, so quiet and peaceful and so restful – Glory was everywhere and peace and love. It was on that day that the words that had been burdening my mind so long, “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” II Cor. 6:17-18, were used by me as a text. What I was saying, did not seem to me to be preaching but it was the sweetest ease and relief as the long pent-up matter was emptied and I felt so refreshed. That text has never since burdened my mind. On August 25, 1871, the conference of the members of the Toisnot Baptist Church in Wilson County voted unanimously to call him to fill their vacant pastorate. He accepted this call on August 27th, and subsequently made his permanent home in the town of Wilson. On January 25, 1879, he brought his membership into the Toisnot Church upon a letter of dismissal from the Kehukee Church in Halifax County.

During his lifetime, he was the pastor of the following Old School or Primitive Baptist Church, to-wit: Kehukee, Tarboro, Toisnot (Wilson), Goldsboro, Roxboro, Sandy Bottom, Durham and Falls of Tar River. He was also Moderator of the Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association of which he helped to organize, in 1876, at Upper Black Creek Church in Wilson County, N.C.

On November 15, 1867, Elder L. I. Bodenheimer began editing and publishing of Zion’s Landmark, which was destined to become an influential Primitive Baptist publication. A gift of \$500.00 by Mrs. Robert Bynum enabled him to buy out Elder Bodenheimer in 1871, and to continue this work alone. A considerable printing business developed and was incorporated in 1902, as the P. D. Gold Publishing Co. He wrote a vast amount of prose for his magazine and newspaper, but his only book was a slender treatise entitled: “The Book of Joshua.” His Christian generosity and sincere interest in the affairs of the community naturally raised him to a high place in the public esteem, and he served as a trustee of the University of North Carolina and held other positions of importance, although his heart and hands were devoted chiefly to his labors in the ministry.

As a minister, he was studious and was sound in doctrine and practice. He had an agreeable address and pleasing manner and he wielded a strong influence among his brethren. Elder Gold was always fond of reading from his youth, and possessing a strong, logical mind, he was benefitted by his close study, and his opinions have been clear and well defined. His principles were founded on his religion and exemplified in his daily life. He traveled and preached extensively among the Old School or Primitive Baptists of the United States and Canada. During his pastorate of the Toisnot Baptist Church (Wilson), it prospered and rendered great influence over the social and economic life of the town of Wilson, as well as the county of Wilson and the adjoining areas.

Elder Gold was loved and admired by those who love the truth that he so ably preached and defended, and his integrity, his capability, humility and respect of all who knew him, for few are endowed with the qualifications he possessed.



## **ELDER POSY GREEN LESTER**

Elder P. G. Lester was born March 12th, 1850, about five miles west of Floyd Court House in Floyd County, Virginia. He had five brothers and four sisters.

Elder Lester was educated in the common schools. He was received into the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church at White Oak Grove on Saturday before the second Sunday in June, 1873, and began to exercise in the ministry on Saturday before the second Sunday in December of the same year. He was ordained a minister on Saturday before the second Sunday in October, 1876.

In 1883 he became an Associate Editor of Zion's Landmark with Elder P. D. Gold as editor and at the death of Elder P. D. Gold in June, 1920, Elder Lester succeeded him as editor. He traveled and preached rather extensively. The area he visited included twenty-one of the states in the United States and Ontario, Canada, traveling as much as thirteen thousand miles in a year. He served churches in Kentucky several years.

In 1888 without any solicitation and in his absence, he was nominated by the Democratic party to represent the Fifth District of Virginia in the United States Congress. There he served during the fifty-first and fifty-second Congresses. He served churches in Washington and surrounding territory also, while in Congress. He declined the third nomination to the congress in order to retire to more active service of the churches, in his native county and town. Elder Lester served as clerk and then as moderator of the New River District Primitive Baptist Association. For twenty years he served as president of the Peoples Bank of Floyd County, Va.

On June 22, 1898, he married Miss Emmette Harris of Reidsville, N. C., and to this union were born three children. He was called to serve the church at Roanoke, Va., as pastor and moved there in August, 1921, serving until his death. Elder Lester died at his home in Roanoke on February 9th, 1929, at the age of seventy-eight years, nine months and twenty-seven days.

As Elder Lester was the former moderator of the New River District Primitive Baptist Association, I deem it prudent that we write this sketch of our estimable brother, although our words are inadequate to express our high estimate of him.

His mother, Mary Amanda Simmons Lester, of whom he often spoke, taught him when a child, to shun rude company and to avoid the use of vain language. She heeded the words of Solomon who said, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it". Abraham trained up his children, and those born in his house, in the way of the Lord, in the paths of justice and judgment; which are the ways in which they should go, and which will be to their profit and advantage." See Gen. 18:19. In this he obeyed his mother and grew morally upright, commanding the esteem of his fellow-man.

The moderate estate of Elder Lester's parents, together with the ravages of the Civil War were influential factors that limited his opportunities in early life, which restricted his success to a persistent application of his personal energies to overcome the problems of life which confronted him. The inherent qualities which brought him into the literal sphere of life which he occupied and maintained, he attributed to the heritage from the life and character of his mother, whose maiden name was Simmons and daughter of Elder Thomas W. Simmons. His early avocation was teaching vocal music and in the literary schools.

I first met him in September, 1872, at an Association. He kept near and listened to the conversation of Elders Thomas Dickens, Amos Dickerson, John C. Hall and Isaac Webb. The interest he manifested in these men of God, begat love and fellowship in me for him, though neither of us were members of the

church then. In June, 1873, he left me in the cold world and joined the church at White Oak Grove, and in Decernher of the same year, he began to preach in the demonstration of the Spirit and with power. The old Elders said of him, "He was a God send and strength given the church in due time." They ordained him in October, 1876, and he began to travel extensively, as stated above. He was heartily received, loved and approved of among the Primitive Baptists every where he went. He was well established in the faith, firm in the doctrine of God our Savior, zealous in maintaining good works, an earnest laborer for peace and an able writer.

As a statesman he was the most efficient member of Congress that we ever sent from the Fifth District of Virginia. For that reason our people would have continued to hold him in office, but he preferred Jerusalem, his chief joy. As before stated he became Associate Editor of Zion's Landmark in 1883 and when Elder Gold passed, he became Editor of the Landmark, in which he has written many comforting Editorials to the people of God all over the United States.

On June 22nd, 1898, he became, the worthy husband of Sister Harris, the daughter of Elder J. M. Harris. When he would speak of his wife, he called her "Sister Lester." The dear sister did so much appreciate his kind loving companionship, his counsel and his great care for his family. Feeling that God had blessed them with the two sons and one daughter, he must therefore give unto them wise counsel after a Godly manner, feeling responsible unto God for this moral training. He hath done what he could, with promise that they will not depart from it.

In 1883 he and Elder Durand compiled and published a very acceptable, sound Hymn and Tune Book, now extensively in use among our people in many sections of the country.

Too much cannot be said in truth of Elder P. G. Lester for he was a man of God. I dearly loved him. He came from God and God hath taken him away. Blessed be God for the wonderful gift.

D. Smith Webb Hillsville, Virginia



## **ELDER OLIVER JOEL DENNY**

Elder O. J. Denny was born in Surry County, N. C., on November 30, 1871, the son of the late Elder Gabriel and Delfina Stone Denny. He spent his early life in his home county where he was educated in the Public Schools and Oak Ridge Military Institute. After teaching several years, he entered business in Pilot Mountain, N. C. and in 1904, he moved to Greensboro and then to Charlotte, where he was associated with the Singer Sewing Machine Company as manager.

He was associated with the Wachovia Bank and Trust Company of Winston Salem, N. C., thirty-five years. He held the position of cashier for twenty-seven years in this bank.

Elder Denny was first married in May, 1896, to Minerva Ellen Pell, and to this union were born fifteen children: five daughters and five sons survive. In January, 1925, he was married to Miss Bessie Boaz who recently passed away. (1967)

He united with Cedar Hill Primitive Baptist Church in Surry County in 1893 and was ordained to the Gospel Ministry in 1904 by the Church at Pilot Mountain, N.C. Elder Denny served Reidsville Primitive Baptist Church thirty-five years and his home Church, Winston-Salem on Broad Street Primitive Baptist Church, twenty-five years. He also had the pastorate of Greensboro Primitive Church,

(Tate Street), McCrays, Deep Creek, Pine, Gilliams and Lawyer Springs during his long service in the ministry. When Elder P. G. Lester was deceased in February, 1929, Elder Denny became editor of Zion's Landmark, the following month, March 15, 1929. He ably served his churches and edited the paper until his death on March 17, 1951, or near that time, but in his later days his health failed him and it was necessary for him to call to his assistance some younger brethren of the ministry.

Elder Denny was an ensample to the flock for faithfulness and perseverance. After completing his education, he taught in the local schools for many years. He was associated with Wachovia Bank and Trust Company in Winston-Salem thirty-five years. Be this means, he provided an honorable living for himself and his family.

The Apostle Paul labored with his own hands that he might not be chargeable to the church. He said: "Neither did we eat any man's bread for naught: but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you: not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an example unto you to follow us." II Thess. 3:8.

Elder Denny was blessed to amply provide the necessities of life for those of his own household; yet the cause of Christ and His kingdom was his primary concern, as was observed by all lovers of the truth who were associated with him and especially the members of the churches he served, his brethren in the ministry, and the readers of Zion's Landmark, of which he was Editor nearly twenty years. He will be remembered many years to come by the able comments and editorials submitted through its columns. Preaching the gospel to the thirsty, poor, and hungry of God's kingdom, and the great love of God was the moving cause which prompted him, to leave his natural business when His Master called. He followed the injunction of his Master, "Go without script". It can be truly said that when the time came to depart this life he lacked nothing. We are told that "By their fruits ye shall know them".

The life and labor of our Father in Israel, Elder O. J. Denny, was an example of faithfulness and untiring effort in the vineyard of our God. We speak of Him as a "Father" because we believe he is one of the few who qualify. Paul said, "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many Fathers." I Cor. 4:15.

T. F. Adams



We are printing the following Editorial entitle "EDITORSHIP," which is one of Elder Lester's first editorials after he became Editor of the Landmark in 1920, following the death of Elder P. D. Gold, former editor of Zion's Landmark. Zion's Landmark today shares the same sentiments as expressed by our esteemed former Editor on July 15th, 1920. – T. F. Adams.



## **EDITORSHIP**

In the very first issue of the Landmark for 1883, my name first appeared in association with Elder Gold as its Editor. In all these 37 years, I have never felt to be sufficient for the association and contribution reasonably to be expected and it seems to me now that I have not attained unto that efficiency which

the readers of the paper have had the right to expect and demand. The efficient qualities of Elder Gold as an editor during the active service of his life precluded all demands upon me, and even since I have in a small way been acting in some respects as editor, the able management has measured up to such a standard of proficiency as to render my services merely normal. And now in the removing of Elder Gold's name from its long, accustomed place as editor leaves my name merely as a reminder rather than a functional assignment. However, I assume it will remain as such until such time as will enable the management to formulate permanent arrangements. While Elder Gold was a good editor, he had, for years, a man for publisher who himself is a practical editor and publisher in a secular line, and having been familiar both literally and spiritually, I trust with the subject matter entering into the make-up of the Landmark for these years, there exists no apparent reason why the paper should not continue.

We may wonder so to speak – who will take Elder Gold's place. There is no one to fill his place, there is no one who can do it. He did that himself. He served his day and generation, and his successor will have to do likewise. Every man serves in his day according to its demands and we have the promise that our strength shall be as our days. See Deut. 33:25.

The editing and publishing of a paper is every part of that upon which its life and success depends. As to the Landmark, it is largely with its readers as to whether it lives long, or dies soon. Its columns are open to each and every one of them, not only to read, but to write. All the while all lovers of gospel truth have been invited to write for it, "if impressed." I have no doubt but that many of its readers have felt, while reading the testimony of others, that they would love to bear witness to the same blessed truth. Others, no doubt, have written and instead of submitting their thoughts to the judgment of the editor, have passed judgment themselves and respected. If those impressed to do so would submit communications from the various communities it would quicken the solicitude, enlarge the general interest, increase the value of the paper to its readers, and thus maintain it, what it is designed and desired to be – A family paper for mutual correspondence and edification.

Are there any who have passed through any seasons of peculiarly impressive experiences? If so, let them write it out and let the brethren and friends have the benefit of it, and let them file it away that their children may read it and perhaps repose in their memory when they have long since passed away, and are no more, except by memory.

Elder Gold's writings have been full of variety of subject matter and exceedingly interesting and for all the active years of his life he measured up to the full stature of a ready writer, and I feel that we have indulged ourselves too much in this assurance and did not contribute to his support and comfort the supply of reading matter that might have been done.

I have no doubt but that the names of those who kindly furnish contributions for the paper are looked for with fond anticipation and the same would no doubt be true of others if they would write. If you feel that you have nothing to say just pencil down how you feel and what you think about it. That sometimes makes the most interesting matter for strength.

Elder Peter Corn on one occasion said, "I am not going to try to preach, but will just talk a little and his talk was so good and so interesting, I told him I did not want him to even try to preach again, but 'just talk a little'." If one has a vision let him declare it, a dream let him tell it, if a revelation let him speak of it and if a word of exhortation let him say on or tell it.

The Landmark in a large and essential sense, belongs to its subscribers, and if one has a thought in harmony with its expressed character and purpose, he has the right and privilege to speak upon its pages. In character and manner of expression, the Landmark is in harmony with its environment, which gives it an aspect peculiar to its main sphere of circulation, and a usefulness compatible with the

interest of its readers. We feel that in the spirit of the gospel, its subject matter is in accord with Primitive Baptist thought everywhere among our people.

Its circulation is largely among the farming class of our people, and the price of all farm products are such as to make it easier than ever before to pay the subscription price, even at the present advanced rate.

The advertisements have been eliminated at the insistence of many of its readers, therefore it is necessary that this loss be repleted by an increased circulation and just a little concerted action on the part of Brethren and Friends will easily maintain an increased circulation as well as an increased interest and edification.

Memorial contributions to the memory of our departed Editor might be made by those able to do so and these contributions used to send the paper into the homes of many who loved him and would love to read the paper but are not financially able to subscribe it. Think upon these things and let brotherly love continue; See Hebrews 13:1

P. G. Lester



## **GOD LEADS**

“And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep His commandments or no.” Deut. 8:2. The above are the words of Moses which he spake to the children of Israel. Moses led them from the Egyptian bondage, through the Red Sea into the wilderness where they journeyed forty years. They endured many hardships. They were brought into a land where there were no seed, no figs, no vines, no pomegranates: neither was there any water to drink. See Numbers 20:5. They spoke against God and against Moses.

Naturally speaking it seemed that the Lord would have supplied them with food and drink, but not so, for He said: by the mouth of the Prophet, Isaiah: “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.”

God first proves and humbles His people by sending afflictions on them as He did the Israelites. He, God, sent fiery serpents among them and they bit the people “And much people of Israel died.” See Num. 21:6. This humbled them. They came to Moses and said, “We have sinned for we have spoken against the Lord, and against thee; pray unto the Lord that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people.” Note: When they were humbled and acknowledged their sins and transgressions, the Lord through Moses provided a serpent of brass on a pole and when a man who was bitten by a serpent beheld the serpent of brass, he lived; and the Lord fed them with manna from heaven and He gave them water to drink. Afflictions cause us to see our faults, to see our needs and they humble and keep us at the feet of Jesus.

It would require many pages to record all of my experiences relative to the actual living through of my conviction of sin, the knowledge of unworthiness, the great mercy bestowed on me in the forgiveness of sin and the glorious deliverance, revelations and assurances of His promises now and in eternity. I

will only say that from the time that I felt the convicting power of God, because of my sins and transgressions and received pardon and peace through Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, I have been enabled to look back and remember that God has been so wonderful to me in bringing me through many trials as well as joys during this period of years. "Thou shalt remember all the way which the lord led thee." Numbers 8:22.

The Lord favored me with a very dear, and devoted companion, one whom the Lord has taught in the school of grace and has given her wisdom to discern between good and evil – law and gospel, fitting her for the services she renders in the publication of Zion's Landmark. Through the fifty years (fifty-one to be exact) that we have been joined together, our sorrows and joys have been shared together. The Lord has blessed us with four dutiful and devoted boys and two girls who are now young men and women with little families which are very dear to us, and I feel to say our God has blessed them with good companions. We also reared an orphaned niece and cousin from little girls who are very dear and we love their companions and their six children, very devotedly. They are all honest and trustworthy in their dealings, we feel safe in saying. For these great blessings we acknowledge the hand of God. My time during the childhood of our children, was largely taken by my church duties, funerals and my life as a business man for the support of our family.

I have served from four to six churches regularly since shortly after I was ordained the second Sunday in September, 1927. This time has been mixed with both joy and sorrow. I have enjoyed great love and fellowship from the brethren, sisters and friends of each congregation and I have many times been saddened by sickness and many deaths from among our dear saints – both of the membership and congregation. But for the felt presence of the God of mercy, many of these deaths would have been almost unbearable. The God in whom I trust is a God of mercy and it is in mercy that many of His saints are taken by death, from this world of suffering, sin and sorrow.

This being the end of the centennial year of the publication of Zion's Landmark, we think it appropriate that we give our readers a short sketch of how we became associated with this publication. In the year 1946, Elder R. Lester Dodson, editor of The Signs of The Times, contacted me and requested that I accept an associate Editorship on the staff of The Signs of The Times. This came as a surprise to me, but after deep consideration by my wife and me, I decided to comply with his request, yet I was keenly aware of my incompetence to serve in such a sacred capacity. However, shortly after I had agreed to conform to Elder Dodson's proposition, I received a letter from Elder O. J. Denny, the Editor of Zion's Landmark at that time, requesting me to become an associate Editor with him on Zion's Landmark.

While Elder Denny was the editor, the owner who was Mr. John D. Gold, (the son of the deceased and precious former editor, Elder P. D. Gold, who had so largely contributed to the success of the Landmark), wrote me, insisting that I become associate editor with Elder Denny who was in his declining years. I was now at a loss to know what to do. If I filled my obligation and promise to Elder Dodson, who first made this request of me and I had given an affirmative reply, I could not go with the Landmark for my obligation and promise to Elder Dodson was binding. I loved the SIGNS, but The Landmark had all my life been a family paper. My parents and my wife's parents had loved, subscribed and read it as long as we could remember. We wrestled with the thought, How can I honorably withdraw my promise with Elder Dodson? Will I be able to reconcile the matter with Elder Dodson and will he understand? I had an appreciation for Zion's Landmark that I could not subdue. But I have convincing evidence that the Good Lord was in the matter and solved my problem for me. Elder Dodson was a lovely man and very understanding. At my first opportunity I approached him with the matter and explained the situation to him, when he very kindly and submissively consented to my withdrawing my agreement to become associated with The Signs of the Times. This solved my problem.

So being released from The Signs of the Times, I was then at liberty to accept the same relationship with Zion's Landmark, which I did very promptly, and became associated with Elder O. J. Denny which was also in accord with Mr. John D. Gold's request.

(To be continued next issue)

## Zion's Landmark

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"Remove not the ancient Landmark  
which thy fathers have set."

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Editor

ELDER T. FLOYD ADAMS

Willow Springs, N. C. 27592

Associate Editor

ELDER J. M. MEWBORN

Willow Springs, N. C. 27592

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## GOD LEADS

(Continued From Last Issue)

Elder Denny was deceased March 17, 1951. Soon after his death Mr. Gold requested that I accept the editorship of Zion's Landmark. This was a responsibility for which I was poorly prepared and less qualified, but I accepted with little knowledge of the great responsibility with which I was confronted. There is little doubt that I have made many blunders and mistakes, but the brethren, sisters and friends have been tolerant and sympathetic.

My wife has been a great help to me in meeting the arduous tasks. I remember the words of Elder P. G. Lester, who said, "I have never written nor sent an editorial for publication until it was first proof read and approved by my wife." I can truthfully say the same, for the same is applicable in my case.

We have keenly felt the words of the Prophet who said, "To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them." Isa. 8:20. It has been our earnest and I hope, sacred desire, to publish a paper that is God-honoring, soul-satisfying to the spiritually hungry and worthy of the name – Zion's Landmark. This we have edited the last sixteen years.

Elder J. M. Mewborn, my Associate Editor, has only occasionally contributed an article for publication, but he lives a very full life. He serves three churches monthly, spends as much time as he well can to the comfort of his Dear father and mother on weekends and he operates an Insurance Agency for the benefit and convenience of the community in which he resides. He is well respected and has the confidence of the people in the area in which he lives. When life is less demanding and home and family needs less exacting, we believe Brother Mewborn will be able to meet the demand of the readers. Behind the scene, he has been most beneficial in selecting many excellent articles from the pens of writers, now deceased, to be published for the comfort of the readers. He has also assisted us in proof reading some correspondence for the benefit of our subscribers.

Mrs. Swindell has befriended us greatly, for she has made a sacrifice to continue printing or publishing the Landmark at a price below the actual cost for sometime. She has stated to us several times, that the sentimental value is always considered in the publication of the Landmark due to her family's association with the paper since 1871, when her Grandfather, Elder P. D. Gold, purchased the paper. She has said they will print the Landmark as long as we desire. All this is acknowledged and deeply appreciated. Mr. Frank W. Denny, nephew of Elder O. J. Denny, a former Editor, shares the sentiment, of Mrs. Swindell and has been, and still is a faithful friend to the Landmark and the lovers of it. He efficiently supervises the make-up, printing and mailing of Zion's Landmark. This he does twice each month.

We take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to all of our subscribers for their interest, their efforts to obtain new subscribers and their loyal support of Zion's Landmark and to them and our friends we thank for the contribution to further the cause of caring for the indigent as well as helping to pay the expenses which have of necessity been substantially increased due to the increase in costs of materials, postage, labor, etc.

Zion's Landmark does not have any endowment fund nor paid advertisements. We are entirely dependent upon subscriptions and gifts for the support of the paper. May we again say, Thank Every one of YOU.

(Elder) T. F. Adams