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ZION'S LANDMARKS.

DEVOTED TO THE DEFENSE OF THE PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS.

"TO THE LAW AND TO THE TESTIMONY."

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NO. 8.

Desiring to be Faithful in the Lord.

In happiness I hope
I shall live after death,
As Jesus is my prop
And my path;
For thus I do perceive
That Christ the Lord did grieve,
And died that I might live;
Did redeem me to him,
And may I give him praise
All my days.

This my desire is now,
Him to praise while I live,
For every bliss and joy
I receive;
'Tis my desired intent,
Until my time is spent,
I would I could repent
When I see sin in me;
For it is my delight
To do right.

O that I had the power
To do right day by day,
To practice every hour
In this way;
But there is a thorn,
Which makes me often mourn,
And with many a groan
I would cry, O that I
Could do my duty right
With delight.

But Jesus is my all,
Of myself I am vile,
Without him I shall fall
All the while;
Though I would if I could,
I can't do nothing good,
Until it pleases God,
Who has wrought fully brought
Redemption through his Son—
Him alone.

This Jesus is my love,
All my hope and my friend,
Through him I'll live and move
To the end.
Through him I'll worship God,
And walk the narrow road,
I'll do all things as good
Through his name as I can,
If I have one accord
With my Lord.

Abel Palmer, 1844.

Poor believers are but princes in disguise here in this world. Princes they are. Christ hath made them all so; but while here below they are in a foreign land, under a veil.

Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase; so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.

MACOMB, ILLINOIS,
February, 1870.

Fragments.

No. 7.

THE PRODIGAL SON.

BROTHER BODENHAMER:—As long ago as the time of the Saviour, and even before, there appears to have been some boys who did not like to stay at home with their parents, and their brothers and sisters, but being dissatisfied with the order of the house, and with parental control, and conceiving the idea that they could do better on their "own hook" than to listen to a father's advice, left the old homestead and rambled off. And where two brothers were raised together it sometimes was the case that the younger, instead of the elder, left first, which was contrary to the laws of nature and of God. My own observation convinces me that this unnatural and unfilial trait of character is fearfully on the increase among the youth of the present degenerate times, in these "last days" when Paul says they shall become "disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection," &c. 2d Tim. 3:2, 3. Christ, in the 15th chapter of Luke, speaks of one of these dissatisfied boys leaving his father's house, his older brother and the family, taking with him his part of the estate and going into a far country. There, instead of the young man pursuing a course of uprightness, morality and industry, he wasted his substance in rioting and dissipation, and soon spent all his living. He was now far from home, without means of subsistence, and without friends or credit. To add to his misfortunes a mighty famine arose in that land and he began to be in want; and feeling the pinchings of hunger, and looking at his tattered clothes, and having nothing in his pockets, he was driven, as the best way he could then think of adopting for a support, to join himself to a citizen of that country and work for bread.

His employer sent him into the fields to feed swine, rather a low calling, one would think for a proud young man who had recently quite an estate in his hands, and whose father was well to do in the world. He had no thought when he started out with full pockets and well dressed from his father's well-stored house and barns, and his well-fed servants, that he should ever see the day he should have to feed swine for the mere sustenance of his mortal existence; and his sense of pride and independence, with a recollection of an affronted father and friends, forbid the thought of returning home at this time. How could he endure the thought of going home in his rags, penury and disgrace? Without clothes, credit, money or health—a mere wreck of the nobility which he once was! So he went to feeding swine, and associating with the unclean in their filth in order to get bread; but the famine so increased that no man had any to give him, and his hunger became so great that he would have eaten husks, but they had no sustenance in them for a hungry man. Under these circumstances he "came to himself," and was fully convinced that there was but one alternative to prevent the certain pangs of starvation and death: that was to return to his father's house without delay, while he yet had strength to go. He resolves now to arise and go to his father, but a consciousness of his guilt and disobedience, against both his earthly father and his Father in heaven, forbids all hope of being received at home with any degree of joy, or even allowed to enter the threshold of his father's mansion; so he makes up his mind to confess all his guilt to his father on sight, and beg no more liberty or honor than a hired servant enjoyed—a place in the kitchen; for even these have "bread enough and to spare, and I perish here with hunger."—Under the deepest emotions of shame and repentance, and pinched with hunger and clothed in rags, the son

of misery and want weends his way towards the door of an injured father. But as he approaches the precincts of his former home, he thus soliloquizes: "Will not my father, when he sees my rags and learns the history of my shame and dissipation, forbid me to come inside of his inclosures or to enter his door? Will he not be so shocked and disgusted at the appearance of his once respectable son, and so angry against me that he will disown me forever? I cannot expect and surely deserve nothing better." But long before he reached the homestead, the father, somehow looking in that direction, beheld the long lost boy a "great way off," and knew him, notwithstanding his rags, and his compassion yearned over him, not only because he was his son, but because of his destitution. So his father ran and met, embraced and kissed his truant but repentant son, who, from the sincerity of his heart cried out, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." But did the father suffer him to come into his house, and into the society of the family? Not just yet. He is too ragged and filthy. Don't let the family see the wretchedness and shame of our once noble boy. Don't mortify his sense of decency by ushering him into the parlor thus in his rags. He may have a mother and sisters in there. Matthew 12:50. Nay, go, my servants, and bring the best robe, and put it on him, first divesting him of his filthy rags; and put shoes on his feet and a ring on his hand, and let us kill the fatted calf and feast and rejoice over this our lost son who is now found.

Brether Bodenhamer, and brethren, can you bear with me till I make a brief application of this subject?—Though it appears to me that this "fragment" is about to become a basketfull. The parables of the lost sheep, the lost piece of silver, and the prodigal son, were all spoken just after the Pharisees and Scribes had murmured at Jesus for having com-