

# The Gospel Herald

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“As the truth is in Jesus” (Ephesians 4:21)

For The LORD’S PILGRIMS, STRANGERS & SOJOURNERS

by

Donald E. Martin, Sr.

## *The arrow of death hath taken its flight before we drew our first breath*

*A Puritan quote from the 1600s*

*I was in a meeting two weeks ago and was called upon to speak a spell; I was led to share some comment on God’s determined purposes. During the lunch break, a dear Sister and long-standing member of the assembly sat across from me and was asking some probing questions, to sort of “feel out” how radical I may be in my theology. She first asked, since I made the statement, “You are here this very morning as God has ordained; for if you were somewhere else, you would be there instead of here.” She asked me, Brother Martin, “What if I’d chosen to not be here today?” I said, “Sister, where are you as we speak?” She said, “Well, I’m sitting here talking with at church.” I said, “Why aren’t you somewhere else?” She looked at me as if she went into “tilt” mode. She sat silent for a season, eating and thinking. Then, she said, “Can anyone die prematurely, before their time?” I said, “Absolutely not; listen to the Scriptures. If God has directed our paths and ordered our steps, how can one do other than what God has ordained?” She said, “Well, a father shot and killed his two children to death recently around here, and I don’t think God had anything to do with that.” I said, “Dear Sister, it is appointed unto man once to die: That appointment God Almighty has ordained as our breath is held in HIS HAND.” The purposes of God are often beyond our understanding and many are secret things which belong ONLY to the Almighty God of eternal glory, who can know all His ways? As we who have been blessed to believe in Christ know, “All things work together for GOOD of them that love GOD, to them that are the called according to His purpose” (Rom. 8:28). So it is with the ungodly, passed over, non-elect; ALL things are working together, accomplishing God’s decreed, divine, ordained purposes which shall, in time, be to his honor, glory and eternal praise, whether we understand or not.*

*I lament over my children’s lack of spiritual fruit being manifest, not having an interest in the things of the Lord and his Church. Yet, I am comforted in the fact that in eternal heaven, the FORMER things of this life shall be remembered NO MORE (Isa. 65:17). Therefore, ALL who inhabit eternal heaven shall rejoice together with those whom God*

*has ordained to redeem seek and eternally save. As for the others, they shall be remembered no more. No tears shall be in heaven's realm, no sorrowing Saints shall be meandering about; for ALL shall be joy, happiness, praise and worship of our worthy Lord, Saviour and Master.*

*With this closing comment, it was brought to my attention that an old Puritan penned these words: The arrow of death has taken flight before we drew a breath.*

*Think upon these things, dearly beloved, as our time has been determined to fulfill the sovereign eternal purpose of He who ORCHESTRATES ALL THINGS for HIS divine purpose, glory and honor. Bless HIM, dear Saints of God, glorify His Almighty character in Jesus' sweet and lovely name.*

*September 7, 2007*