

The **STANDARD BEARER**

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

"... Truly to pray is extraordinarily difficult. It is hard enough to pray in our own private closets when we are alone with God and express before God our own personal thanks and praise, our needs and cares, our fears and worries. It is more difficult when someone else prays in our place and we are called to make that prayer our own."

See "My Sheep Hear My Voice" — page 7

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MEDITATION

Cornelius Hanko

Serving God As He Is

Ques. 96. What doth God require in the second commandment?

Ans. That we in no wise represent God by images, nor worship Him in any other way than He has commanded in His Word.

Ques. 97. Are images then not at all to be made?

Ans. God neither can nor may be represented by any means: but as to creatures: though they may be represented, yet God forbids to make, or have any resemblance of them, either in order to worship them or to serve God by them.

Ques. 98. But may not images be tolerated in the churches, as books to the laity?

Ans. No, for we must not pretend to be wiser than God, who will have His people taught, not by dumb images, but by the lively preaching of the Word.

Lord's Day 35. Heidelberg Catechism.

Let us bow down and worship!

Let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker!

Let us worship in the beauty of holiness! For this God is our God forever and ever!

To us belongs deepest humility, holy fear, loving devotion, trembling adoration! For He is GOD! The Holy One of Israel is His Name! He is Jehovah, our covenant God!

God commands us in the first commandment of His law: Hear, O My people, I am God, even your God, besides Me there is and can be no other! I am transcendent beyond all that is creature! I alone am the Foundation of life and blessing!

Now in the second commandment He adds: I am God in all the fulness of My eternal perfections! I am jealous of My honor. Love and serve Me as I am!

"Thou shalt not make unto thyself any graven image."

That eliminates all the luminaries of the heavens, every fish and monster of the sea, every creature upon the earth, whether it be like unto corruptible man, or to birds, or four-footed beasts, or creeping things.

Abraham saw images representing heathen gods already in Ur of the Chaldees. Already then these had become a temptation in his family. Rachel cherished her household gods. Jacob's descendants saw the images of the gods of the Egyptians and remembered them when they were in the wilderness.

At Sinai Jehovah reminds Israel that "ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spoke to you from Horeb, out of the midst of the fire." They saw many signs. They heard the voice of the Lord that filled them with terror. But they saw no likeness.

Moses did see the glory of God, while he was hidden in the cleft of the rock and God passed by, but even the glory he saw, that still shone from his face when he returned to the camp, was not the being of God. No man has or can see GOD!

Israel had many types and shadows which pictured to them the spiritual and the heavenly. They

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had the House of God and the presence of God in the Most Holy Place, but they never saw God!

Christ, the Son of God, came in the likeness of sinful flesh, born of a virgin. The apostle John tells us: "And we beheld His glory, the glory of the only begotten Son of the Father, full of grace and truth." Even though His glory shone forth in His words and deeds, His divinity always remained hidden behind His humanity.

At the baptism of Jesus John saw the Holy Spirit descending upon Jesus in the form of a dove. Many have concluded from this that the Holy Spirit can be represented by the form of a dove. Not the Spirit, but the descending was like a dove descends upon an object.

There was the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, which was accompanied by many signs, showing the presence, the power, and the working of the Spirit; but no one saw any visible sign of the Spirit Himself. In fact, the Spirit of Christ in the church never speaks or acts on His own, but Christ speaks and works through Him. He reveals God in Christ to us as the God of our salvation dwelling in us.

Even in heaven we shall not see God, except in the face, that is, by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Let this be a warning to us, lest we corrupt ourselves by making a likeness of God, either in reality or in our imagination! This was done, not only by Aaron at Sinai, and later by Jeroboam, the first king of the ten tribes, but is also repeated today, possibly more often than before. We live in a audiovisual age. We not only gather knowledge by our hearing, listening, but also at the same time by seeing. Our sense of hearing has become dulled, so that we want to see as well as hear. Although God has purposely not preserved for us a picture of the Man of sorrows, many have contrived a picture of Jesus as a very attractive, model man. Yet this is a distortion of the Jesus of the Scriptures. Many hymns in our day stress the person of Jesus, usually as a very kind and loving person, while God is rarely mentioned; and God's righteousness and justice are entirely ignored, even in Jesus. Ministers carry with them various objects to demonstrate the subject of their sermon, often distracting the attention from the Word to the object. Worship services are made "appealing" by introducing dialogue, solos, drama,

movies, liturgical dances, all as a part of the divine worship service that is centered upon man, rather than God!

But how about us? Have we searched our souls to see whether there be any sort of image worship in us?

"Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them."

"God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth!" (John 4:24).

The fact that God is a Spirit of infinite perfections already precludes the possibility of making a visible or tangible form to represent Him. Would you want a picture in your home, purported to be a picture of your mother, yet disguised by every resemblance to a woman of the world? How much less should we attempt to give form or likeness to Him who may not and cannot be simulated!

We have the Spirit of Christ in our hearts. Through the Word and by the testimony of the Spirit we have the assurance of Jehovah: I love you with an eternal love. I have purchased you unto Myself with the blood of My dear Son. I have delivered you from the realm of Satan and from the bondage of sin. You are Mine! To you is My promise: "I will be your God!"

The righteous God, who thinks and wills and judges righteously, declares us righteous in Christ, free from sin and guilt and worthy of eternal covenant fellowship with Him forever! The Holy One of Israel, who dwells in the dazzling brightness of His eternal perfections as God above all, blessed forever, makes us in a creaturely measure like unto Himself, saints in Christ Jesus! The God of all grace adorns us with His beauty of true knowledge, righteousness, and holiness. He who is Love and loves us as His own, spreads His love abroad in our hearts that we may love Him as sons and daughters in His house.

As children of the living God we worship Him, not with a mere form worship that expresses itself in moments of exuberant emotion, traumatic cries and shouts, as the heathen do, but we worship Him in Spirit and in truth! In faith we humbly respond to Him by saying: O My God!

Ours is a worship in *truth*. For God is truth. He reveals Himself as the true and living God in His Son, Jesus Christ, who is the Word, the complete revelation of the fulness of our God. He is the Way. No man cometh unto the Father but by Him, for He leads us into all truth. In His light we see the light. He is the source of all life, and therefore also our Life and our salvation.

Christ is for us the Way, the Truth, and the Life

by His Spirit in our hearts. This Spirit of Christ never testifies of Himself, but only always of God in Christ. Even as Christ speaks to us through the infallible Scriptures, so the Spirit applies that testimony to our hearts. The Scriptures are the Guide, but also the content of our serving God. Not we determine how God must be served, but God does, giving us His directives in His Word. Scripture knows of no conflict between God's love and His justice. Even this second command warns us that God is jealous of His honor, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of those who hate Him. Hate runs in generations, and so does God's justice. It was in fear for this justice that our forefathers, realizing their own guilt of sin, would pray: Cut us not off in our generations! If God were to deal with us according to our sins, we and our children would all perish under His consuming wrath! But God in His mercy gave Christ as our substitute, and in His justice visited our sins upon Christ in righteous judgment. God still angers upon our sins, but He is slow to anger and plenteous in mercy, because of His forgiving love in Christ. God is merciful unto His people, showing that mercy unto the thousands that love Him and *keep His commandments*.

Yet we so often question God! We complain about the weather, about our troubles, about anything we can find to raise a complaint. It is amazing that God does not grow weary of our constant complaining. We question His wisdom, His almighty power, and even His goodness. We often like to treat Him like a lowly servant, whom we can tell how to direct our lives, or whom we can ignore until we need Him, and then He must stand ready to our beck and call. We sin against Him, yet we think lightly of it. Often we go to the worship services on Sunday without a real desire in our hearts, we sing without enthusiasm, and we listen critically to the preaching of the Word, as if we can determine what we shall and what we shall not accept from the preaching. We listen to a man instead of asking what God through Christ is saying to us!

God will be served, not by dumb images, but by the lively preaching of His Word. Our worship is not primarily for us, but must be for God's sake, to His glory! Our hearts must overflow, even burst with joy, in thanks and praise to Him, the Fountain of life, from whom all blessings flow.

Therefore we come together in the communion of saints on the Sabbath Day to *worship*. Appropriately our services begin with a divine benediction and a doxology, and they are also concluded with blessing and praise. Many of the psalms we sing are songs of praise and adoration. It is in that attitude of heart and mind that we approach God as empty

vessels to be filled out of His fulness with grace for grace. We come as weary pilgrims, laying aside for a moment our pilgrim's staff, to drink from the Fountain of eternal life. We step, as it were, out of the battle zone, just long enough to find peace and rest for our souls, that we may carry on the battle for another week. We receive so much; we always need still more!

The Dutch psalmbook has a versification of the ten commandments, which ends in this strain:

O that we would keep Thy commandments,
Show us Thy mercy, O Most High!
Give Thy grace to strengthen us,
That we may keep them in thankfulness!

Editor's Notes

Changes. This issue is the first of Volume 62. As we indicated in our previous issue, there will be several changes introduced. Here they are: 1) Rev. James Slopsema will alternate with Rev. Cornelius Hanko in our *Meditation* department. 2) Prof. Herman Hanko will be in charge of a new department, *Walking In The Light*, dealing with contemporary ethical issues; this department will appear after the final installment of *My Sheep Hear My Voice*. 3) Prof. Robert Decker will be in charge of *All Around Us*, replacing Rev. G. Van Baren. 4) Rev. Van Baren will introduce a new department, *Good Morning, Alice*. 5) Rev. Ronald Hanko will share *Taking Heed To The Doctrine* with Rev. Herman Veldman, but will no longer write for *In His Fear*. 6) We welcome to our staff the Rev. Barry Gritters, who will share *In His Fear* with Rev. A. den Hartog. Again this volume-year we hope to present three special issues. The first is planned for December 1, and the theme will be the Antithesis.

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Question Box. Our Question Box has been empty for a long time. And though our Question Box editor, Rev. C. Hanko, does considerable traveling about our country, he is still ready to answer your questions. In view of his travels, it is probably better to send your questions to me for forwarding to him.

* * * * *

New Publication. For a long time Ursinus's *Commentary on the Heidelberg Catechism* has been unavailable, except in hard-to-get used copies. Recently, through the urging of the Eureka Classis, Reformed Church in the U.S. (German Reformed Church), Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing

Company has published a reprint. This a very nicely done, hard-cover volume. The usual price is \$20. Reformed Book Outlet is making it available for \$13.95 (plus \$1.40 for mail orders). Their address is: 3505 Kelly, Hudsonville, MI 49426. Presbyterian and Reformed and Eureka Classis are to be congratulated on this reprint.

* * * * *

Book Requests. Now and then I get requests for various hard-to-get books and brochures from the early history of our Protestant Reformed Churches. Below is a partial list of some of the books recently requested. If you have a copy of any of these which you can spare, please send it to me, care of the Seminary: 4949 Ivanrest Ave., SW, Grandville, MI 49418. Here is the list:

H. Hoeksema, *The Protestant Reformed Churches in America*

H. Danhof & H. Hoeksema, *Van Zonde en Genade*

H. Hoeksema, *God's Goodness Always Particular*

H. Hoeksema, *Calvin, Berkhof, and H.J. Kuiper*

*The Standard Bearer
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gift for the sick
and shut-in.*

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EDITORIAL

South Africa — Another Viewpoint

Both in the secular and in the religious press South Africa is very much in the news at present. Almost unanimously the white minority government is condemned for its apartheid policy and for its recent actions in suppressing terrorism and rebellion on the part of those who have chosen these means of attempting to bring an end to apartheid. The *Standard Bearer* has not commented substantively on the whole matter, but has only hinted from time to time that we were not hearing the whole story about South Africa in our press. Besides, we have criticized and expressed our disagreement in book reviews of the stance taken by various Reformed churches and leaders and writers with respect to apartheid and the alleged "heresy" of apartheid.

Recently Prof. Hanko shared with me a letter which he had received from a South African reader of both our *Standard Bearer* and our *Protestant Reformed Theological Journal*, a man with whom Prof. Hanko has occasional correspondence. I may add that this correspondent is not one of the "Dutch" South Africans. Because this letter is personal and was not intended for publication, I will not mention the correspondent's name, nor quote the entire letter. However, he makes some very interesting comments about the situation in South Africa; and in doing so he furnishes a different viewpoint. I thought our readers would be interested in his viewpoint.

His comments begin as follows:

"It has been very interesting to note some odd (i.e. occasional, HCH) comments on the situation here in South Africa in the *Standard Bearer*. Quite in contrast to the anti-South Africa stance taken by the media (which in my opinion is very nearly 100% left-wing throughout the world). The violence that is occurring in S.A. today is without doubt instigated from outside the country, but with under-

ground communist agitators inside the country, aided and abetted by the Rev. Trouble Makers, Bishop Tutu and Dr. Alan Boesak. Both of these gentlemen proclaim themselves true leaders of their people, but in fact their following is very small indeed. But they are experts in inflammatory speeches and rabble rousing. The furthest thing from their thoughts is the calling of men and women to repentance and faith in Christ."

He then sheds light on the tribal situation in S.A. which makes it plain that the situation there is by no means the same as with the racial (black vs. white) situation in our own country in the integration struggle. He writes as follows:

"What many outside S.A. fail to understand is the fact that we have about 13 main tribal groupings who speak different languages and have different cultures. Among these tribes there are many responsible men who are the truly elected leaders of their people, (but) known to the outside world as stooges of the Pretoria regime (the Botha government, HCH). This, of course, is typical left-wing jargon which clouds the issues. I often think it is strange how little notice is taken of Chief Buthelezi, the leader of the Zulu nation, which is the largest group in S.A. A man of high integrity and, as I understand it, a Christian. Believe me, he is very critical of many aspects of affairs in this country, but nevertheless is willing to cooperate and work towards solutions that will do away with many of the difficulties."

Our correspondent has this to say with respect to the integration situation:

"We hear strange comments from people who profess to be experts on S.A. For example, it seems that it is widely believed that we cannot use the same shops, that we cannot use the same restaurants and so on. All this is, of course, nonsense. Restaurants are open to whoever can afford to pay;

most hotels are open to all again for those who can afford to pay; there is no restriction on shopping. Most sport is open to all races; for example, soccer is totally integrated; athletic meetings always have people from all races"

With respect to the real problem he writes:

"All these things are really superficial. The main problem, as far as I am concerned, in S.A. is the desperate slide into humanism and the consequent blatant materialism that can be seen on every hand. The splendid Calvinistic heritage that this country has is being thrown overboard at an alarming pace. The Reformed churches are riddled with dead orthodoxy, holding to the form — and in many cases not even that — but no real belief. The only true Christian university is Potchefstroom, with Stellenbosch, in Cape Town, a pretty long way behind. But otherwise the universities are homes for pathetic liberal theologians who propagate their strange ideas almost in step with the humanistic philosophers who propagate their doctrines of despair."

Finally, he puts the "state of emergency" which

the S.A. government has declared in perspective, as follows:

"It may interest you to know that this 'state of emergency' that everyone seems to be so hysterical about affects 26 magisterial districts out of 200-odd magisterial districts in the country. The trouble by-and-large is black against black; in Durban they (the black agitators) infiltrated the Indian areas; and the latest, in Cape Town, have infiltrated the coloured areas. So you can see the authorities have an enormous task to maintain law and order, which is, or course, the prime function of government. Dr. Alan Boesak has now been arrested, and he has been asking for this for a long time. This government will not lock up anybody for disagreeing with their policies either publicly or privately; but they will not tolerate people who go out of their way to undermine government, tell blatant lies, and deliberately cause trouble."

A different viewpoint, and a different picture!

But there is another matter involved here to which we will call attention next time. HCH

MY SHEEP HEAR MY VOICE

Herman Hanko

Our Order of Worship

In previous articles we discussed the role which the minister has in the worship services. We noticed that sometimes he speaks on behalf of Christ, as Christ's ambassador, saying authoritatively what he has been given to say in Christ's name. Other times he speaks to God on behalf of the congregation assembled to worship. Especially this latter function of the minister is our interest now.

The minister speaks to God on behalf of the congregation when he speaks the votum, "Our help is in the name of the Lord . . .," when he reads the Apostolic Confession (when the congregation does not recite it in unison), and when he prays. These

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prayers which the congregation makes through its minister we discussed in the last article.

In connection with these prayers we discussed various subjects: when and how often these prayers ought to be made in the worship services, whether it is preferable to use form prayers or free prayers, whether confession of sin and absolution ought to be included in the prayers, and what is the proper posture in prayer.

We turn now to the question of the content of these prayers.

While it is certainly true that no hard and fast rules can be laid down for these public prayers in the worship service, there are certain principles which ought to be remembered by all those upon

whom falls the responsibility of praying on behalf of the congregation.

But before we enter into this subject, there is one other matter which ought briefly to be treated. I refer to the fact that, though the minister makes these prayers, they are nevertheless the congregation's prayers made through the minister. In a way, this part of the worship service is the most difficult part for the child of God who sits in the pew. While he is singing, he actively takes part in the worship. While he listens to the sermon, he appropriates the words of the minister by faith as the very Words of His Shepherd Who speaks to him. When he brings his gifts and offerings he does so in the consciousness that he actively supports the causes of God's kingdom with those material possessions which God has given to his care. But when the minister prays, there are really two acts which he must perform, and that at the same time. On the one hand, he must listen to what the minister is saying, agree with it, express his "Amen" to what is being said; and on the other hand, he must make what the minister is saying his very own in such a way that it becomes his prayer before God. He stands consciously in God's presence during the time of prayer and what the minister says, he consciously utters himself.

This is not always so easy. There is the abiding temptation, of course, to let the words of the minister enter his consciousness so that he is aware of what the minister is saying, but hardly makes these expressions his own. And, if he does only this, he may find that easily his mind begins to wander. He may begin to think about the implications of what the minister is saying so that his mind is involved in this rather than in making the words of the minister his own. And if he allows this to happen, he will find that his mind soon travels into entirely other paths far from prayer or from the things he ought to be praying about. The result is that, while the congregation prays, he may be thinking about all kinds of worldly things, evil things, problems and troubles, lusts and pleasures — all of which not only keep him from praying, but also are a kind of blasphemy in God's presence.

This is true, of course, of all public prayers in which one prays for others. It is true at family devotions around the supper table; it is true when prayers are made at various programs; it is true even when the elders of the church come to visit us on our sickbeds and pray over us. But it is also true in the worship services. Truly to pray is extraordinarily difficult. It is hard enough to pray in our own private closets when we are alone with God and express before God our own personal thanks and praise, our needs and cares, our fears and wor-

ries. It is more difficult when someone else prays in our place and we are called to make that prayer our own.

We need, in such instances especially, the power of the Spirit in our hearts so that we may pray as we ought and that our prayers may be heard by Him Who sits on the throne of His grace and hears the prayers and cries of His people. But we ought also to remember, not as an excuse in our sins, but as encouragement in our weaknesses, that the Lord is mindful of our needs, our weaknesses, our frailties: Mindful of our human frailty/is the God in Whom we trust; He Whose years are everlasting/He remembers we are dust. As our merciful Father He bears with our infirmities and hears us even when we are least deserving of it.

In discussing what are the general requisites of congregational prayers, it might be well if we bear in mind, first of all, a few "don'ts." A minister's prayer ought not to be vainly repetitious. No prayer ought to be that. But sometimes in the inner closet we struggle in prayer and wrestle with the Lord. This sometimes requires many repetitions and we strive in prayer for strength to go on, peace for our troubled hearts, and courage to bear the burdens our Lord places upon us. But these are not vain repetitions. A minister especially ought to avoid repetition in his prayer.

In the second place, congregational prayers ought not to be courses in theology. This is not to say that prayers must not be theologically sound; nor even that deep Biblical truths cannot be expressed in prayers; but a minister must not use his prayers to instruct in theology. The sermon and the Catechism room are the places for this.

In close connection with this, prayers ought not to be used to reprimand the congregation. This ought never to be the case with prayer, under any circumstances. I recall from my own childhood a parent who would use family prayers as the time to reprimand each one of his children for all the sins of the day. This is inappropriate at the dinner table; it is also inappropriate on the pulpit.

In the third place, a minister ought not to give a preview of his sermon in his prayers. I have heard this done. By the time the congregational prayers are over, I knew pretty much what the minister was going to say in the sermon. The whole basic sermon was there already in the prayer; the sermon itself was only a broadening out of the prayer.

From a positive point of view, congregational prayers, as well as all prayers, ought to contain the "requisites" of true prayer. These requisites are beautifully set forth in the Heidelberg Catechism in Q & A 117:

Q. What are the requisites of that prayer, which is acceptable to God, and which he will hear?

A. First, that we from the heart pray to the one true God only, who hath manifested himself in his word, for all things, he hath commanded us to ask of him; secondly, that we rightly and thoroughly know our need and misery, that so we may deeply humble ourselves in the presence of his divine majesty; thirdly, that we be fully persuaded that he, notwithstanding that we are unworthy of it, will, for the sake of Christ our Lord, certainly hear our prayer, as he has promised us in his word.

In other words, true prayer must always be Biblical, not in the sense of including expressions directly found in Scripture (although this is good), but in the sense that it is based in form and content on the Word of God.

This means that all congregational prayers ought to include the following elements always. 1) Congregational prayers ought, especially in the morning service, to be adapted to leading the congregation consciously into the presence of God. I say, "in the morning service especially" because the congregation often is not spiritually ready to worship God. Especially in our day this is lacking. There is no true preparation in many homes on Saturday night and Sunday morning for worship. While this is to be deplored, the minister has the added responsibility of leading the people into such a spiritual frame of mind in the worship service. He can best do this by emphasizing in His prayers the great glory of God, our unworthiness, and the great wonder of His grace in condescending to have fellowship with us through Jesus Christ.

2) In connection with this, it must be made clear to the congregation through the prayers that our only access to the throne of God's grace is through the blood of our heavenly Mediator, Jesus Christ our Lord.

3) There must be time in the prayers for thanksgiving and praise. Prayer is never only petitional. Prayer is not only a time to bring our needs before God's throne. It is a time for thanksgiving for all that God has given; and it is a time to express our praise to Him Who alone is worthy of all praise and glory.

4) Although I have briefly referred to this already, prayer must be a time for confession of sins and for seeking forgiveness for sin at the throne of grace. This must not only be a confession of sin so that each individual saint has opportunity to confess his sins, but also a time for a confession of those sins which belong to the congregation as a

whole. The congregation as a whole worships in corporate unity. The congregation as a whole has weaknesses and sins which characterize her and mar her life as the people of God. Prayer must take this into account.

5) Prayers must be made especially for the worship service. The needs of the congregation in the hour of worship must be brought to God. The congregation must ask for grace for the minister, and for herself that she may submit to God's Word in faith and receive that Word as the food of her soul. This is an important part of congregational prayers, and must not be overlooked. This is why the congregational prayers are not the time for personal prayers, either on the part of the minister or the members of the congregation. Only those personal needs which affect the corporate life of the congregation are proper in congregational prayers.

6) The needs of the congregation must be brought before the throne of God. These needs differ from week to week, from year to year. The minister must be spiritually sensitive to these needs and bring them before God. These needs are determined by the circumstances in which the congregation finds itself. They are needs that arise because God has sorely afflicted her through the loss or suffering of one of her midst, because the congregation finds itself in persecution, because sin has crept into the congregation with the need of discipline, because the congregation is reduced to poverty, because the threats of materialism or false doctrine, etc. have influenced her life. These and many more affect the congregation as a whole and these needs must be brought to God.

7) Dr. A. Kuyper says somewhere in connection with the worship services that no prayer ought to be made in the worship services which does not include a prayer for the whole of Christendom. This surely includes prayers for the denomination of which a given congregation is a part; but it recognizes the fact that God's church is found throughout the world, that we are a part of it, and that the needs of God's church everywhere are our needs. Never must a congregation become narrow and parochial so that her concerns and interests are exclusively bound up in her own congregational life. This happens sometimes, but is to be deplored.

It is evident from all this that the minister assumes a great responsibility when he prays in the name of the congregation. He must assume this responsibility carefully and prayerfully and prepare before the service for his prayers as he does for his sermon. When he does this, the congregation will also be blessed in this part of its worship.

Read and study the Standard Bearer!

FROM HOLY WRIT

George C. Lubbers

Believing All the Prophetic Scriptures

Chapter XXII

The Mystery of the Seventy Weeks in Daniel 9

"IT IS FINISHED" TO THE UTTERMOST — con't.

It is really quite noteworthy that the Hebrew infinitive *lecallee* = *to shut, restrain, finish* is translated with the Aorist infinitive in the Septuagint. The Piel degree in the Hebrew suggests that this transgression was finished *very, very much!* The Aorist infinitive expresses completed action, pointedly completed action. The great transgression which was perpetrated by the one man in Adam, and as this passed on as sin and guilt and corruption to all men, was all taken away once and for all at the end of the ages by one man, Jesus Christ. The infinitive construct here looks at this mediatorial, sacrificial work as one which in its totality was "a finishing of transgression." The definite article in the Hebrew underscores the blessed and grand fact that this was the well-known, central transgression which had to be removed by Christ in such a way that, if by the trespass of the one, death reigned by the one, much more shall they that receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one, even Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:12-21).

At this point it may be of benefit for a proper understanding of the entire verse to notice the grammatical construction (verse 24).

We must then observe that we have here placed before us six different infinitives. These are translated from the Hebrew as follows:

1. "To finish the transgression"
2. "To make an end (seal) of sins"
3. "To make reconciliation (to purge away) for iniquity"
4. "To bring in everlasting righteousness"
5. "To seal up vision and prophecy"
6. "and to anoint the most holy"

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Quite obviously we are here dealing with the two aspects of Christ's work and of our salvation. It is the removal from sin and guilt and granting us the free gift of righteousness and life. Hence, the first three infinitives refer to the removal of guilt and sin in Christ's atoning suffering and death, and the latter three refer to Christ's work as the living Savior in glory. Here we have the glad truth that if we have been saved, while we were legally enemies, by the death of God's Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved in His life (Rom. 5:10). Furthermore, we should also notice that in the first three infinitives there is a certain broadening and expansion of thought. The most basic concept is "The Transgression." It is the very conscious transgression of the commandment of God. The next speaks of "sins." These are the sins which are *all implied* in the transgression. And in the term "iniquity" we see the sinfulness of sins and of the transgression. God's law is very wide. Here we see the fulfillment of the law of God in its length and breadth, height and depth. And hence we see what it means that Christ, having loved us, loved us even unto the end (John 13:1). Behold, the manner of the love of God. God has divinely commended His own love to us when we were yet sinners!

But there is more here!

When we look carefully at the last three infinitives we see that here we get a glimpse of the power of grace. We see somewhat what it implies that we are no longer "under law" but "under grace." For here we see what it means that we receive from the fulness of Christ grace for grace. The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth became through Jesus Christ (John 1:16). Here Gabriel tells it to a trembling and thankful Daniel: "To bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy" (Dan. 9:24).

Choice words of life and comfort for God's

weary saints, looking for *the city* (Psalm 107:33-36)! Daniel hears the fulfillment of the oft sung Poet: "He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and watersprings into a thirsty ground . . ." Yes, but also: "he turneth a wilderness into a pool of water" (II Kings 3:17). And here he maketh the hungry to dwell, that they may prepare a city of habitation." Ah, who can forget this city of which the people sang at the Red Sea, the Song of Moses, "Thou wilt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, the place, O Jehovah, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in, the sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established. Jehovah shall reign for ever and ever"? Yes, this is the city and the sanctuary which Abraham saw from afar and rejoiced, the city whose Builder and Maker is God!

In the spotlight of the prophetic word, which shines like a beacon-light across the ages of the Old Testament history, Daniel sees Calvary; he sees the dying Christ hanging on the accursed tree. There he hangs, the Man of sorrows. There the veil was rent, and the Holy Spirit proclaims clearly and strongly that the way into the most Holy is opened! Amen!

Yes, it is all fully finished.

Let us see this step by step. Each stone is laid very carefully here in the text. Let him that reads understand. Thus speaks Jesus while upon the earth in His utter humiliation in this dark hour at the doorstep of Calvary. He sees the utter desolation of the earthly Jerusalem to bring in forever, by one sacrifice, the heavenly and the better city.

Secondly, He "came to make an end of sins." Seventy weeks are determined upon God's people and upon the holy city. In the seventieth "seven" this last and only Cornerstone shall be laid in Christ's blood. Yes, He came to save His people from their sins. His name is JESUS, the MESSIAH. The infinitive (verbal) "*lechatheem*" means: to set the seal upon sins. He will so remove them that it has the seal of God's approval. Sins are no more upon the statute books of God against us. God does not reckon them any longer to our account. He sees no sin in us any more, nor iniquity in Jacob. And no Balaam or any of all the hosts of hell can any longer accuse us properly in God's court. Jesus seems to allude to this when He says in John 5:27, "Work not for the food which perisheth, but for the food which abideth unto eternal life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him the Father, even God, hath sealed." The Messiah is sealed in God's appointment and anointment! No man can defrock Jesus, nor make His work and word void, Amen! And notice the plural "sins." One thinks here of the well-known words of I John 1:9, "If we confess *our sins*, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us *our*

sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Yes, Christ is the Lamb of God, Who carries away the *sin of the world*, the one great "world-sin," so to speak. But He does so in such a way that each of our "sins" is sealed in His blood as blotted out forever, so that He may come the second time "without sin" to them that wait for Him unto salvation (Heb. 9:28)!

The third matter, the third duty to which the Messiah is appointed of God is "to make reconciliation for iniquity." Here we are brought into the very holy of holies of the Old Testament typical sanctuary. Here we stand in the great feast of atonement when the high priest went into the most holy place, not without blood. Here we are reminded of the two goats, which were used to signify this typical reconciliation from sin, and the sprinkling of the blood upon the mercy-seat. It was sprinkled on the mercy-seat. It was sprinkled on the mercy-seat above the tables on the law. Here mercy and justice kissed each other. The verb which is in the infinitive form (a verbal) really means: *to cover*. When sin is covered, it is not "put under the rug" but it is covered before the eyes of a holy and just God, so that these sins are forever, removed, and the sinner, the guilty, damnable sinner is justified before God. It means to restore into the favor of God, the sinner, who once stood in the pristine beauty of being able to have the right to be God's servant. Thus man was created. He did not need to attempt to hide from God. He could have boldness to talk with God, as a son — to God, the Father of all creation. But he fell. He became *legally* an enemy of God; he is accounted an enemy. He "dying he must die" in the just judgment of God, until full and complete satisfaction for sin has been brought. And when "sin is covered" it means that the sin is so paid, that God no longer sees it as sin which must be punished as an offending of the highest majesty of God!

For the sin which must be covered is what the text calls "iniquity." This means that the sinner acts crookedly. It is a breaking of the justice of God. The noun "iniquity" as the translation of "*awoon*" occurs some 218 times in the Old Testament. When the sinner comes to heart-felt sorrow for his sins by the enlightening and quickening grace, which makes his refractory will pliable and willing, then he confesses the *iniquity of his sins* (Psalm 32:5)! Hear David speak of this in the well-known penitential Psalm, the fifty-third: "According to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions; wash me thoroughly from mine *iniquity*, and cleanse me from my sin." O, the sinfulness of both adultery and murder! Yes, murder to attempt to cover up before men the sin of adultery! Yes, David learned from and by the law the sinfulness of

sin (Rom. 7:13). Notice some very striking usages of the term "iniquity" in Isaiah 50:1; 59:2; 53:5, 6, 11. Did the Lord not cause the iniquity of us all to be the ground for the bruising of the Christ at Gethsemane and at Calvary?

And now Gabriel tells Daniel of the dying Christ to come. As we said earlier, the spotlight of prophecy shines very brightly in a dark and dismal situation in Israel's history and sorry state. Behold, the morning-star is seen arising!

But here and here only we are given the real answer to Daniel's deep cry for God to look down upon His holy city. Was this not the cry of every child of God when he left the temple in the Old Testament? But, O when they hang their harps

upon the willows, and when they cannot sing the Lord's song in a strange land. This is very painful. What a passionate plea of a Daniel who must have joined in with the weeping Israel, "Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I remember thee not, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy." Yes, let Edom say, "rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof" (Ps. 137:6, 7). But God hears the prayer of the righteous man, Daniel, which cries, "O Lord, hear, O Lord do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God, because thy city and thy people are called by thy name."

And the Son, the Messiah said: Behold, I come to do thy will, O God! I long with great longing for that moment at Calvary. There I will cry and cry until it is "finished." Amen.

ALL AROUND US

Robert D. Decker

As our readers know, for the past several years this rubric of our *Standard Bearer* has been capably edited by the Rev. Gise Van Baren. His contributions were informative, well written, and often provocative. The undersigned will try to maintain the same high standards for "All Around Us" in future issues. Our intention is to keep our readers informed concerning what is happening in the

church generally. We will concentrate our efforts especially on the churches which are nearest to us, those of the Reformed and Presbyterian tradition. Critique, suggestions for improvement, news worthy items from you, the readers of *The Standard Bearer*, are welcome. Send them to the undersigned at the Seminary address.

Alcoholism

The Grand Rapids Press recently published an interesting article on this subject in its editorial section. This article first appeared in the *Los Angeles Times*. While its authors, two university professors, do not write from a Biblical perspective, they do maintain that classifying alcoholism as a disease is at least open to question. Here are some of their comments:

Today many, if not most, of those in the mental health professions are willing to call virtually any deviant or excessive behavior an "illness" or an "addiction" — including violent crime, gambling, jogging, sex, work, eating and, especially, drinking alcohol.

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This alleged disease of "alcoholism" is said to be epidemic, afflicting at least 10 million Americans and those close to them.

These behavioral "illnesses" are seen as medical problems despite the lack of any evidence of pathological causes. This deludes the public, and it allows so-called ill people to avoid moral, and sometimes legal, responsibility for their behavior.

Often, the labeling of a person as an alcoholic or a drug abuser as one suffering from the sickness of drug abuse is a refuge from accountability. Celebrities often go from shame to lionization when they publicly explain (usually called "courageously admitting") their professional and-or personal failings as the consequences, not of lost ability or irresponsibility, but of alcohol or drugs . . . Is there any validity to the no-

tion of alcoholism as a disease? The answer is complicated.

"Alcoholism" means different things to different people . . . This confusion over definition leads to confusion and dispute over the causes and cures of alcoholism. The media report, frequently and uncritically, that there is a consensus among medical "experts" that inborn biochemical factors are the cause of alcoholism, or at least predispose alcoholics to their condition (an argument that, again, begs the question of what alcoholism is).

But Harvard psychiatrist George Vaillant (who supports the disease metaphor), in his landmark study on alcoholism, argues that people are not psychologically disposed to become alcoholic, and says that a biochemical cause will likely never be found: "I think it would be as unlikely as finding one [biochemical cause] for basketball playing."

Scripture does not forbid the moderate use of alcoholic beverages. Even Jesus changed water into wine at the wedding feast at Cana and this is termed the "beginning of miracles" (cf. John 2:1-11). Scripture also warns us in no uncertain terms against the *sin* of drunkenness. (Cf. Proverbs 23:21; Romans 13:13; I Corinthians 5:11.) Scripture also assures us that no drunkard will inherit the Kingdom of Heaven (I Corinthians 6:10).

It cannot be denied that drinking to excess leads to physical and psychological dependence. Habitual drunkenness also results in the destruction of the body. While all this is true, drunkenness itself is not a disease, but a terrible sin. The cure, therefore, is the grace of God in Christ Jesus.

Making Merchandise of the Church

Among the signs of the coming of Christ and of the end of the world is the fact that many false teachers and false Christs shall come and deceive many. Jesus said: "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many . . . And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many . . . Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect" (Matthew 24:4, 5, 11, 23, 24). Scripture warns us concerning false teachers: "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that brought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of" (II Peter 2:1, 2). These false teachers are motivated by covetousness and "with feigned words make merchandise of you . . ." (II Peter 2:3). In other words the false teachers make money, often a great deal of it, off God's people. They use the gospel and God's people to make a fortune for themselves. *The Banner* in its August 26, 1985 issue reports on two well-known and rich evangelists:

"Electronic evangelist Jim Bakker, of the 'Praise the Lord Club,' is building a \$56 million luxury hotel in South Carolina that will feature 'world class' accessories like a shopping mall, spa, and custom made furniture.

"The complex is necessary, says Bakker, because existing religious-retreat centers are 'run-down, tacky, and falling apart . . . We're using better bait to win people to Jesus Christ'."

"Oral Roberts, the 67 year-old evangelist whose ministry heals the sick and raises \$60 million a year, is about to unveil another miracle in Tulsa, Okla., where he founded a university and a hospital. The next project is a seven-acre attraction, called a Healing Center, that will cost \$15 million and will be able to accommodate up to 2 million visitors a year. Exhibits and special effects are being designed by Peter Wolf Concepts of Dallas, which has done work for Broadway shows and world fairs.

"Besides shops, restaurants, and a television studio, the park will offer a 'Walk Through the Bible,' where tourists will witness God's creation of the world, the parting of the Red Sea, and Moses' receiving of the Ten Commandments. The exhibits will attempt to create the illusion of real miracles. 'Journey into Faith' will depict the life and faith-

healing ministry of Oral Roberts.

"'Providing people with fun is not our sole purpose,' said a Roberts spokesperson. But Jeffrey Hadden, a sociology professor and author of *Prime Time Preachers*, calls the park a 'last-ditch effort to try to save Oral's shaky financial empire.' (*Grand Rapids Press*)"

One cannot help wondering how long the Lord will tolerate such flagrant blasphemies. One thing is sure, in the light of Scripture, our Lord's return cannot be too distant. Let us, when we see these things, not be deceived. Let us, rather, be sober and prayerfully watch for Jesus' coming. Indeed, the end of all things is at hand.

Seceders or Schismatics?

An article under this title appears in *The Banner* (August 26, 1985). The writer, Dr. John H. Bratt, asks: "Yet, because of sin, a time sometimes comes when the 'faithful remnant' is forced to separate from the church. When does the breaking point come?" Bratt's answer is: "It comes when the parent body retrogresses to the point that it loses its claim to be the *true* church of Christ and demotes itself to the level of a *false* church. It happens when the church descends to that level of falsity which distorts or scuttles the biblical doctrine of salvation: vicarious atonement, redemption through the blood of Christ on the cross, and salvation by grace through faith." After citing four examples from church history to support his contention (Calvin's calling the Roman Catholic Church the false church because "it had allowed and provided for the intrusion of human merit into its concept of salvation," the *Afscheiding* of 1834, the *Doleantie Kerk* under the leadership of Abraham Kuyper in 1886, and the formation of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in 1936 under the leadership of J. Gresham Machen) Bratt deals with what he calls "The Key Question. What about the pivotal doctrine of 'salvation by grace alone' (along with the related doctrines of the deity of Christ, the virgin birth, his physical resurrection, and his second coming — doctrines which Calvin calls *non-negotiable*)? Is *that* doctrine taught,

upheld, and propagated? Are deviations from *that* doctrine strongly disciplined?

"If a church jeopardizes, waters down, compromises, or repudiates that doctrine, that church lapses into the category of being a false church. Unless that falsity is rectified, secession must follow in order to preserve the faith."

We certainly agree with Dr. Bratt that schism is a terrible sin. Our Lord's Supper form lists it among those sins which bar one from the table of the Lord. We and all Christians do and ought to deplore the sin of schism. We also agree that when a church denies the doctrine of salvation by grace alone through faith in Jesus Christ, it can no longer claim to be a manifestation of the true church of Christ. The faithful remnant must come out of such a church. This after all is the material principle of the 16th century reformation, the *sola fide* principle. Nevertheless, we have two questions the answers to which ought to be self-evident. 1) Is not Arminianism because "it allows and provides for the intrusion of human merit into its concept of salvation," a legitimate ground for secession? Or are the Canons of Dordt meaningless? 2) When the formal principle of the 16th century reformation is denied, the *sola scriptura* principle, is not *that* a legitimate ground for secession?

The Standard Bearer makes a thoughtful gift for the sick & shut-in.

Good Morning, Alice

Gise J. Van Baren

(Alice Van Baren: b. August 12, 1935; d. March 24, 1982; after suffering for two years with ALS. She was a life-long member of the South Holland, Ill. Protestant Reformed Church. The last two years of her life she spent at the home of her brother John in Grand Rapids, Mi.)

We tell this story, not so much of a sickness, a terrible and fatal sickness — though this too — but of communion of saints. Even that must be told but in part, for words can not express the whole, with the prayer that the “part” may be of great encouragement and help to others.

One could show a sizable box, still in our possession, filled with cards: sympathy cards, birthday cards, Christmas cards, “I’m just thinking of you” cards sent to one grievously ill — all sent within a span of less than two years. One could mention many visits, many gifts, many flowers, many prayers during this same period of time. Truly the wonder of communion of saints is known in affliction. Here we must limit ourselves to one set of cards — cards which came almost daily during the last three months of Alice’s life. It’s the story of cards which uniquely comforted and assured — and we present them here for the comfort of many others.

It was at the end of June, 1980, that the call came to my study. A cousin from the Chicago area was on the line. She had accompanied Alice to the doctor’s office that day to hear the diagnosis of tests Alice had recently taken. The doctor informed Alice that she had ALS; it was incurable, but (so he assured her) she would not die of the disease. This cousin was very sure that Alice didn’t fully understand yet the seriousness of the disease. It was Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, or more commonly known as “Lou Gehrig’s disease.” The prognosis: a

two-year average life span with increasing debilitation — resulting finally in complete helplessness.

Certainly, then, with such an incurable and terminal illness, cards and letters, prayers and visits, from saints of God take on a wonderful meaning. It’s the expression, “We know. We care. In a little way, we are suffering with you.” The special set of cards Alice received totaled 98, and each wonderfully assured of God’s nearness and great love. Later, about a year and a half after the diagnosis, these cards began to arrive daily. None identified the writer. The cards were simply signed, “A friend.” We first joked about this “friend” to Alice. We examined with her the postmark — trying to make our guesses who would be sending these comforting messages. But Alice never had any idea who the person was — and we believed that she preferred it that way. In a real sense, the cards did represent, as the writer expressed, all of her many friends who were thinking of her and praying for her. How she looked for the next card each day! The first three cards were ordinary greeting cards, signed simply, “Your friend.” The fourth and later cards differed. The fourth card had a Scripture text written on the bottom: Isaiah 40:27-31.

The next card, received the following day, revealed the reason for the text. It was a personal note of hope and encouragement based on that Word of God.

Dear Alice:

I hope you were blessed by reading Is. 40:27-31. Even though I have never faced a trial such as yours, these verses speak to me in my life too.

Sometimes in raising our children, and battling my own flesh, it seems my way is hidden from the Lord. But oh how true: that when I “wait upon the Lord, my strength is renewed.” Ah, but then why can’t I, or won’t I, wait more upon Him . . .

Your friend

Please read Ps. 34:6-10

We heard Alice complain of a numbness in her left hand and later also in her left leg as early as March 21, 1980. In April, she had fallen as she walked up a flight of stairs at the office where she worked. She had cut her lip in falling — requiring a number of stitches. At the time, none thought this was anything but a “normal” tripping. In retrospect, we realized that this fall likely was caused by muscle weakness at that time already. But by May, Alice increasingly mentioned the growing numbness and weakness of her arm and leg. We also noticed that she could never mention this without becoming extremely upset. Obviously, she was concerned that something was wrong — perhaps a tumor somewhere? Only later we realized that one of the symptoms of ALS was an inability to control one’s emotions well.

What a comfort, then, much later, was the card that came:

Dear Alice:

Good morning. I hope and pray that it is a good morning for you, and that you are feeling God’s nearness. I guess that’s why I wanted you to read Psalm 34:6-10: “They that seek the Lord shall not want any good.”

Seek the Lord! That’s the answer. The “good” is always there, but it’s when we seek the Lord that we understand that we lack nothing.

The good I desire may be one thing, the good you desire may be another. But when we live seeking the Lord with all our hearts, He gives us the peace that His way for us is good and lacking nothing. May you experience that peace in this day, Alice.

Love, Your friend

Please read Phil. 4:19

It was at this time that Alice was scheduled for an annual physical at her regular doctor. The father of this doctor had, years before, died of ALS. And her doctor, shortly after diagnosing Alice’s disease, himself came down with it. Although he said nothing at this time, he surely suspected the diagnosis — and sent her immediately to St. Luke’s Presbyterian Hospital in Chicago for tests.

The next note, then, was particularly encouraging under those kinds of discouraging circumstances. Oh, to have the reminder of fellow saints in time of need:

Good Morning, Alice:

I know it may not be morning as you read this, but it is 8:00 as I write this to get it in my mailbox and off to you — so — I’ll say: “Good morning!”

Before I started writing you, I had wished there was something I could do for you. You don’t know me at all, and I’ve only seen you twice, and yet I had a desire to

help you somehow; maybe read from God’s Word to encourage you.

I’m going to continue to be just “your friend” because I want to represent all the “friends” of yours who don’t know you well, and yet often remember you in prayer to God.

But you know, Alice, now that I’ve been writing you, (and the first couple notes were not easy) I think I’m continuing it just as much for myself as for you! I look forward to saying “Hello” and I look forward to finding a verse in Scripture for us. So you see, God has used you to bless me.

I guess Phil. 4:19 really “fits” today. It has always been a favorite verse, but this morning it hits home a little more. Only my God supplies all my needs out of His boundless riches only through Christ’s sacrifice.

May you feel God’s blessing today, Alice, and fill all your needs out of His riches.

“See” you soon, “Your friend”

Please read John 17:20-26

Several of the family took Alice to St. Luke’s Hospital on Sunday, June 8, 1980. Alice was hardly able to answer necessary questions at the admitting office — she would choke up and tears copiously flowed. Finally, with great effort, and much patience, the forms were filled out, and Alice was taken to her room. Alice had difficulty talking about her fears — but she nodded her head in agreement when we discussed the grace of God that is sufficient for every need — whatever God’s will for us might be. We read together from Psalm 46 and prayed for that necessary grace now.

Hi, Alice:

What a beautiful sunny morning!

Although I haven’t seen the little bird on this card, our pine tree is “home” to many, many birds; and I’m hoping the cardinal stays here this year too.

I’ve read over and over again Jesus’ prayer in John 17. It is really hard for me to comprehend what I know is true — that Jesus here is praying for me.

Jesus loves us so, that He desired us to be with Him everlastingly, and willingly suffered to make that possible.

And more, He makes it known to us so that His love may be in us.

Hard to understand, but wonderful comfort!

In His love, Your friend

Please read Gen. 39:1-3

***Take the time to read and study
The Standard Bearer!***

BIBLE STUDY GUIDE

Jason L. Kortering

Genesis — The Beginnings (1)

The title of the first book of the Bible, Genesis, is derived from the opening word, *Bereshith*, which translated means, beginning. Hence, it sets forth the keynote of the whole book, the beginning of all things. This is further expanded by the Septuagint Bible which uses the Latin word, *geneseos*, origin, generations, and applies it to the generations mentioned in subsequent chapters.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BOOK

In a real sense, the approach we take to this first book of the Bible will determine how we read the entire Bible. Recent controversy in the churches, the Reformed churches included, on the subject of what the Bible says about the origin of the universe is significant. Too many people are willing to cast aside the teaching of the Bible for evolution, even a so-called Theistic evolution or progressive creationism, by simply saying, "What's the difference? Everyone is entitled to his opinion. The Bible doesn't tell us *how* God created, it only tells us that *fact* of creation." If we concede this point, such differences will be tolerated in our dealing with the rest of the Bible. We can interpret all the miracles in different ways, even the virgin birth of the Lord. The crucial point is this: method of interpreting Genesis will affect our method of interpreting the whole Bible and will greatly affect our belief in all that God says in His Word.

We accept the account of Genesis as the revelation of God written by Moses. We must be careful to distinguish God's revelation that was given to Adam and Noah and others from that given to Moses. Certainly there was revelation given by God long before Moses wrote it down. The difference is that, prior to this, all revelation was oral and became tradition by word of mouth. Here for the first time it took on written form. Hence, the truth

of creation was well known to Adam, Seth, Enoch, Noah, Shem, Abraham, etc. Through Moses, this knowledge assumed a permanent record which became the basis for subsequent copies which were preserved in various forms until our present day. Through the wonder of the Holy Spirit's inspiration, we have today the record of God's Word revealed to Moses concerning creation and subsequent history.

We conclude from this, that the content of Genesis is historical revelation. The details of the creation days are recorded by Moses under divine direction as events that took place on successive days. The narrative of the fall, including the speaking serpent, is a record of an event that took place in the Garden of Eden. This is true of the flood, the call of Abraham, the journey of Egypt, and all the rest.

By doing this, we follow the example of others who took this approach under God's guidance. Paul referred to the creation of Eve as taking place after the creation of Adam, the significance being important for the headship of the husband over the wife (I Tim. 2:13). Jude referred to Enoch as being the seventh from Adam (vs. 14). Christ called those who promoted the true faith, "sons of Abraham" (Luke 19:9). He also mentioned that the flood was a pre-figuration of the end of the world when the wicked would be complacent in their sins (Matt. 24:38, 39). Surely, we are in good company when we accept the historicity of the Old Testament events from creation to Malachi.

The real importance of doing this is that we also bow before the message that God is bringing to us through sacred history. Acceptance of the wonder work of God in creation as a historical fact, brings us face to face with a wonderful God! Even creation itself testifies of God (Romans 1:20). By faith we accept the wonder of it all (Heb. 11:3). Our Reformed

fathers explain it as bowing before our Heavenly Father, Who by His power made all things and upholds it all by His power, and thereby is qualified to care for us (Lord's Day 9 of the Heidelberg Catechism). Through the fall of Adam and Eve into sin, death reigned from Adam to Moses (Romans 5:14). The only hope for man is the promise of Christ Who will come as the seed of the woman (Genesis 3:15). Christ Jesus is the golden thread woven throughout the fabric of the Old Testament. By name and by prophetic type He appears upon every page, and we do well to read these pages looking for His presence. Even then, God is a discriminating God. His salvation is not available for all, nor intended for all. God's sovereign purpose of election and reprobation shows itself immediately upon the pages of Holy Writ. The hearts of Adam and Eve are saddened by the murder of Abel by Cain. In the flood, God reveals both salvation and judgment. Jacob is distinguished from Esau. The nation of Israel is set apart from the other nations of the earth as God's special people. God is a God of the antithesis, of spiritual separation, and of particular salvation. This becomes clear to us as we consider the contents of Genesis in outline form.

A BRIEF OUTLINE

Besides the detail of the creation, Genesis mentions ten distinct generations (beginnings) and we will follow them in our outline.

1. The narrative of the creation (1:1-2:3). The great summary statement begins it all, "In the beginning, God created . . ." (1:1). Then follows a description of the chaos which God created (1:2), the creation of the first day — light (1:3-5), the second day — firmament (1:6-8), the third day — dry land and herbs (1:9-13), the fourth day — heavenly bodies (1:14-19), fifth day — fowls and fish (1:20-23), sixth day — animals and Adam and Eve including the instruction to be fruitful. God gave His evaluation of the entire creation: it was all very good (1:24-31). The seventh day — rest (2:1-3).

2. The generation of the heaven and earth (2:4-4:26). God formed the plants and watered them by a mist (2:4, 5). God formed Adam out of the dust and breathed into him the breath of life (2:6, 7). Details are given of the Garden of Eden (2:8-14). Adam is placed in the midst of the garden and instructed to care for it and not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil (2:15-17). Eve is created from the rib of Adam and partakes of his own nature (2:18-23). Instruction is given concerning marriage (2:24, 25). The history of the fall follows: the serpent approaches Eve (3:1-5), Eve eats the forbidden fruit and gives to Adam (3:6, 7); God calls them to account and they make excuses (3:8-13); God speaks to the serpent, including the promise of

Christ's coming (3:14, 15); God declares the consequence for Eve and all women (3:16) as well as for Adam and all men (3:17-19); Adam names his wife Eve; and God clothes them with the skin of an animal (3:20, 21). God drove them from the garden and placed a cherubim with flaming sword (3:22-24). Eve gives birth to Cain and Abel (4:1, 2); they bring offerings to God and God receives Abel's lamb, but not Cain's produce; Cain rises up and kills Abel (4:3-8). God pronounces His curse upon Cain and places a mark upon him (4:9-15). The family of Cain is described: son Enoch built a city and in his generations Lamech is born who had two wives and three sons, all inventors, but evil men (4:16-24). Seth is born to Adam and Eve (4:25, 26).

3. The generations of Adam (5:1-6:8). God created Adam in His likeness (5:1, 2); Adam lived 930 years and begat Seth and others (5:3-5); Seth lived 912 years and begat Enos and others (5:6-8); Enos lived 905 years and begat Cainan and others (5:9-11); Cainan lived 910 years and begat Mahalaleel and others (5:12-14); Mahalaleel lived 895 years and begat Jared and others (5:15-17); Jared lived 962 years and begat Enoch and others (5:18-20); Enoch lived 365 years and begat Methuselah and others; Enoch walked with God and did not die, but was translated (5:21-24); Methuselah lived 969 years and begat Lamech and others (5:25-27); Lamech lived 777 years and begat Noah and others (5:28-31); Noah was 500 years and begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth (5:32). The sons of God intermarried with the daughters of men and God became displeased with them. Giants were born to them and they became very wicked (6:1-4). God resolved to destroy all flesh except Noah who found grace in the eyes of the Lord (6:5-8).

4. The generations of Noah (6:9-9:21). Noah was a just man and walked with God in the midst of a corrupt people who even resorted to violence. God informed Noah of the impending flood (6:9-13). He instructed Noah to build the ark (6:14-16). He told him the waters of the flood would destroy all life whose breath was in its nostrils. His covenant is with Noah and his family (6:17, 18). Noah is to bring two, a male and female, of each species of animal and fowl into the ark and also food for all (6:19-21). He is to take seven of all the clean animals, three pair and one extra (7:1-3). He told him that in seven days the water would come and continue for 40 days and nights and destroy all life on earth (7:4). Noah was 600 years old at this time. He and his family were in the ark and all the animals came unto them, by twos and sevens, so that on the seventh day all was ready and the Lord shut them in (7:5-10). The waters of the flood were great. The fountains of the deep were broken and

the windows of heaven were opened. All in the ark were safe as the waters lifted them up, even above the highest mountain (7:11-20). All flesh was destroyed as the waters prevailed 150 days (7:21-24). God remembered Noah and his family and all the animals in the ark. The rain stopped and the waters receded (8:1-3). The ark rested on the mountains of Ararat. Noah used a raven and dove to determine whether the waters were dried up. The raven did not return; the dove did. A week later he released the dove again and she returned with an olive branch. A week later it did not return at all. After 375 days, they came forth from the ark (8:4-14). God instructed them to go forth and breed abundantly (8:15-19). Noah offered a sacrifice to God, the extra one of the clean animals, and God re-

ceived it (8:20-22). God instructed Noah that wild animals would endanger them. He could now eat meat as well as herbs, only they had to drain the blood first. They were not to kill their fellow human beings (9:1-7). God renewed His covenant with Noah and all flesh and gave the rainbow for a sign of that covenant (9:8-19). Even though God destroyed the world by a flood, sin was not destroyed; it still lurked within the heart of man. The sad history of Noah's drunkenness tells us of this (9:20, 21), as well as the mockery of Noah by Ham and evidently by his son Canaan (9:22, 23). Noah pronounces a curse upon Canaan and blesses Shem and Japheth for their act of covering him up (9:24-27). Noah lived a total of 950 years and he died (9:28, 29).

THE STRENGTH OF YOUTH

Ronald L. Cammenga

The Christian and Drama

Almost from the time of its introduction, the Christian church has been opposed to drama and the theater. The immorality and violence of the theater, as well as acting in itself, have always called forth the church's condemnation.

The ancient church father, Cyprian (c. 200-258) was an outspoken critic of theater-going. He wrote:

But now to pass from this to the shameful corruption of the stage. I am ashamed to tell what things are said; I am even ashamed to denounce the things that are done — the tricks of arguments, the cheatings of adulterers, the immodesties of women, the scurrile jokes, the sordid parasites, even the toga'd fathers of families themselves, sometimes stupid, sometimes obscene, but in all cases immodest. And though no individual, or family, or profession, is spared by the discourse of these reprobates, yet every one flocks to the play.

Ronald L. Cammenga is pastor of the Protestant Reformed Church of Loveland, Colorado.

In another place, addressing himself to the question whether or not an actor or acting teacher may be permitted membership in the church, he answers:

This, I think, neither befits the divine majesty nor the discipline of the Gospel, that the modesty and credit of the Church should be polluted by so disgraceful and infamous a contagion.

Also the church fathers John Chrysostom (c. 347-407) and Augustine (354-430) were vehement in denouncing the theater.

More and more, drama and theater-going become a problem in the church. Many churches permit and even encourage the members to attend dramatic productions. Several church magazines regularly feature movie reviews, which almost invariably find, in the worst productions, some "redeeming value" which justifies viewing by Christians.

In our own churches there appears to be a growing acceptance of drama and the theater. Reports are heard of more and more of our youth attending

movies. There is the fact, observable to every elder and minister who has ever gone on family visitation, that the great majority of our homes have a television in them. Talk among the children at school and by parents when visiting often concerns the TV programs recently watched. Women share over coffee the latest scandal in their favorite afternoon soap-opera.

For our young people especially the theater poses a temptation. Many of their friends are allowed to go to movies. They are confronted by drama in many of the high schools and colleges that they must attend, where courses are offered in drama and where they are encouraged to participate in dramatic productions.

In light of this situation, it's good for us to remind ourselves of the arguments that have been used by the church in the past against drama and against theater-going. It's good for us as young people to understand these arguments so that we do not become corrupted by the filth of the theater. It's good for us as parents to understand these arguments so that when we prohibit our young people from going to the theater we are also able to give them good solid reasons for this prohibition.

There is, first of all, the argument against drama based on the impermissibility of impersonation. Drama and acting necessarily include impersonation, the assuming and acting out of the personality of another, whether a real or fictitious character. This is not permitted the Christian. This argument is developed at length in the pamphlet "The Christian and the Film Arts," by Prof. H. Hanko. The argument runs like this. Acting involves the assuming of the person and personality of another. This is a violation of the 9th Commandment, is the living of the lie, the pretending to be what you are not and what God has not made you, and this for purposes of entertainment.

This we believe to be a valid argument. It is interesting that even worldly psychology recognizes the serious consequences of impersonation, the damage that this does to one's own person.

In the second place, there is the argument against drama based on the content. The content of the theater must be either that which is holy or that which is sinful. Every subject dealt with must fall into either one of these two categories.

The result when holy things are dramatized is hypocrisy and blasphemy. The holy would include the life of Christ, some Bible character, or some Christian. It would include various acts of worship as well as good works which are the product of sanctification. To perform these in an empty, formal way, and then solely for the purposes of entertainment, is an abuse and a blasphemy. This is

especially the case when the actor is an unbeliever of the vile sort that populate Hollywood.

In the case of the dramatization of sinful things, the result is that sin is compounded. That sinful deeds will be acted out on the stage is inevitable. Drama is the reproduction of life. And the one reality of life is sin. It is simply unavoidable that sin will be acted out on the stage. That sin is in fact acted out in the theater cannot be questioned by anyone who even infrequently glances over the movie advertisements in the daily newspapers. But to act out sin is itself sinful, and therefore forbidden the child of God.

This, to my mind, is perhaps the most compelling and forceful argument against drama. The point is that to go through the motions of a sin, to act out a sin, is to make oneself guilty of that sin. An actor who takes God's name in vain, lies, cheats, rebels against authority, commits fornication on the stage cannot justify his actions by saying that he was only acting and that by his acting he was attempting to teach his audience a worthwhile moral principle. This is rationalization of the worst sort. In reality, by his acting, the actor made himself guilty before God of the sins he acted out. And those who watch this and are entertained by this fall under the condemnation of the Apostle Paul in Romans 1:32, "Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them." This, all by itself, makes drama an illegitimate art form. And this explains why the theater has always been an instrument of iniquity and why it has always been in the control of wicked men. This is simply God's judgment on an institution that is in itself depraved.

It is especially in this respect that drama is to be distinguished from novel writing and novel reading. Now, no one would deny that it is possible to read in the wrong way. No one would deny that in reading novels it becomes very easy to become sympathetic with the hero or heroine, even in their sins. Then we are reading in the wrong way. Then we are not reading objectively and judging what we read and the works of those about whom we are reading in the light of the standard of God's law. But in novels no one is actually acting; no person is going through the motions of sin and therefore making himself guilty of sin. The characters in a novel are fictitious and in our mind. That distinguishes novels sharply from drama.

In the third place, our argument against the theater concerns the message of the theater. By its message, its general tone, the theater presents a false view of life. That false view of life is that a life of sin is the good and happy life. You can sin and

get away with it. There is joy and happiness in a life of disobedience to God's commandments.

But this is a distortion of life. The fact of the matter is that a life of sin is *not* the good and happy life. The fact is that the life of the impenitent sinner is a life of misery and woe. The fact is that God punishes sin and the sinner in this life already. Men do not get away with sin, not even here and now. When men divorce their wives and marry someone else it's not the case that everything turns out all right in the end. Instead it is the case that the adulterer experiences in this life already the judgment of God. When men murder other men it's not the case that everything turns out all right in the end. Instead it is the case that the murderer experiences in this life already the judgment of God. No one, especially the youth, must be fooled by the lying message of the theater.

Not to be ignored as an argument against movie attendance is the source and substance of the modern-day movies. The source is godless Hollywood. The participants are immoral movie stars. The substance of the movies, with few exceptions, is violence and sex. And the movies are presented

in such a way not only to entertain people with these vile activities, but to entice people to commit them.

How can we ever justify allowing our young people to view the corruption of the theater? How can we young people justify to ourselves the watching of modern drama in which every one of God's commandments is broken, and broken repeatedly? How can we parents allow ourselves and our children to be entertained hour after hour, night after night by the violence and debauchery of the television? And if we do this, do we suppose that there will be no harmful consequences for us?

We must reject drama and the evil of the theater. We must separate ourselves and our children from its evil influence. Jude calls us to "hate even the garment spotted by the flesh" (Jude 23). We ought to make our resolve that of the psalmist in Psalm 101:3, "I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me." Our prayer ought to be the prayer of the psalmist in Psalm 119:37, "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way."

GUEST ARTICLE

Rev. Philip Rawson

Brief History of the Measbro Dyke Congregation in Barnsley, England

(This is the substance of a speech delivered by Rev. Rawson while in Kalamazoo, MI at a Missionary Conference sponsored by that congregation.)

I believe The Holy Catholic Church, The Communion of Saints. In Barnsley, England that church of Jesus Christ is to be found.

First of all, let me tell you something about my home town. Barnsley is a town of some 250,000 souls. It is almost in the center of the British Isles, and in the midst of the largest coalfield in England.

Philip Rawson is the pastor of Measbro Dyke Evangelical Church at Barnsley, South Yorkshire, England.

Barnsley is an old town going back to the days when the mighty Roman Empire's borders extended to the British Isles. Around Barnsley have been found evidences of Roman occupation, for example, the site of an altar dedicated to the god Mars by the Emperor Augustus. The town's oldest building is the "Monk Brethren Priory," founded in 1154, falling into ruin during the Reformation struggle at the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1538.

That seems by the way to have been the extent of the Reformation in the Barnsley area.

The history of the Measbro Dyke Church goes

back over one hundred years. At first a few people met for worship in a building belonging to a brick-works. In 1897 the present church building was erected.

The past one hundred years have witnessed the widespread departure from the historic Biblical truth in England. There is no mainline denomination that is not well down the road of apostasy. Maximum coverage is given by the media to clergymen (especially Anglican bishops) who vie with one another to see who can be the most outrageous in their denial of Biblical doctrine.

It is against this background that the church of Measbro Dyke, Barnsley separated from the Wesleyan Reform Church, which was very ecumenically involved. In 1975 we were reconstituted as an Evangelical Church. As such we were just a small part of what was happening throughout England in the 1900's - 1970's. It was in 1972 that the writer of this article became the first pastor of the Measbro Dyke Church. Since 1980 I have been fully maintained by the congregation.

Neither the church nor its Pastor have their roots in the Reformed faith. Our roots are those of Wesleyan Arminianism.

By God's grace the Pastor was brought to a knowledge and love of the Reformed faith. Not that this has been easy, for even today we have bitter disappointments and opposition to the doctrines of God's sovereign grace. Much still needs to be done if we are to become a truly Reformed church.

Over these past eight years the writer of this article has received much encouragement and help from correspondence with ministers in the Protestant Reformed Churches, and the literature produced by the R.F.P.A.

You young people have a very rich heritage for which you must surely give thanks to God. That rich heritage in the witness and literature of your churches is being used of God to encourage and keep alive the testimony to the Reformed faith in many places of the earth.

Some of God's faithful servants are in very lonely and isolated situations here in England. Part of my ministry is to make known the literature of the R.F.P.A. in England. Over these past months I have received several requests for the literature and now correspond with several who truly love the Reformed truth. One man writes concerning the literature of the R.F.P.A.: "It is a ministry very much to my taste"; and another: "I continue to be impressed and encouraged by the testimony of the Protestant Reformed Churches and the clarity of its literature."

It was for our congregation a joy and a privilege to welcome into our midst Rev. D. Engelsma and Prof. H. Hanko on their recent visit to the British Isles, a report of which has already appeared in *The Standard Bearer*. Their warm and faithful ministry did much to instruct and encourage us in the truth of God. Indeed over several years a number of people from the Protestant Reformed Churches in America and the Protestant Reformed Fellowship (now church) of New Zealand have visited and worshipped with us. In the Spring of 1985 it was my great privilege to pay a brief visit to Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids. I saw at first hand the churches and seminary and schools, and met so many brethren and sisters in our Lord Jesus. You have much for which to be thankful. I pray God will keep you steadfast in this truth, that He will continue to use you to His glory in the great work to which He has called you in His kingdom.

Book Review

THE EPISTLES TO THE COLOSSIANS, PHILEMON AND EPHESIANS (New International Commentary), F.F. Bruce; Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1984; 442 pp., \$18.95. (Reviewed by Prof. H. Hanko)

The New International Commentary Series is different from other series because the volumes of the set are periodically rewritten. The original volume on Ephesians and Colossians was written by E.K. Simpson and F.F. Bruce, while the original volume on Philemon was written by Jac. J. Muller. This

volume is literally an entire rewriting of the older commentaries.

It is, in the judgment of this reviewer, one of the better works of Dr. Bruce, especially because it does not give evidence of the influences of higher criticism to the extent that some of Bruce's other works did.

It is really not a helpful volume for God's people; it is rather technical and is written with the minister in mind, although a great deal of the technical material (such as textual criticism, Greek

words and their meaning, references to scholarly works by others) has been relegated to the footnotes. Those who are more than passingly acquainted with New Testament scholarship can profit by the commentary and ought to have it on their shelves. It gives insights on occasion into the text which are helpful and interesting. And Dr. Bruce is a scholar who must be taken into account in New Testament studies, whether one always agrees with him or not.

Nevertheless, there are some things about the commentary which trouble me greatly. In the first place, there seems to be more emphasis in the commentary on dealing with interpretations of others (often going back to the early history of the New Testament Church and giving interpretations of those who really were part of sects) than in coming

to grips with the text itself and explaining it. In close connection with this, one looks in vain for a careful development of concepts, concepts with which Colossians and Ephesians are loaded. One, e.g., never finds any clear definition of such great truths in these epistles as election, adoption, reconciliation, etc. And in close connection with this, the historic theological terminology of the church, developed over many centuries, is rarely used, in an attempt to be contemporary. The result is that the truths these terms set forth are no longer clearly defined and expressed. By doing this, one cuts himself off from the church of the past not only, but loses a precious heritage of the truth without which we cannot live. Perhaps this is the result of rewriting commentaries in an effort to keep them up to date.

Report of Classis West

September 11, 1985

Classis West of the Protestant Reformed Churches met in Loveland, Colorado on September 4-6. Ten ministers and fourteen elders were present, to do the work of the churches in the West. Rev. M. Kamps, president of the previous Classis, opened the sessions with a devotional exposition of I Peter 1:17-21. Rev. K. Koole presided over Classis. Rev. M. De Vries (Edgerton) and Elder J. Van Oort (Doon) were delegated to Classis for the first time and signed the Formula of Subscription.

Working through the largest Agenda in recent memory, if not in all its history, Classis labored three full days and nights, either by committees or in full session. Most of the work was done in closed session.

Classis heard the reports of a special committee and of the Church Visitors concerning work done, on behalf of the Classis, in churches where there have been special difficulties.

With sorrow, Classis received the information from the Trinity, Houston Church, that the Rev. Jon Smith resigned as Pastor of the Trinity Protestant Reformed Church and withdrew the membership papers of himself and his family from the Congregation. Rev. R. Cammenga was appointed Moderator of Trinity, Houston until they receive a Pastor.

Three churches asked Classis' advice regarding the discipline of members, according to Article 77 of the Church Order. Having heard and considered the information presented by the Consistories

through their delegates, Classis judged that the churches should proceed with discipline.

The following classical appointment schedule was adopted for Trinity, Houston: Oct. 6 & 13 - Kuiper; Oct. 20 & 27 - Koole; Nov. 10 & 17 - De Vries; Nov. 28, Dec. 1 & 8 - Miersma; Dec. 22 & 29, Jan. 5 - supply to be sought from the Seminary; Jan. 19 & 26 - Slopsema; Feb. 2 & 9 - Moore; Feb. 23 & Mar. 2 - Lanting; Mar. 16 & 23 - Kamps.

Concerning the use of the inheritance willed to Classis West by the late Mr. C. Van Der Molen, Classis decided to give this bequest and accumulated interest to the Protestant Reformed Churches in America on the condition that the gift be placed in a perpetual fund invested in government insured securities whereby the principal remains intact and only the annual earnings be used exclusively to subsidize the denominational Emeritus Fund.

Classis appointed a committee to bring recommendations to the next Classis regarding rules on the length of protests and appeals so that Classis does not again have such a large Agenda. This committee is also to bring recommendations regarding the necessity of reading aloud large appeals in their entirety on the floor of Classis. The committee consists of Rev. D. Kuiper, Rev. M. Kamps, and Elder J. Van Den Top.

Classis meets next in South Holland, IL, on March 5, 1986, the Lord willing.

Rev. David Engelsma
Stated Clerk

NOTICE!!!

Plan now to attend the Lecture sponsored by The Protestant Reformed Lecture Committee.

THE SUBJECT: "PSALM SINGING — A REFORMED HERITAGE"

THE SPEAKER: REV. JASON L. KORTERING

THE DATE: TUESDAY, OCTOBER 29, 1985

THE TIME: 8 P.M.

THE PLACE: SEVENTH REFORMED CHURCH
950 LEONARD ST., N.W.
GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

Protestant Reformed Lecture Committee

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On October 17, 1985, our parents, MR. AND MRS. BEN MEELKER will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary.

"And he said unto him, 'If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence.'" (Exodus 33:15)

Their children:	Henry and Karen Meelker
Bernie and Anna Mae Meelker	Roger and Hilda Gritters
Hilda Meelker	Dan and Anna Bodbyl
	Gerrit Meelker
Their grandchildren:	Bert Meelker
Tom and Gretine Bodbyl	and their 10 great-grandchildren
Berend and Janine Meelker	

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On August 4, 1985, our beloved, parents, MR. AND MRS. EVERETT VAN VOORTHUYSEN celebrated their thirty-fifth wedding anniversary. We humbly thank our faithful Father for keeping them in His care, and for graciously leading them to raise their children in His fear. Our prayer is that our Lord will keep them in health and strength that they may continue by their example to lead and counsel us according to His Word.

Their children:
Mr. & Mrs. Cory Koot
Mr. & Mrs. Ken Kamps
Mr. & Mrs. Ron Van Voorthuysen
Mr. & Mrs. Ron Schut
and 11 grandchildren

Redlands, Calif.

IN LOVING MEMORY

On August 21, 1985, it pleased our Heavenly Father to take unto Himself our beloved father, grandfather and great-grandfather, PETER M. HOEKSTRA, at the age of 92 years. We rejoice that he is in Glory with his Lord and we pray that Jehovah, our Covenant God will uphold us by His Grace and give us peace that passeth all understanding.

"So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." (Psalm 116:15)

Martin and Stella Hoekstra	Florence and Ray Brunsting
Eunice Brummel	Peter and Sharon Hoekstra
George and Greda Hoekstra	Dorothy and Al Mulder
Donald and Margaret Hoekstra	Henry and Hildred Hoekstra
Ted and Myna Hoekstra	69 grandchildren
Bernice and Bert Van Maanen	147 great-grandchildren

IN MEMORIAM

The Consistory of the Hull Protestant Reformed Church hereby expresses its sincere sympathy to a fellow member, Elder Henry Hoekstra, in the loss of his father, MR. PETER HOEKSTRA.

May our God, who is gracious, comfort the bereaved in their sorrow.

Rev. R.G. Moore, Pres.
B. Gritters, Vice-Pres.

LEAGUE MEETING NOTICE!!!

The Fall Meeting of the League of Eastern Men's and Ladies' Societies will be held, the Lord willing, on Tuesday, October 22, 1985, at 8:00 P.M., at the Hudsonville Protestant Reformed Church.

Rev. Barrett L. Gritters will speak on "What Constitutes True Preaching?, Who Preaches, and How Sent?"

Members and others interested in the topic are urged to attend.

Elsie Kuiper, Secretary

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Martha Ladies Aid Society of the Hull Protestant Reformed Church expresses its sincere sympathy to our fellow members, Mrs. Bert Van Maanen, Mrs. Ray Brunsting, Mrs. Ted Hoekstra and Mrs. Henry Hoekstra in the loss of their father and Mrs. John Boer in the loss of her brother, MR. PETER M. HOEKSTRA.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." (Psalm 116:15)

Rev. R. Moore, Pres.
Mrs. Tom De Jong, Sec'y.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On September 18, 1985, our parents and grandparents, MR. AND MRS. BERT MARING celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary. We are grateful to our Heavenly Father for them and their covenant instruction. May God guide and keep them in the years He may give.

"Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations." (Psalm 90:1)

Gene and Ruth Ann De Boer
and 6 grandchildren