

Communicated.

WARREN COUNTY, PENN., }
 April 12th, 1874. }
 Brother Gold, and Brethren and Sisters
 of the Old School Baptist
 Church:—

I have seated myself in order to respond to a request sent me in a private letter from New Mexico, from a brother, L. G. Dawson, on St. Matthew, 24: 12, which reads: "Because iniquity shall abound the love of many shall wax cold." The word "iniquity" means false worship, false religion and false doctrine. We see a large portion of the Jewish nation were lovers of iniquity, headed in the first place by old King Herod—the Red Dragon. Then we see the church was surrounded by iniquity throughout the persecution from the Jews, and many were tried to cause them to deny Christ and their faith, and the love and zeal of many of them waxed cold, and some through weakness denied Christ and some endured all that the iniquity of the Jewish nation inflicted until the end of that nation. But the iniquity of that nation, before they fell, never to rise again as a nation, scattered the church into different parts which agreed with the words of Christ. He said, smite the shepherd—speaking of his crucifixion, by the iniquity of that nation—and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will turn my hand or power upon the little ones. The first one of God's flock that fell a victim under the rage of iniquity was John the Baptist, the first gospel preacher. The next that fell a prey to the rage of iniquity was the great head of the church. In this act iniquity received a mortal wound, so that when he arose he conquered the main weapon of iniquity which was death. There is, and was, and will be two great mysteries until God takes one mystery out of the way.—These two mysteries are: the mystery of godliness and of iniquity. The Devil, the source of iniquity, has always been trying to get his subjects mixed up with subjects of Christ's kingdom or godliness. When he can get iniquity in the hearts of the visible church, corruption and coldness takes place, and the church in this condition makes the love of many wax cold and iniquity abounds and triumphs. Some of my old brethren, as well as myself, have felt some of the effects of iniquity when we were mixed up with the Missionaries and Campbellites. When we the Old Baptists were in this condition, there was not much love, or at least very cold love. But iniquity was abounding and in its own element. But when the time comes to cast out the bond-woman and her children, we had to bear the slang of iniquity, and I fully believe many of the children of God were led off by them into Babylon, or mystery of iniquity. And I will say in the language of Christ: "Come out of her my people!" Some Old Baptists contend that all that

was written in the 24th chapter of St. Matthew was fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem. They take this for proof. Christ said, "This generation shall not pass away until all these things be fulfilled." If you will examine the third chapter and also the 12th, 13th and 23rd verses you will find the generation that shall not pass away. Christ said, all the righteous blood shed upon earth shall be required of this generation which is the generation of iniquity. Wherever iniquity abounds there will darkness and coldness reign in the church just as long as the smoke of the pit or false doctrine abounds.—The love of many of the children will wax cold. But Christ has declared through all the works of iniquity he will bring his people through more than conquerors. It has been the will of God to permit iniquity to abound for the trial of his people. It is for the benefit of the church for them to be surrounded with iniquity and darkness, for when God delivers them from these enemies light will be pleasant and their love strong.—We see it was God's pleasure to suffer some of the Canaanites to dwell in the Land of Canaan to try his people. He likewise permits iniquity to creep into the Church. In speaking of the same, Jude says, men of your own selves shall rise up and speak perverse things to draw away disciples after them. My dear brethren, some of us if not all have been eye-witnesses to these things, and in all such cases the love of many of God's dear children will wax cold. My brethren, if we can keep iniquity outside of the church we have nothing to fear. It seemed to grieve Paul worse than anything else to get in among false brethren. The workers of iniquity are of the Devil, and you all know that the Devil is a liar and the father of lies—and I will say that the least one of the workers of iniquity is of the same stripe. If you find them in the true church they told lies to get there and will tell lies in order to stay there.—In his day, St. John spoke of one of these workers of iniquity who loved to have the pre-eminence. When you see a preacher trying to control the church and finding fault of other preachers, and trying to prevent them from preaching in the church where he belongs, you may mark him as a worker of iniquity and the love of the members of that church is sure to wax cold. We see that iniquity has abounded ever since the Devil preached the first sermon to our mother Eve, and mixed only enough truth in it to deceive her, and Christ said, that if it was possible that they should deceive the elect. But my dear brethren and sisters, iniquity cannot lead God's people beyond the bounds of God's love, and power, and wisdom; he has said and will say to the North, give up, and to the South, keep not back—bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth. It is a plain case that

the bounds of iniquity cannot hold one of God's children, for his love is stronger than death—the weapon of iniquity that the Devil, the head of all iniquity, has always used. But Christ, the head of Godliness, has and will disarm him, for he shall reign until he has put all enemies under his feet, and the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

I will now return to the twenty-fourth chapter of St. Matthew. And Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and his disciples came to him. He tells them that the time shall come when there shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down. The disciples asked him these questions: 1st. When shall these things be, that is, when shall this temple be destroyed? Second, The sign of Thy coming and the end of the world. He gives them many signs that would come before the destruction of Jerusalem. The first sign, take heed that no man deceive you. And he tells that they shall be hated of all men, that is, all the men of sin or iniquity. This took place day by day, and took place at that time. He tells them that many shall come in my name—all the preachers of iniquity come in the name of Christ—if they were to come in their own name they could not deceive any. He tells us that many false prophets shall rise and shall deceive many. A false prophet is a false teacher or preacher. The doctrine that is taught by these false teachers is evidently the works of iniquity that have almost eclipsed the sun or the light of the gospel truth, and has and will be the principal cause of the love of many of the children of God waxing cold. He said in the fourteenth verse: And this gospel, not the gospel of Anti-Christ, but of this kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto, not against, all nations. We see the gospel is sure to be preached to all the world without the agency of Anti-Christ, unless persecution is an agency. He commences at the twenty-third verse to describe the second coming of Christ. Some of our Old Baptist preachers believe he has already come, but we beg leave to differ with them. His second coming will be when the mighty angel casts Satan into the bottomless pit and chains him with all iniquity a thousand years. I believe, when he comes the second time, he will reign here with his church a thousand years.

I have not space to say more on this subject, but will say to brother Dawson that I have given the best views I have on this subject.

ABNER HERN.

GRIFFIN, GEORGIA, }
 April 24th, 1874. }

Dear Brother Gold:—

Below you will find a few scattering remarks on a portion of God's word and a part of my poor feeble christian experience, if a christian at all, and if you think that it will not

do any harm to the children of God to read it, let them read it through the LANDMARKS and judge for themselves. I hope that their thoughts and judgments may be seasoned with grace and truth, &c: Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him and he cannot sin because he is born of God, John 3: 9. And again, We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not, but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself and that wicked one toucheth him not—John 5: 18. If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us—John 1: 8.

To the dear children of God that read the LANDMARKS, pardon me for giving you a few thoughts on the foregoing scripture, as God has and may impress my mind. They have troubled and given me more thought than any of God's dear truths. Over twenty years ago I felt that God had led my mind and heart along paths, and given me thoughts and desires that were averse to the carnal mind and appetite, and my troubles were such from viewing myself a great sinner before God, that I was made to fall down before him as I trust, and asked for forgiveness. And I was made to believe that God was a just God, and that Jesus was the Son of God, and that God could not look on sin with the least allowance, and there was no remedy for me but the imputed righteousness of Christ, as the dear Son of God and the only friend whereby a poor sinner could be justified to ask of God for pardon for such a poor sinner as I was, and while asking God for pardon and for forgiveness of my sins which troubled my poor heart so much as to cause me to feel the need of a Saviour there came a change in my mind and feelings that I could not account for. Instead of condemnation and sorrow I felt relieved of sorrow and my poor heart was filled with love for the cause of God, and the people of God, and had a strong desire that everybody would seek God and be saved, and felt that I wanted to tell my feelings to the dear children of God—and did try. But, I fell so far short of telling my feelings to them that I really felt bad because I fell so far short from telling the feelings of my heart. I felt that there was something in my feelings too pure and joyful for my poor sinful heart to have. After expressing my feelings to some of the dear children of God as best I could, they tried to console me with the consolation that I was a child of God and was born in the kingdom of grace and that I was born of God. And I felt at that time that I should never sin or want to sin again, nor ever could be induced to sin any more, and for several weeks and months I still felt that Jesus was my Savior. But alas! while I felt that sin could have no more dominion over me I soon found I was the subject of weakness and