

**MINUTES**  
**OF THE**  
**TWENTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL SESSION**  
**OF THE**  
**WATER VALLEY FREE-WILL**  
**BAPTIST ASSOCIATION**

**CONVENED WITH**  
**ANTIOCH CHURCH**

*Thursday Night, Friday and Saturday,  
September 9th, 10th and 11th, 1926*

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ELD. J. H. NORWOOD, M. D.

REV. GEO. C. LEE, Clerk.

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*Next Session*

WITH BETHLEHEM CHURCH, SEVEN MILES NORTHWEST OF  
PONTOTOC, PONTOTOC COUNTY, MISS., ON THURSDAY  
NIGHT, FRIDAY AND SATURDAY BEFORE THE SEC-  
OND SUNDAY IN SEPTEMBER, 1927—ELD. H. B.  
ROGERS TO PREACH THE INTRODUCTORY  
SERMON, FOLLOWED BY REV.  
G. W. KENNEDY

# MINUTES

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## Of the Twenty-Eighth Annual Session of the Water Valley Free-Will Baptist Association of Mississippi.

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### FIRST DAY—NIGHT SESSION

The Twenty-Eighth Annual Session of the Water Valley Free Will Baptist Association convened with Antioch Church two miles South of Toccopola, Pontotoc County, on Thursday night, before second Sunday in September 1926. Rev. Dave Smitherman preached the introductory sermon—subject, "Love". Adjourned to meet Friday at 9:00 after the delegates were assigned to homes.

Rev. J. M. Haas, of Tupelo, was present and was given a seat as a corresponding messenger from Vernon Association of Alabama.

### SECOND DAY—MORNING SESSION

Met by singing. The Moderator read a chapter from the 2nd chapter of Ephesians. After reading, a prayer. Then the church letters were called for and the following churches reported by letter and delegates—Antioch, Gauley, Bethlehem, New Life, Stetson, Springdale and Pleasant Grove. Their letters were read and delegates seated, after which a hymn was sung and the hand of fellowship was taken by the Association.

It was moved and seconded that we go into election of officers, and the following were elected: Eld. J. H. Norwood, M. D.; Rev. Geo. C. Lee, Clerk; W. F. Bevill, Treasurer.

The following was paid: Minute fund, total amount, \$34.55; Clerk's fee, \$7.00; balance for publishing Minutes, \$27.55.

The Moderator appointed the following committees:

Preaching Committee—Bud Coleman, Alford Graham, C. B. Coleman.

Associational Committee—Tobe May, Dock Starnes, B. E. Suggs, Jess Morphis, J. P. Hamilton, S. C. Lee, Henry Sanders, Bailiff.

Denominational Literature—Jim Corder, Rev. W. H. Fondren, Rev. G. W. Kennedy.

Temperance—Egbert Roberts, A. M. Cook, Rev. J. M. Haas.

Educational—Rev. Geo. C. Lee, Lon Morphis, W. F. Bevill.  
Sabbath School—Jennie Sims, Mattie Coleman, Bell Roberts.  
Obituary—Rev. D. M. Smitherman, Dave Long, I. W. Corder.  
Finance—Rev. H. B. Rogers, Lee Coleman, Wilburn Warren.  
Adjourned to meet at 1:30 p. m., and Rev. J. M. Haas preached at the 11:00 service—subject: “The Lord’s Supper,” followed by Rev. Geo. C. Lee.

## SECOND DAY—EVENING SESSION

Met by singing, reading and prayer, by Rev. E. A. Lewis, from James, 1st chapter.

The Moderator read the Articles of Faith and church covenants.

Antioch and Springdale churches made the Treasury report. The rest of the churches were requested to report to committees.

## REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Temperance Committee—We, your committee, make our report: We are made to believe that Temperance is one of the greatest thoughts known to mankind. If we disobey the laws of God and Nature, by getting into an intemperate way, we bring upon ourselves condemnation, because He said, “Be ye temperate in all things.” Therefore, we should all join together in urging and helping one another to be more temperate, because the things that God has given as a blessing to mankind can be used so as to prove a curse instead of a blessing.

H. E. Roberts, Rev. J. M. Haas. A. M. Cook.

Preaching Committee—We, your committee, report Rev. J. M. Haas to preach Friday at eleven o’clock, followed by Rev. Geo. C. Lee; and Eld. J. H. Norwood. Friday night, subject, “Feet Washing,” followed by Rev. W. H. Fondren. Rev. Geo. C. Lee, Saturday at eleven o’clock, followed by Rev. D. M. Smitherman.

Obituary Committee—We make our report. We find that our Association has lost seven of her members since our last meeting—W. M. Fondren, from Gauley; Sister Nancy Morphis and Sister Dora Wager, from New Life; Bro. Wess Waldow, from Bethlehem; Bro. Arthur Potts and Sister Garrett from Springdale; Sister Sallie Hollis, from Antioch. They all died in the Faith. “From henceforth, yea, saith the Spirit, they shall rest from their labor, and their works do follow them.” We thank God for people



who contend for the faith to the end.

W. I. Corder, Rev. D. M. Smitherman, Dave Long.

Pleasant Grove church asks this Association to ordain Bro. Tom Self this to be added to said letter,

Jim Thomas, C. C., Bud Coleman, A. W. Graham, C. B. Coleman.

Sabbath School Committee—We your committee, find four Sabbath Schools in our Association—Springdale, Gauley, Antioch, and Pleasant Grove. We recommend that a good Sunday School is one of the best means of education and for the advancement of the cause of Christ, for both young and old; we also recommend that each church endorse the same and that we use Union Literature, such as is published by the American Sunday School Union.

Mrs. Bell Roberts, Miss Jennie Sims, Mrs. Mattie Coleman,

There was a good talk made on Sabbath Schools, by Rev. J. M. Haas.

W. L. Warren, Mattie Coleman, Lee Coleman.

Brother Self was ordained by the Association to full work of the Ministry. Eld J. H. Norwood was chairman of the counsel and the following ministers as counsel: Rev. W. H. Fondren, Rev. H. B. Rogers, Rev. D. M. Smitherman, Rev. Geo. C. Lee.

Adjourned for the day.

Eld. J. H. Norwood filled the stand at the eight o'clock service and preached on "Feet Washing," followed by Rev. W. H. Fondren, after which the Lord's Supper was commemorated, with some forty or more coming to table, and supper ending, the church washed each other's feet in love and fellowship.

### THIRD DAY—MORNING SESSION

Met by singing, reading, prayer by Rev. H. B. Rogers from 23rd Psalm.

Denominational Literature—We, your committee, recommend that each church make the Bible their study more, in the future. We recommend the Free-Will Baptist publications, such as is published by M. L. Hollis, Vernon, Ala.; also Union Literature. We urge our people to practice the church ordinances, night communion and feet washing, more than usual.

J. M. Corder, Rev. W. H. Fondren, Rev. G. W. Kennedy.

Education Committee—We your committee make our report:

Education is essential to human progress; civilization is the fruit of education. We believe that the day has come in the history of the church that education is in greater demand than ever in the past. Every phase of life is being put to a test because of man's learning and we see the great need of education, and therefore, urge our people to get the best of Bible education and as good literary training as possible to obtain, and strive to educate their children preparatory to life and service, and we urge a study of the Bible, first, that we may know the way of life, for in Christ "we live, move and have our being," for we are commanded to seek first the Kingdom of God and all these things shall be added. If any man lack wisdom, let him call upon God, who giveth to all men liberally.

Rev. Geo. C. Lee, W. F. Bevill, Lon Morphis.

Associational Committee—We, your committee, make our report: We ask this Association to urge each church of this Association to come to an agreement within their respective bodies, as to the approximate help financially they will help their pastor each year, and that at the beginning of each pastoral year, the church will collect said money agreed upon and turn into the treasury, and that a record be kept by treasurer, of all such money collected and paid out and who paid, and to whom paid. Also that the treasurer be authorized by the church to pay this money to the pastor at each monthly meeting, one twelfth each month until the year is finished. Said money not be a tax on the membership, but a free-will offering, by each one who feels disposed to help.

We further report that this Association urge the churches of this Association to urge their delegates to come to the Association on Thursday night before the second Sunday in September for the business of this Association.

Finance Report—We, your committee, beg to make the following report: We find cash on hand for Minute fund and Clerk fee, \$34.55—Clerk fee, \$7.00; Minute fund, \$27.55. Springdale church treasury received \$8.95; paid out \$3.50, balance \$5.45. Antioch church received \$55.55; paid out \$51.92, balance, \$3.63. Gauley church received \$27.52; paid out \$18.00, balance \$9.50. New Life received \$23.50; paid out \$7.00 and \$6.10, balance \$10.40. Bethlehem received balance on hand, \$7.40. Pleasant Grove received \$27.00; paid out \$5.50, balance \$21.50. Stetson Chapel re-

ceived \$9.30.

Report of Rev. Geo. C. Lee: received help \$175.25, paid out \$42.07. Above expense—\$133.18. Rev. W. H. Fandren help, \$48.20. Rev. J. H. Norwood help, \$18.05, paid out \$35.40. Rev. D. M. Smitherman, help, \$38.15; paid out \$21.70. We recommend that each church be more liberal in their financial support.

Rev. H. B. Rogers, W. L. Warren, T. L. Coleman.

## PREACHERS' REPORT

Rev. Geo. C. Lee reported: "I have preached 63 sermons since last Association; have traveled 1,972 miles, received \$175.25 help, paid out \$42.07 expense; balance above expense, \$133.18; have had four profession of Faith; received into church, 10; baptised 3, held 4 funerals, married 7 couples. My address is Calhoun City, Miss."

Rev. W. H. Fondren reports: "I have preached 49 sermons; had 8 professions, baptised 3, held 3 funerals, married 4 couples, organized 2 Sabbath Schools, traveled 322 miles, received \$48.22; have pastored 2 churches this year and have two for 1927. My address is Denmark, Miss."

Rev. J. H. Norwood reports: "I have preached 82 sermons, 2 funerals, had 17 professions, received 8 into church. Baptized 3—married 1 couple, received \$18.05, paid out \$35.40, traveled 552 miles. The Lord has blessed my labor and I appreciate His blessings. My address is Toccopola, Miss."

Rev. G. W. Kennedy reports: I have preached 31 Sermons, helped ordain 2 Deacons, married 3 couples, helped in 5 meetings. My address is Pontotoc, Miss., and Toccopola, Miss.

Rev. D. M. Smitherman reports: "I have preached 32 sermons, have married 1 couple, helped in 5 meetings where there were 7 professions and additions to church; traveled 678 miles; received help \$38.15; paid out expenses \$21.70. My work has been a great pleasure to me. May God bless all the churches in my charge. My address is Calhoun City, Miss."

Rev. H. B. Rogers reports: "I have helped in 3 meetings, have been delighted in the work; have preached 10 sermons, helped ordain 2 deacons, worked in Sabbath School some. My address is Pontotoc, Miss., R. 2."

Adjourned for preaching. Rev. Geo. C. Lee preached, fol-



lowed by Rev. Smitherman—subject, "My Record," after which we adjourned for dinner.

### THIRD DAY—EVENING SESSION

Come together by singing, and Rev. G. W. Kennedy read from Genesis 1st chapter, and had prayer.

Moved and seconded that the session of this Association meet with Bethlehem church seven miles North-west of Pontotoc, on Thursday night, Friday and Saturday before the second Sunday in September, 1927.

Moved and seconded that Rev. H. B. Rogers preach introductory sermon, to be followed by Rev. G. W. Kennedy, at Association of 1927.

The Moderator appointed four corresponding messengers to Vernon Association of Alabama, which convenes on Saturday before the 3rd Sunday in October, 1926. Rev. Geo. C. Lee, Rev. W. H. Fondren, J. P. Hamilton and Eld. J. H. Norwood were appointed.

The Clerk of the Association was given authority to write Cards of Thanks to Antioch church and community.

Moved and seconded that Rev. Geo. C. Lee be elected the Evangelist in this Association for the associational year of 1926 and 1927, and it was also voted by this Association that he have authority and power to organize churches, with or without a counsel.

Treasurer's Report—receipt of Minute funds: Gauley, \$5.75; New Life, \$6.10; Pleasant Grove, \$2.80; Stetson Chapel, \$5.00; Bethlehem, \$10.00; Springdale, \$3.50; Antioch, \$4.80—total amount \$37.95. Clerk fee, \$7.00; balance for publication of minutes, \$30.95.

W. F. BEVILL, Treasurer.

We the Water Valley Association of Mississippi, extend our heart-felt thanks to Antioch and Antioch community for their kindness and courtesies shown us while in your midst. May the good Lord bless your church and community.

### CHURCH LETTERS.

We the Church of God Denominated Freewill Baptist, worshipping at Bethlehem Church, send as delegates to represent us in your body, Brothers Dave Long, Alford Grasham, Henry Graham, alternate, our Clerk is B. E. Sugg. Deacons—Brothers Bob McCarver, Arthur Graham and Sam Tucker. We have called Rev. Geo. C. Lee to pastor for 1926-27. We have two ordained preach-

ers, Rev. Dave Smitherman and Rev. G. W. Kennedy. Our membership is 200 in all. Resident, 100. We send \$10.00 as minute funds, and time of meeting is fourth Sunday in each month. We have recieved 3 by experience of Grace, excluded 3, died one. We have had regular conference. Our address is Pontotoc, Mississippi, R. F. D. No. 2.

We the Church of God Demoninated Freewill Baptist, worshipping at Springdale Church send as delegates, Brother Devo Starns, Chester Coleman and G. C. Starns. Our Deacons are Jack Reynolds, F. F. McCord, M. C. Bowler; Clerk, F. F. McCord; Pastor, Rev. W. H. Fondren; Treasurer, Tap Starns. We have in the church treasury, \$7.00. We send \$3.50 for minute fund. We have 35 resident members, one death, Arthur Potts. We have 30 non-resident members, added to church 3, excluded 6, lettered out one. We have a good Sunday School. Our time of meeting is the 1st Sunday in each month. Our address is Denmark, Miss.

We the Church of God Denominated Freewill Baptist, worshipping at Pleasant Grove send as delegates to represent us in your body Brother W. S. Warren and Mattie Coleman. Our membership is 44. 28 resident members. Received since last association 4, excluded 1. Our Deacons are Joe McCoy and Jim Thomas, Claud Long, Lee Coleman. We have one licensed preacher, Brother Tom Self. Our Clerk is Jim Thomas. Our pastor, Rev. W. H. Fondren. Time of meeting, Second Sunday in each month. Spiritual interest good. We have a good Sabbath School. We send \$2.80 minute funds. Our address is Thaxton, Miss.

We the Church of God, worshipping at Stetson Chapel, send as delegates to represent us in your body, Brothers J. F. May, Jim Frezell and Hoy Furgerson. Our membership is 43. We send \$5.00 as minute fund and Clerk fee. Our Deacons are B. O. Tallant, Morton May and J. W. Sims. Our Clerk, past year, Jessie Frizzille, for next year and Melvin Akes for 1926-27. Rev. George E. Lee has been pastor this year. Rev. Dave Smitherman is pastor for next year, 1926-27. Our time of meeting is 1st Sunday in each month. Our address is Toccopola, Miss., R. F. D. No. 2.

We the Church of God worshipping at Gauley Mount, send greetings. We send as delegates, Shelby D. Lee, W. A. Cook and Winnie Lee. Our Deacons are S. C. Lee, Sid Parker and W. A. Calder. Our Clerk, J. F. Parker; Treasurer, Gouldie Moutry. Our Pastor, Rev. Dave Smitherman. We send \$5.75 minute funds. Added by experience of Grace, 2; by letter, 6; by reclamation, 2;



total added 10. We have 70 members, some non-resident ones. We have a good Sunday School. We have lost one of our members, Brother W .M. Fondren. He died trusting in the Lord. In our body are two ordained preachers, Rev. Geo. E. Lee, and Rev. Dave Smitherman, who joined and is held under watch care of church, on fourth coming of his lter from Bethlehem Church. Our meeting day is the 4th Sunday in each month. Spiritual interest is good. Our address is Calhoun City, Miss., R. F. D. No. 1

We the Church of God Denominated Freewill Baptist, worshipping at New Life, send as delegates to represent us in your body, Brothers Lon Mosphis, Bell Roberts, and Bell Corder. Our pastor past year, Rev. Geo. E. Lee. Pastor for next year, Elder J. H. Norwood. Our Clerk is H. E. Roberts, Our Deacons are J. M. Corder, J. H. Morphis, T. L. Handcock. We send \$6.10 on minute fund. We have 61 resident members. We have lost two members since last association by death—Sister Nancy Morphis and Dora Wages. Our time of meeting is the 4th Sunday in each month. We have in the church treasury \$10.40. Spiritual interest is good. In our body is two ordained preachers Rev. H. B. Rogers and W. H. Tolloson. Our address is Pontotoc, Miss., R. F. D. No. 4.

We the Church of God Denominated Freewill Baptist, worshipping at Antioch send as delegates to represent us in your body, Brothers G. H. Gilmer, Emzie White, and Bud Colman, and as alternate, Brother Dock Henderson and Sister Emma Fondren. Our Clerk is W. F. Bevill. Deacons are J. P. Hamilton and W. F. Bevill. Our Pastor for 1926-27 is Rev. Dave Smitherman. We have two ordained preachers, Rev. J. H. Norwood and Rev. W. H. Fondren. Our membership is 48. We have received 2 by experience of Grace, excluded 4, lettered out 2. We send as minute funds and Clerk fee \$4.80. Our time of meeting is the Third Sunday in each month. Our address is Toccopola, Miss., R. F. D. 1.

### CHURCH COVENANT

1st. We believe that the union of Christians in a visible church is sanctioned by the teachings of Christ and the practice of His apostles, and that it is adapted to promote piety and increase Christian influences. We do now heartily enter into covenant before God and with each other.

2nd. We will constantly strive to maintain true piety in our own hearts, keep ourselves in vital communion with God and com-

mend religion to others, not only in words, but by means of a devout spirit and a holy example, always careful of each other's reputation and usefulness.

3rd. We will watch over each other in the spirit of true charity, seeking to bear each other's burdens, assist the needy, strengthen the weak, encourage the despondent, sympathize with the sorrowful, reprove the erring, win back the straying to duty, maintain wholesome discipline and receive Christian admonition in meakness, keep the unity of the spirit i nthe bonds of peace and cheerfully submit to such regulations as the majority may approve. We will contribute according to our ability for pastoral support, maintain secret and family prayer; and aid by our presence and otherwise, in sustaining public and social worship.

4th. We will give an active and consistent support to the great cause that aims to promote religion. We will refuse all sanctions to those worldly amusements which tend to lessen true piety in ourselves or weaken Christian influence over others, so that religion be not reproached on our account. May He who has promised His help enable us to keep this covenant, and grant us grace to be faithful in all things until He shall gather us to Himself and crown us with final victory. Amen.

## GOVERNMENT OF CHURCHES

The local church is an independent body so far as it relates to its own government, the transaction of its own business, the choice of its officers and the discipline of its members.

Persons who give evidence of piety are received to membership by a vote of the church. If objections are made they should be stated to the church; if the objections are judged to be valid, the candidate should not be received to fellowship. The right hand of fellowship is given to all persons received by the church.

Persons expelled from sister churches for any cause, or from any church for immorality, should not be received until first giving satisfaction.

Letters of dismissal and commendation are granted on request to members in good standing by vote of the church on their removal from its limits. Ministers are received and dismissed by letter, as other members, except when they come from or go to other denominations, in which case a council of miinisters should be called to advise respecting the action.

It is the duty of the church to unite with some association,

and represent itself regularly by delegates and letters.

No person shall be a delegate from a church or other body in our denomination unless he is a member of and appointed by the church which he claims to represent.

## **CONSTITUTION OF THE WATER VALLEY FREE-WILL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION**

1. This Association shall be known as the Water Valley Free-Will Baptist Association of Mississippi, and shall be composed of delegates from different churches forming the same, each church being entitled to three delegates and their ministers, clerks, deacons and treasurer.

2. Each church in this Association shall be an advisory body and shall control its own internal affairs.

3. This body shall be an advisory council, but having no authority over the churches.

4. The officers of this Association shall be a Moderator, Clerk and Treasurer, who shall be chosen at each session by a majority of votes.

5. This Association shall meet annually on Thursday night before the second Sunday in September of each year, and hold together until Saturday night and have the communion and feet washing on Friday night of each session.

6. Churches wishing to become members of this Association must adopt the articles of faith and this constitution, and conform to its usage.

7. We agree, as churches of this Free-Will Baptist Association, to use our best influence to promote the cause of Christ.

8. The minutes of this Association shall be the order of the business.

9. The Moderator of this Association at each annual session shall read the articles of faith in the minutes to the Association when convened.

10. The treasurer of this Association is to collect from the delegates of each church at the annual session and report to this body the first day of its meeting, ten cents per capita membership fee for each church.

11. Each member of this Association, at each session must remain until the Association adjourns.

12. Inasmuch as we have placed an evangelist in the field in this Association we ask each member of each church in this



Association to pay into the Treasury of their church \$1.00 annually for the evangelist's and pastor's and church expenses to be divided as follows: One third to evangelist; one third to pastor, and balance to church.

### **RULES OF DECORUM**

Conference shall be conducted as follows:

1. Extension for membership.
2. Hear the reading of the minutes.
3. Invite visiting Brothers and Sisters to sit with us.
4. Call for unfinished business.
5. Call for acknowledgement.
6. Call for matters of dealings which are in order to come before the church.
7. Call for new business.
8. Call for absentees.
9. Call for miscellaneous business.
10. Call for move and second to close.

### **ARTICLES OF FAITH OF THE WATER VALLEY FREE-WILL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION**

1. **THE BIBLE**—The Scripture of the Old and New Testaments were given by the inspiration of God, and the Scripture of the New Testament is our infallible rule of faith and practice.

2. **GOD**—There is one true and living God, revealed in nature as the Creator, Preserver and Righteous Governor of the universe, and in the Scriptures as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and yet as one God, infinitely wise and good, whom all intelligent creatures are supremely to love, adore and obey.

3. **CHRIST**—Christ is God manifest in the flesh. In His divine nature, truly God; in His human nature, truly man; the mediator between God and man. Once crucified, He is now risen and glorified, and is our ever present Savior and Lord.

4. **THE HOLY SPIRIT**.—The Scriptures assign to the Holy Spirit all the attributes of God. He is the Reprover, Comforter, Guide and Sanctifier of men.

5. **THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD**—God exercises a wise and benevolent Providence over all beings and all things by maintaining the constitution and laws of nature. He also performs special acts of Grace, not otherwise provided for, as the highest welfare of man requires.

6. **THE SINFULNESS OF MAN**—Man was created inno-

cent, but by disobedience fell into a state of sin and condemnation; his posterity, therefore, inherit a fallen nature of such tendencies that all who come to years of accountability, sin and become guilty before God.

7. **THE WORK OF CHRIST**—The Son of God, by His incarnation, life, sufferings, death and resurrection, effected for all a redemption from sin that is full and free, and is the ground of salvation by faith.

8. **THE TERMS OF SALVATION**—The conditions of Salvation are repentance, or sincere sorrow for sin and hearty renunciation of it. Faith, or the unreserved committal of one's self to Christ as Savior and Lord with purpose and love to obey Him in all things. In the exercise of saving faith the soul is renewed by the Holy Spirit, freed from the dominion of sin, and becomes a child of God, continuing in faith and obedience until death.

9. **ELECTION**—God determined from the beginning to save all who should comply with the conditions of salvation, hence by faith in Christ men become His elect.

10. **FREEDOM OF THE WILL**—The human will is free and self-controlled, having power to yield to the influence of the truth and the spirit and live, or to resist them and perish.

11. **SALVATION FREE**—God desires the salvation of all; the Gospel invite all; the Holy Spirit strives with all, and whosoever will, may "come and take the water of life freely."

12. **GOSPEL ORDINANCE**—Baptism or the immersion of believers in water, and night communion and feet washing are ordinances to be perpetuated under the gospel of universal obligation, and are to be administered to all true believers.

13. **PERSERVERANCE**—All believers in Christ, who through grace, persevere in holiness to the end of life, have promise of salvation.

14. **THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH**—The divine law requires that one day in seven be set apart from secular employment and amusements, for rest, worship, holy works and activities and for personal communion with God.

15. **RESURRECTION AND FINAL RETRIBUTION**—The Scriptures teach the resurrection of all men at the last day. They that have done good will come forth to the resurrection of life, and they that have done ill, unto the resurrection of judgement; then the wicked will "go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous unto eternal life."