

# Zion's Landmarks.

DEVOTED TO THE DEFENSE OF THE PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS.

"TO THE LAW AND TO THE TESTIMONY."

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## Zion's Landmarks,

P. D. GOLD, EDITOR.

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P. D. Gold, Wilson, N. C.

### Communicated.

OPELIKA, ALA., May 15th, 1875.

Brother Gold:—

I AM personally acquainted with but few of the readers of the LANDMARKS, and do not know that what I have written for its columns is acceptable with the Lord's humble poor, but from some cause I occasionally feel a strong inclination to write. I know full well that I am a poor afflicted, ignorant and unworthy creature, and in some respects preach and write under more adverse circumstances than any man ever did in modern times, and if I have any motives of vain glory to accomplish by my poor labors, I am really not aware of it. I confess, however, that I am not always able to account for the exercises of my own mind and have often felt determined never again to write another letter for publication; but without any known cause to me my mind becomes at times so forcibly weighted and irresistibly exercised that I seek this method of employment for relief. At times also I have a feeling of sadness and a deep gloom seems to pervade the whole mental powers of the mind, and with all my efforts for relief, or to be cheerful or feel comfortable, I cannot. My heart is heavy and sorely pained within me, and I am made to understand full well that "heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop," and thereby prepares it for a "good word to make it glad," Prov. 12:25. If those holy men of olden time were not exempt from this heaviness it is one of

the marks of divine life within. It is the living that feel sad and mourn over their own depravity. Good old Job had similar trials and would seek, like I and others often have done, to "forget our complaint and leave off our heaviness and comfort ourselves" a little, Job 9:27. But could he do it? No, he was again "plunged in the ditch." David too was "full of heaviness" so that his very "soul melted" under the heavy weight of sorrow, Psalms 69:27. In this he represented Christ whose soul was heavy and exceeding sorrowful even unto death. And doubtless it is thus that the people of God are to be brought experimentally into the fellowship of his sufferings. Men of the world who know not God in the forgiveness of their sins may and often do suffer and sorrow much with the sorrow of the world; but none but the children of God and members of the body of Christ can be partakers of the sufferings of Christ, nor of the glory that shall follow those sufferings.

The Psalmist says, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me?" Is there any known cause for it? Is it distrust, unbelief, or want of confidence in God? No, I would hope it is rather the result of that inward teaching of the grace of our God that gives such a discovery of the depravity and corruption of man as to cause one to feel sad, sorrowful, cast down and inwardly restless, even to loathing one's self and making him feel wretched so as to cry out "who shall deliver me?"

There are times when I feel quite calm and serene, and others times when I really feel much inward peace and soul comfort so that my soul doth magnify the Lord, and I feel like saying "bless the Lord, O my soul, and all within me bless his holy name." Surely changes and war abide me.

Adieu again,  
W. M. MITCHELL.

### THE UNGODLY AND THE SINNER.

Beloved Brother Gold:—

DURING the month of May I received a very interesting and comforting letter from Elder E. J. Williams, of Afton, Ga., at the close of which he requested me to give my views, through the LANDMARKS, on 1 Peter 4:17, 18, and I feel it to be my duty to comply with his request the best I can, which I fear will be but poor. I am not satisfied that I understand the intention of the inspired penman in some of the language referred to in the passage cited, which reads as fol-

lows: "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" Brother W. desires me to write on the whole connection, but particularly to "define between the ungodly and the sinner."

This epistle is addressed to strangers, or saints of God who were scattered abroad; to the elect of God, who had been sanctified through the Spirit unto obedience, and had been sprinkled by the blood of Christ, and hence the general tenor of the epistle is applicable to these as saints, and was written in order to strengthen, encourage and instruct his brethren in Christ, as he was commanded to do by his Lord and master—see Luke 22:32, and John 21:15, 17.

His brethren were at that time scattered abroad among the gentiles on account of persecution by the Jews,

they suffer for righteousness' sake, they should feel happy, and be not terrified; chap. 3:14. But although this epistle is an address to his brethren, yet in it he speaks of others who were not of the brotherhood, or household of God; so that, while all the language of the epistle is addressed to them, some of it refers to others: i. e. "unto you therefore which believe, he is precious; but unto them which be disobedient," &c, to them Christ is a "rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the world, being disobedient; whereunto also they were appointed." chap. 2:2, 9; Isa. 8:14, 15; Rom 9:32, 33. The above citations and many similar ones prove that the inspired writers were drawing a line of distinction between the believer and unbeliever, the righteous and the wicked, the godly and the ungodly, the Church and the world; and although the Lord's regenerate people often do wrong, and sin against the brethren, and even against Christ (1st Cor. 8:12) yet such sinners are to be converted from the error of their ways by their brethren, and they are saved from death in their Church relation, and in their religious enjoyments. But Peter, as well as other inspired writers, often speaks of those without, and contrasts the difference between the house of God, and the world, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not; and in the connection under consideration I understand the Apostle to be showing the distinction between the Church and the world. Paul speaks of those who had pleasure in unrighteousness, and received not

the love of the truth, and they were to be damned, while others were chosen unto salvation; (2nd Thess. 2:10, 13) and Peter says, "the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished,"—29. "The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God;" at the tribunal of the Church; for "the Lord shall judge his people." Heb. 10:30. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in the body," &c., 2nd Cor. 5:10. "And if it first begin at us," the house of God, the Church members who have obeyed her ordinances, and been adopted into the family, if we have to be judged by the holy laws of Zion, and can scarcely be saved from condemnation before her solemn tribunal, "what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" Then that he spurn, reject and discipline.

whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things," Phil. 3:19. "And if the righteous scarcely be saved;" if it is through much tribulation they enter the kingdom, and through cruel mockings, temptations and trials they journey on their way; if it is with the skin of their teeth they escape, (Job 19:20) and they have no oil to spare; if their feet often well nigh slip, and they barely have strength to get through the great and terrible wilderness; if they are scarcely saved, "where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

It appears to me that these ungodly sinners who obey not the gospel are distinct from the house of God, from the us—Peter and the elect—the righteous named in the text. I think no distinction is made, or should be made between the ungodly and the sinner, and that they are synonymous. Ungodly is unlike God, wicked, sinful, and a sinner is a transgressor of the law, and I think where either is used in contrast with the righteous it represents the unregenerate natural man, who is in a state of disobedience to God. Jude uses the word ungodly four times in the 15th verse, and one of the times he calls them *ungodly sinners*; these, though false teachers, and probably, for a time, members, (verses 4 and 19) yet they were to have an awful end. Solomon uses the conjunction between the "wicked and the ungodly," (Prov. 11:31) and many such examples might be cited.

I do not think, brother Williams, that it is a matter of much interest whether the *ungodly* and the *sinner*