

ALABAMA, Feb. 13th, 1869.

Brother Bodenhamer:—Zion's Landmarks is indeed a messenger of love and comfort to me, more than to some who are not deprived of hearing the Gospel preached as I am. I love the doctrine contained therein, and I love to read the communications of the brethren and sisters; and I feel a desire to write, but feel my own weakness and inability so sensibly, I tremble lest I be found wanting. In June 1857, my sister-in-law, her babe and I, attempted to cross a river. By a mysterious Providence, sister and her babe were drowned. By a most merciful Providence I was saved. I was then made to see myself a sinner against God, that God who saved me from a watery grave. I went bowed down in soul and spirit, under the frowns of an angry God, finding no peace or comfort until the second Monday in September, 1858. I took my bible and retired to the orchard, where I had often been before, and seated myself on the ground under a peach tree. I thought I was the most miserable creature. I opened my bible as it happened, at the first chapter of Isaiah, and read to the 18th verse. I closed the book; despair took possession of my heart. I know not how long before I opened the book, but when I did, my eyes fell on the 18th verse: "Come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Glory to God, I exclaimed aloud. I looked around and all things appeared so beautiful; what is the matter with me I asked aloud. I then knelt down and thought I would pray.

"Jesus, lover of my soul,  
Let me to thy bosom fly,"

was all I said. I arose and went to the house. But O, how soon troubles come that I dreamed not of: that I was deceived; that I loved not the Lord Jesus; and thus I have been from that time until now. I offered myself to the church in April 1861, and was received and baptized.

Brother, do as you think best with this, and pray for your unworthy sister in Christ.

SUE CRUTCHER.

ROCKY MOUNT, N. C.,  
January 4th, 1869.

Dear Jane:—You requested me to write my experience, and I will now try to tell what I hope to be

some of the dealings of the Lord with me. When I first saw my lost and ruined condition, I was standing at the table, when I heard these words spoken: "God knows all things." It pierced me to the very heart like an arrow. I left the house and went out. It seemed to me that every sin I ever committed come before me; the tears fell from my eyes like rain; I could not eat or work, nor could I sleep, for I could not find a dry place on my pillow to lay my head, and I saw hell was my doom; I felt like I should die and hell would be the place for poor me. I begged the Lord to have mercy on my poor soul; I tried to pray, but it seemed to me I grew worse and worse; I felt like I should die; I felt like I was willing to have my hands or head cut off, or be nailed to a tree, for the sake of Jesus Christ being my Saviour. I saw my condition was worse and worse; I gave up to die; I thought if I died it would be just and right; but I made up my mind if I died and went to hell, I would go trying to serve the Lord the very best I could the rest of my life; and then was the time, if I ever felt light in my life I did then. O, how I loved the blessed Lord and all his people; I loved them all and wished to be with them; the things that I once loved I now hated, and the things I once hated I now loved. Those moments were very precious to me. Sister Jane, I wish I could express my feelings to you, but I cannot; I know them myself, though I cannot explain them in a proper manner to you.

I am, as ever, your true sister, if I be a sister at all.

EVELINA GAY.

Elder R. C. Leachman died at his residence, near Manassas, Va., on Friday morning, February 19th.—Brother Leachman was well known and highly esteemed by many of our readers.

Twelve dollars was received through Elder A. Partin, Agent, Raleigh, and acknowledged in No. 3, (January 1st, 1869.) The missing papers will be supplied, if Brother Partin will inform us what Ncs. failed to come to hand.

The communications of Elder Marshall McGraw, of South Carolina, and Brother H. J. Williams, of Georgia, will appear in next number. Also that of Brother Frost, of Tennessee.

## Editorial.

Wilson, N. C., March 1.

ELDER L. I. BODENHAMER,  
EDITOR.

### THE DARK AND CLOUDY DAY.

"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand; a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: a great people and strong; there hath not been ever the like, neither shall be any more after it, even to the years of many generations." (Joel 2: 1, 2.)

Notwithstanding the enormity of the wickedness of the earth, and the high pitch of God's anger, yet the first thing He would have the Prophet do, is to give notice to Israel, of His intended judgments. What an expression of love and compassion is here set forth by Jehovah. Israel had become empty of true devotion to God, and served himself, as declared by the mouth of Hosea: tenth chapter and first verse; "Israel is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself, according to the multitude of his fruit he hath increased the altars; according to the goodness of his land they have made goodly images." Hence it is, that prosperity, under the mercies of God, is borne by few, for as earthly vessels fill up, spiritual ones get empty, and the emptier they get of divine things, the fuller they get of carnal things, and from this carnal fullness their hearts are divided, and from such divisions originate the diversified altars or faiths, upon which is offered Cain's, Esau's, Judas's and Balaam's sacrifices, all of which are to be destroyed. Hosea 10: 2. Hence, if the multiplication of altars and self-service in those days, was an abomination to the Lord, and called for his judgments, how much more should it in this day? And, if those days were days of darkness and of gloominess, why do we call these days, days of light and improvement? When there never has been a day of more spurious doctrine and serving of self, than is now.

Hence, in the midst of Israel's idolatry, selfishness, pride, darkness and gloom, when it appeared that religion was almost extinct, when the visitations of God in the sanctuary were withdrawn, and all things appeared religiously, as a dark and foggy morning upon the mountains, so as to hide the face of the Mount of God, as a mountain is hid in fog. But in the midst of this thick darkness, God remembers his beloved Israel in mercy, and says to His trumpeter, "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion." How special was the commission "*in Zion*," God's habitation and rest forever. Here was the means connected with the end and purpose; first, the purpose of God was to turn Israel from darkness to light, and from idolatry to the service of the living and true God. The end of this purpose was to "shew forth His praise." Isa. 43: 21. Hence, it was necessary to this end, to have a trumpet, and a man to blow, both of which God had appointed and prepared.—He had given the trumpet a capacity to sound, and the man a commission to blow. Joel was not commanded to pick the ears nor pockets of the people, to rub their heads nor to pat them upon the shoulders, but, simply to blow the trumpet, and only in Zion at that, and to sound an alarm in God's holy mountain. Neither does Joel use any other means, than what God has appointed; we have no account of his blowing awhile, then singing awhile, then praying awhile, then calling upon all the christians to give him their hand, and all that wanted to go to heaven, to kneel down. All this would have been out side the commission that God gave, so is all such work of the present day, and is an effort of modern Balaamites to get men to approve of that, that God by Elijah has long since condemned. But, the question to be answered, by Arminians who claim the right to institute auxiliaries to God's commands,