

seemed that it would be my last day on earth. Oh, it is hard to die and go to hell, but I knew it was just for I could not see how God could be just and save such a sinner as I was. I went to bed expecting never to rise again. It appeared that I was taken away by the Spirit: it seemed that I was in a broad road in the mire and clay up to my knees. By the broad road, about twenty feet high, was a straight and narrow road, and it appeared to me there was a little man standing in the narrow road with something in his hand that looked like a fishing pole, with a hook and line to it, and he was taking people out of the mire and clay, for there seemed to be a mass of people in it. To my great surprise he took me out and wiped the mud from me. I asked the little man what he meant, and he said that he caught me with a hook: yea all your generation with fish hooks. Then I saw brother Wm. A. Ross standing close by, and I went on with him until I woke up, which was before my wife retired for the night. I never felt so good in all my life, I could not stay on the bed but got up and went out to view the star spangled heavens. Everything looked new. I felt so light that I could scarcely feel my weight on my feet. My burden was gone, and thank the blessed Lord I have never felt it since. It made me say

My sins are gone and I am free
My Saviour lived and died for me.

Saturday before the first Sunday in September 1873, I went to Flat Swamp and related my experience and was received; and the second Sunday in September was baptized by Elder Wm. A. Ross. I desire the prayers of all the brethren and sisters.

Your brother in the one hope,
WILLEY F. TAYLOR.

[From the Primitive Baptist, May 10th 1851.]
REFLECTIONS ON JEREMIAH: 15, 16, 17.

In a correspondence some months since, with sister Kerns of Ohio; I found her much depressed in spirit, in consequence of the mysterious dispensation of providence by which she was called to mourn the loss of all her children, five in number, who were called away by death at different times. In attempting to console her in her troubles, I had occasion to cite her mind to that portion of sacred writ under consideration; to which she replies in a late letter, "Will you preach our children's funerals, and print it; I do not fully understand what that means, 'and they shall come again from the land of the enemy: will you explain it?'" &c. An attempt to answer the foregoing request, would be as novel to the reader as the request was to the writer, yet perhaps a brief examination of the passage may afford some consolation to sister Kerns, and not her alone, but others also. We therefore offer the following thoughts; Verse 15, "Thus saith the Lord, a voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children, refused to be comforted for her children because they were not." In a poetic manner

of expression, Rachel a remote but noted female ancestor of these people (the children of Ephraim,) is represented as weeping and refusing comfort, because they were not—not living but dead. That this might refer to the calamity in the prophet's own day I shall not dispute, but its remarkable fulfilment was in the destruction of children by Herod, Matt. 2: 17. And let us bear in mind here that these were two years old and under, by which we will see the general application of the passage is suited to the case of small children or infants. Oh! how many Rachels [bereaved mothers] have been found in every age and nation. Sin has made this world a "Bochim," a place of weepers.

The influence of natural affection is suffered to prevail awhile, and many refusing comfort are brought to say with Jacob, "my grey hairs shall go down with sorrow to the grave." But this grief would become criminal, if indulged to excess; since the Lord is a fountain of consolation, to the real saint if all the springs were dry, hence holy Job could say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." The admonition of the Lord in verse 16, is to the point—"Thus saith the Lord, refrain thy voice from weeping; and thine eyes from tears; for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord, and they shall return again from the land of the enemy." Faith now gets the better of nature, at the command of God the eyes cease to weep, and the voice from lamentation; God draws near in his promises, and assures the real saint that all things work together for his people's good, and that even their deceased children shall live again. A return from the land of the enemy may in the first place refer to the nation of Israel returning from captivity, [see Ezra] 1: 5. and Hosea 1: 11. But this is not all, it gives an assurance of the resurrection. Death is termed an enemy, 1 Cor. 15: 26, and what is more plain than this, that the land of death is the land of the enemy, and when this last enemy shall be destroyed on the resurrection day, and the grave shall lose its hold on the body, the dead shall live again and return to their own border, verse 17. So far as the Scriptures say anything about those who die in infancy it gives assurance that they are taken from the evil to come. David said when his infant son died, "I shall go to him, &c." signifying that his child was at rest, and that after he himself should serve his generation he should also fall asleep and be at rest. Thus pious people, and children dying in infancy, rest together, and rise together at the resurrection.

I have ever considered the salvation of children dying in infancy brought to view by the blessing pronounced by Jesus on little children that were brought to him. A real blessing was conferred by him on those that were brought to him at that time and now seated on the eternal hills. He is virtually saying by the dispensations of providence in calling little ones away, "suffer them to come, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

And while they remain here, being objects of his special regard, and heirs expectant of a better country; "their angels do always behold the face of their Father which is in heaven." And when the "dead small and great: shall stand before God, they shall leave the land of the enemy and return again to their own border," "For the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come again unto Zion, &c." Many things looked at as evils in this world will be viewed in a different light in eternity. Sounds of lamentations here will raise songs of triumph with the godly in another world. The things written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Hope for ourselves, if scriptural grounds of hope be afforded us. Hope for all characters of hope taken from us—Hope of the resurrection of the dead. Hope of eternal glory. These brief and very imperfect reflections will be closed at this time, by transcribing the following lines from the *Western Harp*, which were originally addressed to parents, who were suddenly bereaved of several of their children.

What mean those lamentations,
That fasten on my ear?
It is the grief of parents,
With many a sigh and tear
Like her who once was weeping,
Absorbed in deepest thought;
For when she sought her children,
Alas she found them not,

But hark! the sounds of comfort,
"Thy voice from grief refrain;"
They are not lost forever,
They shall return again.
Though now in distant regions,
Even in the land of death,
When Gabriel sounds his trumpet,
I'll give them back their breath.

"Their lives shall be eternal,
(When death is pass'd away,)
'Mid scenes forever vernal,
That witness no decay;
On Canaan's pleasant borders,
Where saints immortal reign,
You shall behold your children,
When they return again."

Then dry your tears ye parents,
And pine in grief no more,
You soon shall follow after,
The millions gone before;
Where saints of every nation
With Christ their head shall reign;
And sing complete salvation,
From death returned again,

Western Evangelist.

[From Luther's Commentary.]

"WHO SEPARATED ME FROM MY MOTHER'S WOMB.—This is a Hebrew phrase; as if he said, Who had sanctified, ordained and prepared me. That is, God had appointed, when I was yet in my mother's womb, that though I should so rage against his church that afterward he would mercifully call me back again from the midst of my cruelty and blasphemy, by his mere grace, into the way of truth and salvation. To be short, when I was not yet born, I was an apostle in sight of God, and when the time was come, I was declared an apostle before the whole world.

Thus Paul cutoff off all deserts, and giveth glory to God alone, but to himself all shame and confusion. As though he would say, all the gifts, both small and great, as well spiritual as temporal, which God purposed to give unto me, and all good things which at any time in all my life I should do, God himself had before appointed when I was yet in my mother's womb, where I could neither wish, think, nor do any good thing. Therefore

this gift also came unto me by the mere predestination and free mercy of God, before I was yet born. Moreover, after I was born he supported me, being laden with innumerable and most horrible iniquities. And that he might the more manifestly declare the unspeakable and inestimable greatness of his mercy towards me, he, of his mere grace, forgave my abominable and infinite sins, and moreover replenished me with such plenty of his grace, that I did not only know what things are given unto me of Christ, but preached the same also unto others. Such are the deserts and merits of all men, and especially of those old dotards, who exercise themselves wholly in the stinking puddles of man's own righteousness.

Mark the diligence of the apostle. "He called me," saith he—how? was it for Pharisaical religion, or for my blameless and holy life, for my prayers, fasting and works? No. Much less then for my blasphemies, persecutions, oppressions. How then? "by his mere grace only."

You hear in this place what manner of doctrine is given and committed to Paul, viz. The doctrine of the gospel, which is the revelation of the Son of God. This is a doctrine quite contrary to the law, which revealeth not the Son of God, but it sheweth forth sin, it terrifieth the conscience, it revealeth death, the wrath and judgment of God, and hell. The gospel therefore is such a doctrine, as admitteth no law; yea, it must be separate as far from the law as there is distance between heaven and earth. This difference in itself is easy and plain, but unto us it is hard and full of difficulty. For it is an easy matter to say that the gospel is nothing else but the revealing of the Son of God, or the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and not the revealing of the law; but in the agony and conflict of conscience, to hold this fast and to practise it indeed, it is a hard matter, yea, to them also that are most exercised therein.

"Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you?" This is a throw at the false apostles, who, when they had by their evil insinuation ingratiated themselves into the affections of the simple and unwary, obtained letters of commendation from them, to recommend themselves to other churches, that they might do more mischief; for they had nothing else to recommend them but their pride and their speech, which Paul paid no regard to. "I do not want to know the speech of them that are puffed up, but the power." But of this they were destitute. They had not the power of God manifest in them, they had no power with God in prayer, nor did they ever communicate, by their instrumentality, the power of God's grace and spirit to others. They were false apostles, and ministers of Satan; and Paul is commended by the Lord himself for proving them so to be. "Thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars."

WILMINGTON.