

The STANDARD BEARER

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

. . . We are to thank God for our earthly plenty exactly because it will enable us to have and enjoy the spiritual plenty which is ours in Jesus Christ. And if this is truly the nature of our gratitude, we will show this by using all our earthly plenty for the cause of God's kingdom, the glory of His name and the attainment of His great salvation.

Let us in this manner give thanks unto the LORD.

For He is good: and His mercy endureth for ever.

See "Giving Thanks for God's Mercy"

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MEDITATION

James D. Slopsema

Giving Thanks for God's Mercy

O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. Psalm 136:1

Very soon now our readers in the U.S. will be celebrating a national day of Thanksgiving. Our readers in Canada have already celebrated this holiday.

As we contemplate the giving of thanks to God we must be concerned especially with two things.

First, we must make it our concern to be truly thankful to God for what He has done for us and given to us. Often the more a person has the less appreciative he is. We have been blessed with plenty. Few have enjoyed the prosperity that we do today. Are we truly thankful for our plenty?

Secondly, we must be careful to be thankful for the right things. Quite often those who are thankful for God's bounty focus their attention on their material prosperity and almost overlook the spiritual riches God has sent. Their thanksgiving is earthly minded. Now, it is true that we are to be thankful for the earthly plenty we have received from the Lord's hand. Nevertheless, of primary concern to us ought to be the spiritual, and only then the physical and material. This ought also to characterize our thanksgiving. Let us thank God first for the spiritual wealth He has given to us in Jesus Christ. Only in that connection let us also give thanks for earthly prosperity.

This certainly is the emphasis of the Psalmist.

O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

* * * * *

The Psalmist speaks of giving thanks to God for His goodness and His mercy.

The LORD is good. This means that God is kind, generous, benevolent. He is a God who deals bountifully with His creatures. Writes the Psalmist David in Psalm 145:9, "The LORD is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works."

God is also merciful. God's goodness and mercy are very closely related. God's mercy is His goodness revealed to His creatures in woe. When God sees His beloved creatures in distress He is filled with pity and compassion. His divine heart goes out to them. In compassion He seeks to deliver them from their misery and to make them truly happy.

The people of Israel had tasted this goodness and mercy of the LORD.

In this particular Psalm the Psalmist recalls the great deliverance of Israel out of the bondage of Egypt by the mighty hand of God. With a strong hand the LORD smote the firstborn of Egypt, parted the Red Sea, made Israel to pass through, and overthrew Pharaoh with his host. Then the LORD led His people Israel through the great and terrible wilderness. Furthermore, He slew famous kings: Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan. Their lands He gave to His people Israel as He had promised for a heritage. In this promised land He fed Israel with plenty. Certainly the LORD had been good to Israel and merciful.

The emphasis of the Psalmist, however, is not on God's past mercies but on the enduring mercies of God. Notice, "O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever." This latter phrase is repeated over and over again in this

Psalm. It is the conclusion of every verse. This is to emphasize the enduring character of God's mercy. The theme of this Psalm is that the great mercy shown to Israel long before in delivering them from Egypt's bondage is an enduring mercy. God's goodness and mercy is not a one time thing. His mercy is always with His people. His mercy endures forever!

Of this enduring mercy the people of God had just tasted. This Psalm was written and sung for the dedication of the new temple built by Judah under Zerubbabel. The people of God had become apostate in the land of promise and God had taken them away into captivity in Babylon. For 70 years the true people of God wept by the rivers of Babylon as they remembered Zion, wasted and destroyed. But God in His goodness and mercy raised up Cyrus, King of Persia, who allowed Israel to return to their land and rebuild Zion. A faithful remnant returned under Zerubbabel. They rebuilt the temple on Mt. Zion and now were celebrating God's goodness and mercy to them. Truly, God's mercy endures forever.

For these enduring mercies the people of God gave most humble and hearty thanksgiving.

O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.

* * * * *

The thanksgiving Israel rendered to the LORD in this Psalm was profoundly spiritual in character.

To appreciate this we must remember that Zerubbabel and the 50,000 that returned to Judah did so only for spiritual reasons. In captivity in Babylon the Jews had prospered materially. This was due in part to the lenient policies of the Babylonians to their captives. But this was also due to the fact that they were favored by God. In contrast to the prosperity of Babylon was the hardship that awaited those who chose to return to the promised land. Jerusalem had been destroyed. The temple was no more. What had once been a beautiful city was now a shambles. Those who chose to return had the prospect of hard work, endless struggles, deprivations, poverty, self-denial. There was only one attraction to return to Canaan and that was spiritual. Canaan was the land of promise. There in Canaan Judah could experience God's blessings around the Temple. That alone served to entice Judah to return. For that reason only 50,000 did return. They were the faithful, the remnant of God's people.

It was above all for those spiritual blessings that Judah rendered thanks to God in this Psalm. God had indeed been good to them. They as a nation had been unfaithful and God had taken them into

captivity. But now in mercy God had brought them back to the land of promise. He had enabled them in the face of great opposition to rebuild the Temple which they were now privileged to dedicate. Once more they were able to enjoy the riches of God's blessings and fellowship. For this mercy of God Judah was above all thankful.

And, yes, they were also thankful for the earthly bounty of the land. But even here their thankfulness was spiritual in nature. For the earthly bounty of Canaan served as a token of God's favor and grace to His people. Canaan's plenty spoke of a greater, spiritual plenty that awaits God's people in the heavenly Canaan. In fact, through the earthly bounty of Canaan God's people in the Old Testament were able to taste of this greater heavenly bounty. Besides, the earthly riches of Canaan — its milk and honey — were necessary for Israel to serve the LORD their God. And so for this earthly bounty Judah gave thanks. Their thankfulness therefore was not earthly minded but profoundly heavenly and spiritually minded.

This must also characterize our thanksgiving.

Certainly we are to be thankful for the earthly bounty we have received. We are now in the fall of the year. The harvest is in. The horn of plenty is full. We have food and drink aplenty. We have clothing and shelter. Sometimes we complain how hard the times are. But we are not naked, homeless, hungry, starving as many are today. And our little children do not cry themselves to sleep at night with an empty belly. God has provided for our earthly needs and more besides! Surely we are to be thankful for this. These are gifts of His goodness and mercy to us His people.

But in our thanksgiving let us be spiritually minded and not carnally minded.

Let us not look merely at the earthly abundance God has given us and look no further. Let us not fall into the error of being thankful for earthly plenty and thankful for nothing else. Then we are earthly minded in our thanksgiving.

In our thanksgiving we must concentrate our attention rather on the spiritual blessings God has given to us in Jesus Christ. God has indeed given us spiritual plenty. In Jesus Christ He has taken away all our sins and forgiven us. In Jesus Christ we have a new and wonderful life. We are no more bound to serve sin but are able to live a holy life in the service of God. In Jesus Christ we have the hope of life eternal. In Jesus Christ we are able to enjoy God's blessed fellowship and communion. Furthermore, God has also promised to continue His great covenant in our generations so that we can expect to see our children and our children's children also come to the enjoyment of the great salvation we possess

and enjoy. Indeed, God has greatly blessed us with all spiritual blessings from on high. And for these rich blessings of grace our hearts should overflow with thanksgiving.

In this connection we are also to be thankful for the earthly bounties we have received from God's hand.

We must never forget that the earthly and the material have absolutely no value in and of themselves. We must be reminded again and again of what Christ once said, "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world; and lose his soul" (Matt. 16:26). In other words, if you have all the plenty of this world and not the salvation of God in Jesus Christ, you will lose your soul in hell. And your material wealth has really profited you nothing. The earthly and material are of value to us only in so much as they enable us to attain the spiritual and the eternal. To serve God, to promote the cause of the kingdom, to enjoy in this way God's rich blessings, we need food and drink, clothing and shelter. Herein is the sole value and significance of the earthly and material.

And so when God does send us earthly abundance we are to be thankful. We are to express our thankfulness in both song and prayer. But our thankfulness is to be spiritual in nature. We are to thank God for our earthly plenty exactly because it will enable us to have and enjoy the spiritual plenty which is ours in Jesus Christ. And if this is truly the nature of our gratitude, we will show this by using all our earthly plenty for the cause of God's kingdom, the glory of His name and the attainment of His great salvation.

Let us in this manner give thanks unto the LORD.

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EDITORIAL

Meet James Arminius

"Get to Know Arminius" is the title of an editorial in *The Banner* (Oct. 14, 1985, pp. 6, 7). One could not very well disagree with the admonition of Editor Kuyvenhoven in this title. Not only is it true in general that one should be acquainted with church history and with significant characters in church history; but one should be acquainted specifically with Reformed church history and its chief characters; and even more specifically, one should be acquainted with heretics and their heresies — in order, of course, to be able to discern and to defend the truth.

In trying to become acquainted with Arminius, however, it makes a world of difference to which sources one turns. Editor Kuyvenhoven introduces Arminius to his readers by way of a book by Carl Bangs, *Arminius: A Study in the Dutch Reformation*, and a favorable review of said book by the Rev. Leonard Verduin (a *Banner* review in January, 1973). He also refers to the three volumes of the writings of James Arminius, which, however, play little or no part in his introduction of James Arminius to *Banner* readers. The result is that a very pro-Arminius and totally inaccurate picture of Arminius is furnished. Carl Bangs is not a good source for two reasons: 1) He is himself pro-Arminius — a prejudiced source. 2) He is not a primary but a secondary source. To become acquainted with Arminius one should turn to primary sources as much as possible. One such primary source would be *The Writings of James Arminius*. Digest those writings, and you can never come to the favorable conclusion of Bangs, Verduin, and Kuyvenhoven. Another reliable source is the history of the Arminian controversy written only two years after the Synod of Dordrecht at synodical behest by the Delegates of the Province of South Holland. This amazing document (quite possibly penned by Festus Hommius, one of the clerks of the Synod) furnishes a detailed

account, step by step, of the development of the Arminian controversy. It begins with Arminius in Amsterdam. A translation of this history can be found in my *The Voice of Our Fathers*, pp. 45, ff. Another reliable source (for those who can read Dutch) is L.H. Wagenaar's *Van Strijd en Overwinning*, a book which could profitably be translated into English. In Reformed Fellowship's publication, *Crisis In The Reformed Churches*, there is also valuable information, though this book varies greatly in quality because its chapters are written by various authors.

Now one of the questions which we ought to consider in getting to know Arminius is this: what kind of man was Arminius? How did he conduct himself? And what, if anything, did his conduct show concerning his character?

In this connection we may also consider Arminius's Erastianism, to which the Rev. Kuyvenhoven refers in his editorial. Editor Kuyvenhoven writes as follows concerning this:

Although Arminius was a strong Erastian (that is, he taught that God had appointed the civil magistrate to punish evildoers [not especially Erastian, HCH] and that the church might only advise the state, having no right of censure, even in the church), he had more appreciation for the Anabaptists than did other leaders in the Reformed churches.

But the more important question is: how did Arminius's Erastian view of church government, namely, that the government held the power of rule and discipline in ecclesiastical affairs, enter into the Arminian controversy? Did Arminius use his Erastian view in order to evade and escape and postpone ecclesiastical judgment of his views and discipline? Could it be, perhaps, that Arminius and his followers were Erastian as a matter of utility rather than of principle?

In this connection, let's take a look at the record.

In the first place, historians are agreed that Arminius was popular especially with the aristocracy in Amsterdam, where he was one of the several ministers in that city's congregation. He even married into the nobility. There is also rather general agreement that Arminius was a brilliant scholar, though lacking in depth and profundity. The Historical Foreword to the Acts of the Synod of Dordrecht says this about him: "He was indeed a man of keen understanding, but a man who never delighted in anything except that which recommended itself by an appearance of novelty — even so that he appeared to be nauseated by the greater portion of the doctrines accepted in the Reformed Churches, and for no other reason than that they were accepted by the churches." Common characteristics of a heretic! Again, it is stated: "This man first prepared the way for his cause, openly and in secret, by belittling and blackening the name, fame, and authority of the most outstanding teachers of the Reformed Church — Calvin, Zanchius, Beza, Martyr, and others — aiming to achieve respect for himself at the expense of their good name." Again, common tactics of a heretic! Just study the picture of false teachers which is drawn for us in various passages of the Epistles in the New Testament.

In the second place, let us follow the history of the controversy as Arminius was involved in it until the time of his death in October, 1609. It is a history of deception, evasion, procrastination, and hiding behind the skirts of the government, a government which constantly frustrated every attempt of the proper authorities in the churches to stem the tide of false doctrine which threatened to overwhelm the churches. The record is too long to cite it in detail, though it is worth reading. Permit me to summarize it:

1. The views of Arminius made known in his sermons on Romans were called in question by the Consistory of Amsterdam. Even so, he continued to promote his opinions among the preachers of Amsterdam and among preachers of other churches. One of the latter was Uitenbogaard, the court preacher.

2. When he was appointed to a professorship at Leiden in 1602-1603, the Consistory of Amsterdam at first refused to dismiss him because "they feared that the calling of a person so strongly suspected of strange doctrines would readily become the cause of confusion and schism in the churches; and they pleaded with the honorable Curators that they would not thoughtlessly subject the churches to this danger." Bear in mind that Leiden was under government control and that the Curators were agents of the civil government. Uitenbogaard, who

had recommended Arminius, and the Curators insisted — and won.

3. There was a condition attached to his appointment, however: Arminius had to have a conference with Dr. Gomarus concerning the chief points of doctrine, and he had to clear himself of all suspicion of strange views and to promise firmly that he would never spread abroad his views if he possibly had any peculiar view. Fair enough! He cleared himself by expressly rejecting the chief points of doctrine of the Pelagians, and he promised that he would teach nothing in conflict with the adopted doctrine of the churches. Then he was appointed Doctor of Theology.

4. All went well for about two years. Arminius even defended the doctrine of the Reformed Churches concerning the satisfaction of Christ, concerning justifying faith, concerning justification by faith, concerning the perseverance of the saints and the certainty of salvation, and concerning the imperfection of men in this life (the Romans 7 issue). But after he had gained everyone's confidence, he began to slander many doctrines accepted in the Reformed Churches, both openly and in secret, and to speak deprecatingly of the writings of Calvin, Beza, Martyr, Zanchius, Ursinus, and others.

5. The churches became concerned, and the Deputies of the churches of North and South Holland sought a conference with Arminius. Arminius denied any guilt, but he refused to confer with the deputies *if they would make an official report to the Synod*. End of conference!

6. Next, the Consistory of Leiden admonished him to come to a conference with his fellow professors in the presence of the Consistory to specify the points of doctrine on which there was agreement or disagreement. Arminius's answer? He could not do this without the consent of the Honorable Curators (government officials); besides, he saw no profit in such a conference.

7. From 1606 to 1609 there were various conferences of the opposing parties before the States-General and the High Council and the States of Holland. There were promises of the government to call a National Synod or a Provincial Synod, but always were excuses made for postponement. Arminius would never say anything about his views before an ecclesiastical assembly. At least twice during this period he revealed his views in conferences called by the government. But to the end of his life — even when he had made promises to put his objections to the Reformed position and the Reformed confessions in writing — he steadfastly refused to do so. Once he promised to put his views in writing on condition that the document would be

kept by the government until the National Synod was convened — a National Synod which he and his party, with the cooperation of the government, prevented from being convened. And thus Arminius died, finally, in 1609 without ever having presented his views in writing to the churches, to be judged by them.

All of the above are incontrovertible facts of history.

Now *you* judge as to the honesty of Arminius before the churches.

For my part, I can only conclude that Arminius engaged in the evasive and deceptive tactics which

have been characteristic of many a heretic in church history. If indeed Arminius was genuinely an Erastian, he was dead wrong. But apart from this, it is plain that his Erastian views stood him in good stead in gaining the protection of the pro-Arminian government and in avoiding the rightful judgment of consistory, classis, provincial synod, or national synod.

And Editor Kuyvenhoven does his readers a disservice by painting a favorable picture of Arminius.

Was Arminius a heretic? This question will have to wait until our December 15 issue. HCH

WALKING IN THE LIGHT

Herman Hanko

Gambling

My first experience with big-time gambling came as a bit of a shock. I and three friends were on a trip through the West; our journey brought us to the vicinity of Las Vegas on the Fourth of July. Curiosity prompted us to visit the casinos in the city to see for ourselves what went on there. While much of what we witnessed has disappeared from my memory, various impressions linger to this day. I recall that our efforts to enter one casino were stymied by a huge "bouncer" who met us just inside the door and, after learning that we were below the legal age set by the state of Nevada for gamblers, hustled us out the same door with a speed which left our heads spinning. But an attempt to enter another casino met with success, and we witnessed what such gambling is like. The images which linger to this day include ear-bursting noise, armed guards patrolling a balcony with rifles and holstered pistols, the incessant and ceaseless sound of flying dice and whirling slot machines; but most of all, the hard and frozen faces of the

gamblers themselves. It was then that I first realized that gambling can indeed be an addiction, as much as drunkenness.

Much has changed since that day. Then only Nevada had legalized gambling, although betting at race tracks was permitting in a few states; and then already the Roman Catholics had their weekly bingo games. (It was not so long after this that a sign by the Roman Catholic Church of the Holy Spirit irked me greatly with its blasphemy. The sign read, "Holy Spirit Bingo.") Now, not only do other states provide legalized gambling in huge casinos, but lotteries have become almost a way of life. It was not so long ago that my wife and I stopped at an "oasis" on the Tri-state Highway around Chicago on the way to a preaching appointment in Randolph. We were puzzled by a line of people over a block long that never seemed to get any shorter waiting before a small counter in the oasis. Our curiosity led us to inquire of one man standing in the line what this was all about. He informed us that all these people were waiting to buy lottery tickets because the jackpot had reached several million dollars — the exact amount escapes me. Very few states today have retained laws against gambling.

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These are only the most popular forms of gambling in our country, although enough money changes hands to boggle the mind. The statistics read something like this. Two-thirds of the people in the United States participate in some form of legal gambling. Over 80% approve of it. Bingo generates \$4.5 billion every year and is played by over 22 million people. In Massachusetts alone \$79 million changed hands in 1982. Yet untold billions of dollars pass from some people to others at the playing of every major sporting event in the country and many not so major sporting events. Practically every kind of sport has gambling as a sideline. People play card games for money, golf in which sums of money are bet on every hole, board games of one sort or another — one can hardly find any game which is not used as an excuse for gambling.

Another form of gambling, although there are those who would not call it that, is the growing prevalence of sweepstakes, raffles, and drawings. Hardly a week goes by in our home that we do not get some mail from some organization, very often from *The Reader's Digest*, promising fantastic sums of money, new vacation homes, free trips to exotic places, beautiful automobiles; and, if you are only lucky enough to win third or fourth prize, VCRs, toasters, handbags, and ballpoint pens. All these do not usually cost the participant anything, although many companies urge, along with the sweepstakes, the purchase of a book or a product of lesser value; and one wonders whether those who refuse to make the purchase are really considered in the drawing, although the enclosed letters assure the reader that this really makes no difference. Raffles and drawings are a common way to make money for churches, hospitals, and various other charitable institutions.

So all-pervasive has gambling become, and so much is it a part of life that, when one disagrees with another over almost any point, the short sentence, "I'll betcha . . ." is almost always inserted in the argument to give credence to one's position. The result of it is that many church people, while condemning big-time gambling, are not at all averse to participating in or sponsoring drawings and raffles, see no wrong in winning big prizes through drawings and engaging in small side bets from time to time.

It can be argued, of course, that sweepstakes, raffles, and drawings are not, in the technical sense of the word, gambling. My dictionary defines gambling thus: "1. to play at any game of chance for stakes. 2. to stake or risk money, or anything of value, on the outcome of something involving chance. 3. to lose or squander by betting. 4. to make a wager." For purposes of clarity, therefore, it is

wise to distinguish between gambling and engaging in sweepstakes, raffles, or drawings. The latter involve no risk of one's possessions or of anything of value. Whether such things are right is another question.

The church of Jesus Christ, from the beginning of her history, has always opposed gambling in whatever form it takes. While gambling was rife in the Roman Empire (the soldiers at the foot of the cross of Christ gambled over our Lord's cloak in fulfillment of prophecy), the early church consistently condemned it and considered it a censurable sin. The churches of the Reformation took the same position, a position which is reflected in our Form for the Administration of the Lord's Supper, in which "gamesters" are included among those who are guilty of sins which bar them from the table of the Lord.

The difficulty is that, because no specific and explicit injunctions against gambling can be found in Scripture, the arguments against it are in the form of deductions from Biblical principles. And sometimes the church has raised arguments which are not always very persuasive.

One argument often raised against gambling is the argument based on "chance." To gamble is to take a chance; to take a chance is to trust in fate or luck to the exclusion of God's providence; to trust in fate or luck is to break the first commandment because the first commandment forbids putting our trust in any creature other than the living God. This argument is not altogether persuasive because, in some sense of the word, life is full of "taking chances." When one drives his automobile down the road, one "takes a chance" that he will have a collision, e.g. And, while some have carried this argument so far that any game of chance is condemned, it is hard to distinguish between the "chance" in a game of chess and the "chance" in a game of "Rock."

Others have carried this argument a bit further. They have argued that, rather than trust in "chance," the Christian ought always to recognize God's providence in all his life, live in the consciousness of that providence of God, even when playing a game. But to confess the truth of providence in a game is to make a frivolous use of providence which involves one in a violation of the third commandment, which forbids taking the name of the Lord our God in vain. The point then is that one ought not to connect providence with games. But this line of argument would seem to prohibit the Christian from playing any kind of game, an argument which is not very persuasive, to say the least.

Yet another argument, one which appeared in a

recent article on gambling in *The Banner*, in an issue devoted to that subject, argued that the wrong of gambling is to be found in the combination of risk and play. To engage in something risky without playing is not wrong; to engage in play in which there is no risk (or a minimal risk) is not wrong; but to put the two together, something which lies at the very heart of gambling, is a sin. While there may be an element of truth in this argument, it is not altogether convincing since it involves more than gambling. One who engages in auto racing for pleasure is not gambling (at least in the technical sense of that word), but is certainly endangering his own life. And the Heidelberg Catechism speaks of this as a violation of the commandment against murder.

Still others have argued that gambling is a violation of the principle of the underlying truth of the second commandment: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. To gamble is to take something from the neighbor. This is tantamount to doing harm to the neighbor. It is therefore contrary to the law of love. The argument seems to be a bit strained however, chiefly because, while it is wrong to take something from our neighbor against his will or without his knowing about it, in gambling he consents to give up what he has staked should he lose the bet.

But all of this does not mean that the principles which Scripture lays down as governing the life of the child of God do not condemn gambling.

There are, it seems to me, especially two principles of Scripture which apply directly to gambling. The one is the principle of the tenth com-

mandment, the commandment which forbids covetousness; the other is the principle of Christian stewardship.

To take the latter first, the principle of Christian stewardship is an extremely important principle of the Word of God, but is a principle which is not very well understood in our day, nor very carefully observed. Scripture speaks repeatedly of this truth and pronounces severe judgments upon those who violate this sacred trust.

What is called stewardship in Scripture is an idea taken from the culture in which the church found itself both in the Old and New Testaments. Joseph was steward in the house of Potiphar. Jesus uses the idea of stewardship in his parable of the unfaithful steward. And references to this idea can be found in other passages of God's Word.

A steward was almost always a slave, although he could also be a hired servant. Because of his unusual abilities and devoted work for his master, he was raised to a position of great authority in his master's house. He was made responsible for all the business dealings of his master; he was superintendent of all the other servants; he was in charge of all the household expenses; he was, in fact, sometimes given responsibility for the education and training of his master's children. In short, he often was responsible for everything which his master owned.

Now the principle of stewardship involved a few specific truths which Scripture applies to our relationship to God.

But we shall have to wait with a further discussion of this till our next issue.

THE DAY OF SHADOWS

John A. Heys

A Call to Decry Sin

Although the hymn was not yet written, and Jonah could not at that time sing one line of it for that reason, we can be sure that he agreed fully with the truths expressed in it; and that at specific moments in his life he realized these truths. I have reference particularly to these lines in the hymn:

God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,

And scan His works in vain;
 God is His own interpreter,
 And He will make it plain.

Several days before Jonah came face to face with the truth concerning God that "He plants His footsteps in the sea, and rides upon the storm," Jonah experienced the truth that "God works in a mysterious way His wonders to perform." And of the mystery which is made plain to us in such passages as Ephesians 1:9, 10, we can say that "God is His own interpreter, And He will make it plain."

To put it mildly, Jonah was startled when the word of God came to him and ordered him to go to Nineveh, and to preach the gospel there. As a prophet he knew that his calling was to teach, and not merely to foretell the future. But it was a mystery to him as to why God would send him to that great and desperately wicked city to keep it from being destroyed by God's holy wrath.

Jonah knew that God had gathered into His church Gentiles, those who were not the fleshly seed of Abraham. He knew of Rahab and Ruth. He knew that God had said unto Abraham that in his seed *all* nations would be blessed. But to be called to leave the promised land and go to the capital city of a heathen nation, and to preach repentance there, was quite a different matter. Rahab and Ruth were incorporated into Israel, and had never harmed Abraham's seed. Nineveh was the capital city of Israel's fiercest enemy at that period in history. Go there and seek to have them turn from their sins, so that the city is not destroyed, and the people's lives are spared? The enemies' lives are to be spared? The enemy of the church is to be protected by God, even as His people have been through the years?

Yes, it was the gospel that Jonah was to bring to Nineveh. He understood that clearly. And that is why he did not want to go and do this work. Pronouncing doom and destruction upon the enemies of God and of His church was no problem for him. But when God saved the city in the way of repentance, it became even a greater mystery to Jonah. His complaint and anger showed that. He knew full well that he was to preach the gospel there. How otherwise will you explain his attempt to flee from his calling? And must he go to this heathen city, to these Gentiles who lived outside of the promised land, these people who were not of the fleshly seed of Abraham, the covenant people that God had favored ever since He called Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees, and Israel out of the bondage of

Pharaoh? For Jonah it was a mysterious way for God to work.

Indeed there were dangers involved in this work; and they could frighten a man from doing as called. Assyria was, as pointed out, a fierce enemy. To come into the capital city accusing of sin before God, to pronounce destruction in forty days, to pronounce judgment upon the people, and call sinful the deeds they enjoyed, could evoke wrath against this Hebrew, who dared to come and to tell them such things. Would they not silence his mouth by putting him to death? Then too would he not incur the wrath of his own people for going there? Would they not call him a traitor? And would he dare to come back home after performing a deed such as this in the enemies' land?

Yet what moved Jonah to flee and avoid his calling was not fear of what either Nineveh or his own people would do to him. If we take that position we do not understand the book, or God's purpose in sending Jonah to these Gentiles. To understand and appreciate the book of Jonah we must see that God's purpose in sending Jonah to decry the sins of the people there was to save the elect children in that heathen city. As pointed out last time, the eternal thoughts of peace which God had for His elect in the city moved Him to send Jonah to preach the gospel there. And this is what moved Jonah to flee and go away from Nineveh rather than go into the city. It was because he had to preach the gospel there, that he did not want to go. He revealed very plainly later on that he did not want Nineveh saved.

It is true that Jonah 1:1, 2 simply reveals that he must go and cry against the city because of its sins. Literally this means that all he had to do is prophesy coming judgment. And chapter 3 reveals that he had to be very specific and tell the people that in forty days the city would be overthrown. He must find fault with them, and in no uncertain terms must he tell them that punishment is coming very soon. He must let them know that they are sinning against God, and that all their sins have come up before Him. He has seen them; and these sins have provoked Him. Jonah must let them know that they are performing deeds of hatred against God, and that He will surely visit this rebellion.

It is worthy of our attention that the emphasis here falls upon what they have done *to God*. Undoubtedly in their sins, which are not listed in any detail and presented as to their exact nature, they did harm to each other. They broke the second table of the law (see Jonah 3:8). But one cannot escape the truth that the warning is given them because they have sinned against God. And implied is the fact that God warns them in order to get them

to repent and flee from these sins. The implied desire on God's part is that His elect children in the city turn from their sins and be spared this awful punishment. God's purpose — which was reached, for all His purposes are always reached — was to bring His own to repentance and to salvation. Therefore it was the gospel, the good news of salvation that Jonah was called to preach in Nineveh. It was to save these people spiritually and not simply physically from calamity.

Implied in the warning that in forty days Nineveh would be destroyed and all its people killed, because of their wickedness before God, is the truth that if they believe God's servant, repent of their evil and flee from it, the threatened punishment would not take place. Note what Jonah prays in Jonah 4:2, "I pray Thee, O Lord, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful, and slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest Thee of the evil." Quite revealing, is it not? Jonah realized the possibility of salvation in Nineveh. He knew the gospel as used by God had that powerful effect. He knew that he was preaching the gospel and not simply pronouncing an awful judgment that would not be reversed, or in God's mind was not a warning given in love, but a pronouncement of what had eternally been decreed as about to come to pass.

We do well therefore to take note of the divine lesson here. Let it not first of all be overlooked that it is God Who sends Jonah to decry the sins of Nineveh. On the mission field, and on the pulpit today, it is so tempting to shun such decrying of sin; and instead to emphasize God's love. Make no mistake about it, I do not mean to say that we must not emphasize God's love, mercy, and grace. You can never overemphasize them. Let me say that again: You can never overemphasize God's love, mercy, and grace. They are infinitely great; and it takes an eternity for us to praise God and thank Him for making us experience them. What I mean is that we so often do not emphasize enough the need to decry sin from the pulpit and on the mission field.

There are two facts to consider here. There is plenty — sometimes too much — decrying from the pulpit of social problems, crime, fraudulent practices, injustices, dangers of alcoholic indulgences and the like. But are they decry as sins against God, or merely against fellow men? Usually it is because man is hurt, or because he hurts himself. Indeed there is a horizontal circle of crime on the earth; and that is sinning against God as well as against man. But are they presented as sins against God? Are they exposed as acts of hatred against

Him? There is besides that horizontal circle of sin a wide vertical line of rebellion against God in heaven. Is the pulpit any different from the outbursts of unbelieving civil servants, government officials, men who are concerned only with man and his physical well-being? If we do not see and preach against sinful deeds as rebellion against God, and as acts of hatred toward Him, we have a very low opinion of Jonah for fleeing from his calling to decry it in Nineveh. But then we also have a very low opinion of God. If it merely hurts us because it hurts our friends and countrymen, we show a very callous nature that is not touched because sin is an act of hatred against God. And then we sin against God, because we are not interested in His glorification.

Then, too, it is so easy to say, "Jonah, you sinned by taking that ship." But are we not Jonahs when we go to the mission field and are afraid to preach against sins against God, and to decry them, because we are afraid that we will drive men away from our meetings? To be sure, the matter must be preached in love and with spiritual tact. But if we are afraid to preach and decry sin *against God*, and false doctrines which misrepresent Him, we in our hearts say, "God, you made a mistake sending Jonah that way to Nineveh. You should have told Him to go there and tell the whole city how much You love them. That ought to come first. Do You not see that, Jehovah?" And at home on the pulpit, if you dare not preach against sin against God and against false doctrines, for fear of losing members, and because you want to grow numerically, you raise yourself above the living God (in your thoughts) as one who knows better than He does. O yes, you can decry the sins of the world round about you; but you must soft pedal such things in the congregation, because you want to emphasize God's love, and by *your* words persuade men to believe in and love God? But listen: If you do not decry sin against God, you do not yourself show love to God. Allow acts of hatred of God to exist and develop — for that they will do — and you show lack of love for God.

But Jonah was called in God's wisdom. He made no mistake here, or ever. The Heidelberg Catechism has rightly grasped the truth presented here when it speaks of three things being necessary for us to know in order to live and die with the only comfort in life and in death. We must know our sins and misery; our redemption in Christ; and how to express gratitude to God for our deliverance. Knowing that redemption is not only necessary but wonderful. However, we will never know it until we know our sin and misery. In the measure that we know that we sinned against *God*, we can appreciate His love in saving us. In the measure we

see how much we by nature hate *Him*, we can see the wonder of His love. The clearer we see the

heresies that deny Him His glory, the more we can and will appreciate the truth that He has given us.

FROM HOLY WRIT

George C. Lubbers

Believing All the Prophetic Scriptures

Chapter XXIII

The Mystery of the Seventy Weeks in Daniel 9

Full and complete redemption in the Messiah (Dan. 9:24)

In the former part of this verse we noticed that the transgressions were finished, that sins were sealed and that reconciliation was made. God made Him to be sin, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him (II Cor. 5:21). Yes, salvation is wholly from the Lord. Not only the removal of the guilt is from God, but also that which Christ obtained for us is of God. That which Christ obtained for us we have given here in the text in the terms, *righteousness, sealed vision and prophecy, and the anointing of the Holy One!* (K.J.V.)

The first benefit which we consider here is this: to bring in everlasting righteousness. It is good to notice that this too is the end, the crowning point, of the "seventy sevens" which were appointed upon desolate Jerusalem and the desecrated city of God. When this happens, Daniel's prayer is answered, and God's Name is sanctified forever in Christ in His people. The words of Moses in all the Scriptures are fulfilled. For here we see the Christ of God as the end (*telos*) of the law for righteousness to every one who believes (Rom. 10:4). No longer can the law say to the people of God, as legal taskmaster to Christ, that the man that doeth the same shall live thereby. Here is the glad refrain of Deuteronomy 30:12 ff.: ". . . It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, who shall go up for us to heaven, and make us hear it, that we may do it?

Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who will go over the sea for us, and make us to hear it, that we may do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, in thy heart, that thou mayest do it."

This benefit Christ "came to bring in." We read in Hebrews 7:18, 19, "For there is a disannulling of a foregoing commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness. For the law made nothing perfect, (but there is) a bringing in thereupon of a better hope, through which we draw nigh to God." It is to this great gospel-truth that Gabriel refers when he interprets the meaning of the fulfillment of the seventy "sevens." The text reads that Messiah will "bring in" everlasting righteousness. And we know from Hebrews that this was possible because Christ is not a high priest after the order of a carnal commandment, but that he is a king-priest after the order of Melchisedec. This priest has, in his priesthood, "neither beginning of days nor end of life, but was made like unto the Son of God. He abides a priest continually" (Heb. 7:1-3).

This is the Messiah which is seen here in the searchlight of the prophetic Scriptures. We had better believe this for our very life's sake. To deny this is antichristian! But those who have this work of salvation in their hearts, who have the unction of the Holy One, will see this clearly when the Scriptures are opened up to them. They will exclaim, "How our hearts burn when we hear this Christ interpreted for us from the Prophecies, and we see Christ Jesus evidently set forth before us crucified." For this is the day of the Lord's power in the ministry of reconciliation (Psalm 110:4). Jehovah hath sworn and will not repent (I John

2:27). Yes, yes, we do need teachers (Eph. 4:11-16). However, we do not need any errorists to teach us contrary to the Scriptures. In that sense it is true that "we know all things." Christ came to "bring in everlasting righteousness" as the Son of God. Great is the mystery of the "seventy sevens"; it is the mystery of godliness which is great (I Tim. 3:16); yes, it is the mystery "foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world, but was made manifest at the end of the times for your sake, who through Christ believe in God, that raised up Christ from the dead . . . so that our faith and hope might be in God" (I Peter 1:20).

It is the precious blood of the Mystery of the "seventy sevens" that is meant when we read that Christ was decreed to "bring in everlasting righteousness."

What is this righteousness. The Hebrew term is "tsedek." It is the righteousness of God as the free gift of grace. It is not a righteousness of works or merit. It is that righteousness of which all the "law and the prophets" testify on nearly every page (Rom. 3:21). It is a righteousness of God which we receive by a true faith (Rom. 3:25). Yes, this is the righteousness which is ours by virtue of the fact that it was merited for us by Christ on the Cross, together with the merited gift of faith, so that we may receive this benefit by a true faith.

This term righteousness is employed only in the prophecy of Daniel in this text. However, the very essence of this righteousness is heralded in Jeremiah 23:6, where we read, "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD (Jehovah) that I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, 'Jehovah (is) our righteousness.'" That this refers to the essence of "Jesus, the son of God, who came to save his people from their sins," is clear as crystal. And as to the time when this shall be realized, we read here in Jeremiah 23:7-8, "Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, As the LORD liveth who brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, but as the LORD liveth, who brought up and who led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all the countries whither I had driven them. And they shall dwell in their own land."

This latter benefit is connected by the Holy Spirit in Jeremiah 23:5 to the "righteous Branch," who is the root out of the dry ground (Isaiah 11:1; John 15:5; Zech. 3:8). It is all connected with the Wonder-Child to be born in Israel, Immanuel, God with us (Isaiah 7:10-17; 9:6, 7).

It might be worthy of note that the verb form of the Hebrew verb "to bring in" is causative. He will *cause* eternal righteousness to come; He *brings* it in. He nails our sins to His cross so that we are crucified with Him, and He makes an open shame of principalities and powers; forever they shall no more be able to bring any accusations against the saints. Rejoice, O heavens, and ye that dwell in them! Sing, O heavens! Now is come the salvation and the power, and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ: for the accuser of the brethren is cast down, who accuseth them before our God day and night (Rev. 12:10 ff.). Yes, they came from the north country and from all the countries whither they had been driven, first the Jew and also the Greek (Rom. 1:16, 17; 10:11-15).

Thus teach the holy Scriptures!

Thus we have been instructed and thus we believe unto salvation!

Closely connected with the foregoing, yea, as the fruit of the foregoing, Christ also is said "to seal up Vision and Prophecy."

The Vision and Prophecy do not refer merely to some particular "vision" by which God came to reveal Himself at a certain crucial time in Israel's life and history, but refers to all the visions, as they constitute the *one* great vision. The same thing is true when we read in the singular of "the Scriptures," as these constitute an organic whole from Genesis 1:1 to Malachi 4:6. The same must also be observed concerning the term "prophecy." If prophecy is not fulfilled it is not the word which God gave the prophet to utter. Such an unfulfilled word comes not from the heart of God but from the heart of those who mutter and peep (Deut. 18:15-22; Isaiah 8:19-22). Such prophets are mere dreamers (Jer. 27:9-11).

However, at Calvary all the promises of God became yea in Christ, and in Him Amen to the glory of God the Father. Not one word of God fell to the ground. Every jot and tittle of the law is fulfilled in perfect sacrificial love. Christ is the faithful and TRUE witness, is sealed in His blood. What Moses did typically, symbolically, when he sprinkled the people and "the book" (Exodus 24:6 ff.; Heb. 9:19-22) Christ did at Calvary. We should observe carefully that Moses sealed the "book" with blood. Not the book alone was sealed by itself, but it was sealed in conjunction with the people that were sprinkled. We read so emphatically ". . . and sprinkled both the book itself, and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the covenant which God commended to you-ward" (Heb. 9:19-20).

If ever it was clear that it is true that "Moses wrote of me," as teaches Jesus to refractory Jews, it

holds for this passage of Moses which speaks of the sealing of the Covenant *prior* to the reception of the law on Horeb's stormy heights (Gal. 3:19).

Yes, vision and prophecy were sealed in the sacrifice which merited everlasting righteousness. Hear Isaiah's beautiful prophecy in chapter 51:1: "Hearken unto me ye that follow after righteousness . . . My righteousness is near, my salvation is gone forth — the isles shall wait for me, and on mine arm shall they trust . . . but my salvation shall be forever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished" (vss. 5, 6).

Here I cannot refrain from pointing out that the fiction of a "church-age," which had not been foretold in the Old Testament, is shown up to be just that! Truly, these winds of doctrine of dispensational teaching are proven to be some cunningly devised fables, as they are called by the Holy Spirit, who bases His teaching on His own inspired prophecies. And these prophecies are clear teaching, and not some mumbo-jumbo jargon!

But we must press on.

ALL AROUND US

Robert D. Decker

A Seminar Junkie Creation Versus Evolution News Briefs

A Seminar Junkie

Of the conducting of religious seminars on a wide variety of subjects by the churches these days there seems to be no end. In reaction to this Eutychus of *Christianity Today* (Oct. 4, 1985) makes a point well taken:

It came as no small shock to me to discover recently that a highly respected member of our church is undergoing treatment for spiritual rehabilitation. This man is a church officer, Sunday school teacher, and tither. But he revealed, at last Sunday evening's service, that he is also a seminar junkie. He was quick to

Christ also came to "anoint the most holy." We know that the term in Hebrew "to anoint" is the same word which is ascribed to the Son of God in the Counsel of peace. The verb for "to anoint" in Hebrew is the infinite form *lemishoa* from the verb *Mashach*. Here is the One who is not merely anointed with oil, but who is anointed with the Holy Spirit without measure (Isaiah 11:2; John 1:32, 33; 3:34). For this Messiah, the anointed One of God, all Israel looked in eager and hopeful anticipation. The aged saint Simeon could not really die happily as long as the Christ, the Messiah, had not yet come, could he? But hear him jubilate when he takes the child Jesus in his arms: "Now lettest thou thy servant to depart, Lord, according to thy word, in peace; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." And Andrew runs in great joy to Peter saying, "we have found the Messiah" of whom Daniel writes as announced by Gabriel, MESSENGER of the Mighty God!

add that he is getting help from Seminars Anonymous (SA), a rapidly expanding organization founded to counteract an evangelical epidemic.

None of us knew that Herb had mortgaged his home to obtain money for weekly seminar fixes. We were sobered (if you know what I mean) to hear that he slid into his addiction gradually. "Ah, for the good old days, when a sermon and Bible study could get me through the week," he lamented.

Herb told us the turning point came when he was on a tour across the Arctic Circle. The church group was studying "The Dangers of Lukewarmness" when, as if enlightened by the rays of the midnight sun, Herb admitted to himself that he was addicted to seminars. He promptly returned to his wife and children (not seen since a seminar last summer on

family dynamics). Then he entered an SA Detoxification Center.

Herb said he could no longer keep his addiction secret when he learned that our pastor was enrolled at a camp near Mount Saint Helens to consider 'The Theological Implications of Volcanic Eruptions.' Fearing his faithful shepherd was on the path to seminar addiction, he went public.

It was a courageous step and it has challenged our church. Can we possibly survive without all these outside experts? Several of us have enrolled in next month's 'Spirituality With or Without Seminars' to find out. Eutychus

Creation Versus Evolution

Acts And Facts, a magazine published by the Institute for Creation Research, in its October issue reported:

A three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit entered a decision on July 8 that held unconstitutional the Louisiana Act for Balanced Treatment of Creation Science and Evolution Science. The court's basis was that teaching creation science necessarily has an unconstitutional legislative purpose of teaching religion.

The *opinion* said that, "irrespective of whether it is fully supported by scientific evidence, the theory (*sic!*) of creation is a religious belief," which public schools may not teach. Former Senator Bill Keith, President of CSLDF (Christian Science Legal Defense Fund, R.D.D.), responded that "it is illogical and constitutionally incorrect for the court to say that scientific evidence supporting creation science may not be taught even if it is true, but scientific evidence allegedly supporting evolution must be taught even if it is false!"

Attorney General William J. Guste of Louisiana immediately authorized an appeal, which took the form of a petition for rehearing by all 15 judges of the Fifth Circuit of the Court of Appeals. The 30-page printed petition was filed on July 29.

The legal team of Special Assistant Attorneys General, headed by Wendell R. Bird of Atlanta, has already prepared an exhaustive 630-page brief, gathered a group of 20 expert witnesses, won a favorable Louisiana Supreme Court Decision that reversed an earlier summary judgment ruling, and filed carefully researched and written briefs on each procedural step. They filed the petition for rehearing *en banc* with 30 printed pages and 105 footnotes . . .

Court decisions like the above betray at least two obvious facts: 1) The world persistently refuses to recognize the fact that the teaching of evolution necessarily involves the teaching of religious belief. It is false religion, but the theory of evolution is religion. Evolution is a denial of the one, true God. Its idol is "almighty man." 2) Under the guise of a

supposed "neutrality" the world courts are decidedly antichristian. There is no neutral ground. One either believes in God the Father Almighty, the Maker of Heaven and Earth or he rejects the Truth of God's Word in unbelief. "He that is not with me is against me," said Jesus. (Matthew 12:30) This fact too we must never forget.

News Briefs

The following items have all been gleaned from the *R.E.S. News Exchange* (October 8, 1985), published by the Reformed Ecumenical Synod.

For some time now the two big Reformed Churches in the Netherlands have been in the process of uniting. These are the Netherlands Reformed Church (NHK, the state church) and the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (GKN). The latter has its roots in the Secession of 1834. Concerning the movement toward unity the *News Exchange* reports: "The combined meeting of the synods of the Netherlands Reformed Church (NHK) and the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (GKN), which was to be held on November 1 and 2, has been postponed. The moderamina of the two synods felt that the agenda items for that meeting require preparatory discussion. In *De Waarheidsvriend*, the official newspaper of the Reformed Alliance (GB) in the Netherlands Reformed Church, Dr. S. van der Graaf and Rev. S. Meyers have attacked the 'Together on the Way' (Samen op weg) process, writing that instead of uniting the two churches, it threatens to tear local congregations and the denominations apart. In their view, the 'Declaration of Agreement' lacks sufficient substance, forcing many congregations to say 'no' to the proposed union. It widens the gap between members of the Reformed Alliance and those who are confessionally Reformed. They suggest that it may be better to stop the attempts at union altogether." The Reformed Alliance is a group of concerned, conservative members of the state church (NHK). They obviously are opposed to the proposed union. What will come of all this we know not. We will try to keep the reader informed.

Here in North America, the two daughter churches of the Dutch Churches, The Reformed Church in America (RCA) and The Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRC) are apparently moving closing together. These two denominations "will hold a joint conference here (Warwick, New York; R.D.D.) on contemporary confessions on October 15 and 16, 1985. Using the theme 'Making Common Confession,' the conference will include addresses and discussions on the contemporary testimony of the CRCNA 'Our World Belongs to

God,' the confession of the RCA 'Our Song of Hope,' and the Belhar Confession of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church of South Africa (NGSK). Keynote speaker for the event will be Professor Robert Recker of Calvin Theological Seminary in Grand Rapids. The conference is sponsored by the Eastern Home Missions Board of the CRCNA, the particular synod of the Mid-Atlantics of the RCA and New Brunswick Theological Seminary. "These two denominations will hold concurrent synods in 1989 at the Calvin College and Seminary campus. Will these two eventually merge?

There are four Reformed denominations in Indonesia all of which have been formed as a fruit of missionary work by European Reformed churches. These churches met in a three-day conference on September 24-26, 1985. The theme of this conference was, "The Reformed Heritage and the Mission of the Indonesian Churches." According to the *News Exchange*, "The deepest concern for the Indonesian churches has been the negative attitude of the RES (Reformed Ecumenical Synod) to the World Council of Churches (WCC). The general opinion was that the RES would have to remain open to other church groupings with which the Indonesian churches are related. The question of dual (WCC/RES) membership, it became clear, is the decisive point for them. Only if dual membership is allowed, will they remain and take their place alongside the other churches in the RES."

Among the conclusions reached by these four RES member churches at the conference were: These churches "... recognize that they are still *dependent on and bound to the inherited Reformed confessions and teachings* (emphasis mine, R.D.D.).

Although the four member churches cannot be considered photocopies of the Reformed churches in Europe, they are still striving to maintain their (Reformed) identity within the context of the life of the churches in Indonesia.

"Our understanding of mission is that . . . it is directed to the life of the church itself, to the fellowship of churches within the Fellowship of Churches in Indonesia (PGI) in particular in which the four churches are members, and the fellowship of churches within the wider ecumenical circles, such as RES, WCC, WARC (World Alliance of Reformed Churches of which Dr. Allan Boesak is president, R.D.D.), and also directed to the world and society outside the church

"Concerning the future of the churches in Indonesia, the conference concludes . . . that their membership in the RES should not exclude the possibility of membership in other ecumenical bodies, such as WCC, WARC, PGI.

"The Conference does not see objections in principle against the ordination of women to the ecclesiastical offices (elder, deacon, minister). However, the office of minister is in fact generally still held by men only"

The stand of these churches re the World Council and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and their stand re women in the office of minister, elder, and deacon make their claim to be "dependent on and bound to the inherited Reformed confessions and teachings" ring very hollow indeed! It is sad to see these daughter churches walking down the same path as their European mother churches.

Good Morning, Alice (4)

Gise J. Van Baren

Alice's brother John wanted her to stay with them in Michigan. During the month of sick leave, she was there. It was a pleasant time for Alice — especially because she could "spoil" her niece Janis, now two years old, whom she adored. But it

also became clearly evident to the family that Alice would not be able to return to work. Her legs and arms were becoming increasingly weak. Though she could still drive her car, she was able to do very little else — needing constant assistance even to

dress.

Good Morning Alice:

I'm sure at one time or other you must have studied or really looked into the book of Hosea. I always thought this was a book I'd never understand, but after a study of it, and a sermon on a passage out of it, I think I'm starting to scratch the surface of its meaning.

The verse I asked you to read yesterday is full of comfort for God's people.

Jehovah will betroth us unto Him forever. He will make us His bride. There will be, in that glorious day, a bond in which we will forever know and experience God's righteousness, judgment, lovingkindness, and His mercies.

In faithfulness He will take us to be His bride and we will know Him. We will forever, without sin, know the blessedness of that bond. Because of His unbelievable mercy, He will forever call us His people and, free from sin, we will forever respond, "Oh, my God!" Nothing should hold us back from desiring to experience that bond.

In His Love, Your friend

Please read Galatians 5:22-25

Brother John and his wife Judy took Alice back to Illinois at the end of the month. John would arrange for another sick leave — this one for six months. Alice agreed to this, but with the thought that she might still be able to go back again. Some of Alice's possessions would be taken back to Grand Rapids. At Stauffer, there was great understanding of the situation — and a measure of relief. Those in the office knew that Alice could not properly do her work any more, even when she had been there a month earlier. But no one wanted to tell her not to return. The people in the office and factory who knew Alice, were very kind to her. Several times they collected sizable cash gifts, and a number of them came on various occasions to visit her. Alice's eyes would always light up at the mention of Stauffers.

Good Morning, Alice:

I am sitting at my kitchen table looking out at the snow — finally. I've always liked snow; there's something cozy about it. I know it makes lots of things a little more difficult, but it is beautiful!

The fruit of the Spirit — what a list of difficult things the child of God is called to have. Yes, I know I am Christ's. I know His Spirit lives within me, and because I know this, the verse tells me the answer to the difficulty.

Since I am Christ's, I can crucify my fleshly desires, my pride, my doubts, my impatience (which I've

already told you I have a love of) and my frustrations (raising children is not without frustrations!). I'm sure the list is different for you, Alice, but why can we crucify these sins? Because we are Christ's, because we do have the Spirit in our hearts.

It will do us both good, Alice, to keep that list in our minds this day; pick up this note or the Bible, and ask ourselves, do I love, do I have joy? Do I have peace? Am I longsuffering (patient)? Am I gentle (kind)? Do I have goodness? And do I have faith?

If we live in the Spirit, we will be able to "walk" by the Spirit, and look more and more forward to the day that we no longer have to battle our flesh to do these things, but live in perfection with our great God.

In His Love, Your friend

Please read Ps. 62:5-8

Little imagining the strain that would later be placed on his own family, brother John insisted that Alice should stay with them. At the end of November, it became plain even to Alice that she could not return to work again. The apartment in Illinois was given up and all of Alice's possessions were taken to Michigan. And there was much of this — boxes and boxes of saved mementos and knickknacks as well as much household furnishings. John, who had recently built a new home, would convert the attached garage next to the kitchen into a bedroom and sitting room for Alice.

Dear Alice:

Good morning! Oh Alice, you're going to laugh at me this morning!

You know yesterday I mentioned we should try to examine ourselves: Do I love, Do I have patience, etc. Well, later that morning I went shopping with the kids and I very carefully told them, "Go to the bathroom before you get your coats on because we'll be gone for a while." Well, we got halfway down the driveway, and my little one said, "I have to go bathroom." I started hollering, "WHY DIDN'T YOU . . . ?" And then I had to laugh at myself — where was my patience? I drove back in the garage and took him in, laughing to myself and thinking, "I have to tell Alice!"

How did your self-examination go, Alice?

Ps. 62:5-8 is a real comfort after searching your soul, after looking back at all the times I failed yesterday when I was impatient with my little ones, when I was frustrated because my son didn't do something the way I wanted it done, when I failed time and time again, and all those times I didn't even know about — I can look to Him Who is my refuge and pour out my heart before Him. I can know that my strength is not in myself but that He is my rock, my salvation, my defense and my strength and refuge. I can lay the heavy burdens of my heart and mind on Him.

I can wait on Him and, yes, expect (because of His promises) comfort from Him.

What relief — what blessed warm “inner” joy!

With Love, Your friend

Please read: I Cor. 15:58

John did a remarkable job of converting that two-stall garage into living quarters. A third of it was partitioned off as bedroom. Paneling was placed in front of the garage-doors. Carpeting was placed on the floor. The sitting room area was filled with all the paraphernalia Alice had collected over the past thirty years. Everything looked nice — if a bit cluttered.

Good Morning Alice:

It's going to be another busy Saturday, so I'm writing early.

You may have wondered about these note cards. I like them and I hope you do too. The artist is Gwen Frostic. She has a little shop up north, way out in the wild. She is a naturalist, and lectures about the balance of nature, etc., but the sad part is that she is not a child of God. One knows that by the books she writes. She may see beauty with her eye, but she doesn't know the beauty of God's grace.

How thankful we can be, Alice, that God has shed His grace in our hearts. That is certainly all that makes life worthwhile. All of our labors, our struggle in this life is not in vain before God, because God is working in us. He gives us the glorious victory, which is explained in the verses before this one, but we are called to be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord. Now I may be wrong, but to me, “the work of the Lord” is our daily walk of obedience. We must be unmoveable from His law. Like a minister once said, “In everything you do, you must ask yourself, ‘Is the blessing of the Lord upon this?’” What a question!

When we plan our activities for the day, we must ask it. When we turn the radio on, we must ask it. Or when we choose a book to read or a T.V. program to watch we ask it. The list goes on and on.

In accepting a trial, or (probably more difficult) in living an “easy” life, yes, in everything we do, we must

ask if the blessing of the Lord is upon this. What a calling we have — but what a victory — oh, what a victory!

With Love, Your friend

Please read Ps. 145:18

One of the first things Alice wanted to do, after settling in with John and Judy, was to buy a china cabinet. Shortly after she began working upon graduation from high school, she had purchased a beautiful set of china from Germany. It was packed in the original boxes for all these years — with the hope of using them on special occasions after she would marry. But that time never came. Now she would have the dishes properly displayed in that beautiful china cabinet where she could admire them in Judy's kitchen. There they remain still to this day.

Good Morning Alice:

Did you get my note yesterday or did you get two today? I'm sorry. I'll try not to let that happen again, (if you knew me, you'd be surprised it didn't happen before!) and it was ready by 8 o'clock Saturday morning too yet!!

I'm really glad I'm writing you every day. It's not just for you, but equally for me. This morning there's so much to do, I probably wouldn't have picked up my Bible this morning. Have you had that, where you think you have to do other things so you put aside the most important thing: time alone with God?

Ps. 145:18 explains just how much of a blessing that time alone with God is. Our Lord is near unto us that call upon Him. Does that mean that when we forget about Him, He isn't near? No; God is near His children regardless, but we experience His love and care when we draw near to Him. But the verse adds “in truth.” That is sort of a warning to me anyway. It happens all too often that I get into reading scripture and suddenly I realize I'm either not really calling upon Him, or I'm not using scripture for its proper meaning.

But, the Lord is near unto His children that call upon Him in truth.

May you richly experience that nearness this day.

With Love, Your friend

Please read Eph. 6:17-18

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GUIDED INTO ALL TRUTH

Thomas C. Miersma

Scripture Interprets Scripture: Historically

The principle that Scripture interprets Scripture is, as was pointed out last time, the fundamental principle of the reformers' approach to Scripture. It is rooted in the confession that the Scriptures are the Word of God to us and in the truth that God Himself, by His Holy Spirit, will also teach us in the understanding of them. This truth the reformers received by faith, upon the testimony of Scripture itself and the Spirit's witness in their hearts that the Scriptures are of God.

Having set forth this principle, however, it must also be applied. This takes, as we have seen, the humble willingness to let Scripture speak, to be taught, and to learn of God what He would say unto us. It was this that the reformers sought in their study, exegesis, and exposition of the Word of God. To expound this principle in all its significance is beyond the scope of this column; we can only hope therefore to draw a few main lines for consideration.

To apply the principle that Scripture interprets Scripture means essentially that Scripture is its own commentary. Thus it begins with studying a text or a passage of the Word of God in its context. The Scriptures themselves make plain that God gave us His Word through the instrument of the apostles and prophets, so that "*holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*" (II Peter 1:21). Each passage or book had a certain place and purpose in the life of the people of God in the time in which it was written and has a certain place in the unity of Scripture.

This leads to the historical principle of Bible

study and exegesis. If you are studying the book of I Corinthians you must take into account what Scripture has to tell us historically about that local congregation, its circumstances, its problems, and the reason God gave His Word to us as a letter written to that church through the apostle Paul. This information the letter itself furnishes us, as do the other epistles and the Book of Acts.

Likewise if we are studying the Psalms of David, we must have in mind the history and life of David which is given us in the Word of God. In the same way, the Psalms themselves will show us the inner life and experience of God's servant David when we study the history. It is to Scripture's own explanation of the time and circumstances that we must look.

This does not mean that we may not use other books to give us help in understanding the culture, geography, and matters of the day-to-day life — climate, dress, clothing, and other such things. But we look first of all to the Word of God for answers also to these questions. It is perhaps important to underscore this in our day and age. An atlas, a Bible dictionary, and similar tools are useful in aiding our understanding. But they do not have the authority of the Word of God. One need only compare several atlases to see that they will quite often differ from one another, even in the location of some important cities and towns. Likewise one only has to compare the findings of various cultural studies as to life in the land of Canaan at, for example, the time of Abraham, and the various pictures which have been drawn at different times, to see that they cannot be more than a useful and helpful tool. We must beware of placing the theories and the supposed findings of such studies as archaeology on a par with Scripture. It is not archaeology which in-

interprets Scripture but Scripture which sets the standard for the research and findings of archaeology in Palestine. It has too often been the case that the supposed findings, facts, and conclusions of one generation have been overturned by the next.

This does not mean that we may not use such material to illustrate and understand Scripture; but it must be with caution, and Scripture alone must be decisive. This was the method of the reformers. It is also one of the reasons that even today their commentaries are still valuable and sound. For, not having available to them many of these tools, they were content to let Scripture explain itself in these matters.

It is in the same manner that we must let Scripture explain to us every aspect of its history, its origin and the background of each book and epistle. This study includes reading the book as a whole to understand the main thought and intent of the book, so that we might understand first of all what that Word of God said, and was intended to say to the church when it was written. The epistles of the New Testament were, for example, all written to specific churches with specific needs and problems. This too belongs to Scripture's explanation of itself.

This means also that when figures and images are set before us in the Word of God, as for example in the Prophets, that they are shaped in the language and times in which the church then found itself. This will guard us against the false so-called literalism of some extreme methods of interpretation which would find in Scripture everything from modern weapons of war to cars and helicopters. Scripture itself makes it plain that it was given by God in history. We must therefore let Scripture guide us to understand it as it was given.

This means that Scripture also explains to us the inner experience of God's saints and gives us what we need to know of their feelings, struggles, and emotions. It does so by setting forth the common experience of God's people in the world, which we may take up in our understanding of historical passages as well as the specific details. This too is a matter of allowing Scripture to guide our understanding and interpretation. This also characterizes the expositions and commentaries of the reformers. By letting the Scriptures lead them in this, comparing similar circumstances and experiences with one another, as found in Scripture, the reformers were able to set forth from the Word of God a full and rich understanding of the life of God's saints, which is also given us for our instruction. At the same time they avoided that kind of creative fiction which would add to the simple narrative of Scrip-

tural history all kinds of unbiblical nonsense so that the narrative of our Lord's birth for example, is transformed into the melodramatic love story of Mary and Joseph.

By proceeding historically within the boundaries which Scripture itself draws, and allowing Scripture to guide them in its study the reformers were safeguarded from the wild fancies of medieval speculation, mysticism, and allegory. Texts were interpreted in their proper contexts and relationships and the reformers were guided to a sound understanding of God's Word and its meaning.

At the same time, because they approached the Word of God by faith, recognizing both the organic character of inspiration and Scripture's abiding authority, they avoided the modern error of reducing Scripture to mere human writings. Confessing the sovereignty of God over all the affairs and circumstances of life and His all-embracing counsel and providence, they were not led into the trap of regarding Scripture as culturally conditioned or time-bound. The historical principle of Scriptural interpretation properly applied is a matter of Scripture interpreting Scripture. The reformers followed it to know and understand the meaning of God's Word. But they also understood that God had ordered all things and had unfolded His Word in history with a view to the church of all ages. They sought to understand what that Word meant for the church in the time and place in which it was given, because it is exactly that Word which God still speaks to His church today and that in the fullest sense of the word.

They saw God as the Giver of His Word Who had spoken that Word and revealed Himself in the history and lives of His people, who spake by the mouth of His servants, the prophets and apostles. *"And that afterwards God, from a special care, which he has for us and our salvation, commanded his servants, the prophets and apostles, to commit his revealed word to writing . . ."* (Confession of Faith, Article III). Although therefore Scripture was to be understood historically, yet nevertheless, it was that which the Spirit had to say to the church of all ages, in His unchangeable Word, which stood before them upon the pages of Holy Writ. It was not to set aside God's Word that they laid hold of the historical principle, but because Scripture itself led them to it and by it they came to a knowledge of the truth. It was not an instrument to obscure the meaning of God's Word or to explain away its requirement and calling as is so often the case today. Rather it was a principle taught in Scripture which they properly applied to make Scripture clear and to understand it aright.

Book Reviews

DUTCH CALVINISM IN MODERN AMERICA: A HISTORY OF A CONSERVATIVE SUBCULTURE, by James D. Bratt; Wm. B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., Grand Rapids, MI, ISBN 0-8028-0009-2, 329 pp., paper, \$13.95. (Reviewed by Prof. H.C. Hoeksema)

This book is a study of the Dutch, specifically the Dutch and Reformed, in America from the late 19th century to the present. In the very nature of the case, this study of an ethnic subculture, as it is called is at the same time and in large measure a study of the group's religious history as well. This makes the book interesting for us: it is a book about ourselves, our ancestors, our churches, our struggles. More than this, the book is scholarly, well-written, and is filled with anecdotes and sidelights which make it very interesting. Besides, it is amply footnoted; and the footnotes are sometimes fully as interesting as the body of the text.

Anyone who studies this period and this segment of church history would do well to include this book in his reading.

At the same time, I would warn that at least some of the book must be read with discretion and critically. I would call it history with a tilt. Naturally, I was especially interested in Part III, which covers the history from 1917-1928, the period which includes the Janssen controversy and the common grace controversy, as well as the events and developments preceding these. And my interest was partly due to the fact that I lived close to one of the principals in these struggles and was able to learn much about them firsthand. In that light, I would mention the following:

- 1) I do not believe that the treatment of Dr. Janssen and the proceedings of the Synod of 1922 are accurately presented and evaluated. The author seems to follow the line of Harry Boer and the *Reformed Journal* in this respect.
- 2) Along the same line, I do not believe that the common grace controversy and the Synod of 1924 and subsequent events are correctly presented.
- 3) I do not believe that the relationship between Dr. Janssen and Herman Hoeksema are correctly pictured. There was no great personal bitterness between the two. True, they disagreed fundamentally. But there was also a kind of mutual respect.

Janssen respected Hoeksema for his honesty and consistency, and Hoeksema always had high regard for Janssen as a scholar. I can remember Hoeksema saying, for example, that as a scholar and a teacher Janssen stood head and shoulders above the professors who criticized him. And in later years Janssen still would send Hoeksema his greetings from time to time.

4) I think it is rather simplistic on the part of the author to depict the ongoing struggle in the CRC as a struggle between pietism and Kuyperianism. There were other currents. For example, at the time when *The Witness* was begun, one of the men (later a common grace proponent) complained that it was too late to do anything because the whole church was shot through with Arminianism.

5) I find it strange that after the account of 1924, Herman Hoeksema is hardly mentioned. Like it or not, he and the Protestant Reformed Churches were a force to be reckoned with also in explaining the history of the CRC. Hoeksema and his theology constituted an undeniable reference point in the post-1924 history of the Reformed community. The author seems to ignore the evidence on this score.

The discerning reader will undoubtedly find more points of disagreement and criticism.

Nevertheless, this book is a good addition to one's history/church history shelf.

ABORTION AND THE CHRISTIAN, John Jefferson Davis; Presbyterian & Reformed, 1984; 125 pp. \$4.95 (paper). (Reviewed by Prof. H. Hanko).

As the debate in this country continues over the legality of abortion, the presses produce more and more books, articles, and pamphlets. It is impossible to keep up with it all, and the concerned Christian sometimes wonders what he ought to read and what he ought to lay aside. In my judgment, this is one book every Christian ought to read. It is complete without being tediously long. It is a thorough treatment of the subject without a lot of technical (both legal and medical) terminology thrown in. It presents the case against abortion from a Biblical viewpoint and gathers a surprising amount of material from the Scriptures to show the terrible evil of this national sin.

The "blurb" on the back cover is worth quoting.

Abortion is a topic of immense importance. Not only is it a burning controversy in its own right, but it is also symptomatic of a larger crisis in contemporary values. At stake is the very meaning of human life.

In spite of 1.5 million abortions annually in America, there is much the public does not know about what has become the nation's more common surgical procedure on adults. The Christian public, in particular, needs a more thorough understanding of the questions surrounding abortion questions like, What does the Bible say about prenatal life? When, if ever, is abortion justified? What are the medical risks of abortion? Are the unborn individual persons, biologically, spiritually, legally?

Building on a broad base of biblical data, John Jefferson Davis answers these and many other questions related to the ethics of abortion. In so doing, he equips readers to challenge current assumptions in the areas of law, medicine, and social concern, and to affirm the value of human life both in and out of the womb.

In brief, the author first of all describes the three positions taken on this issue and gives the arguments in favor of them. These three positions are: 1) Unlimited abortion; 2) Abortion under certain circumstances; a) Abortion to save the life of the mother; b) in cases of pregnancy due to rape or incest; c) in case of subhuman retardation; 3) Only to save the life of the mother.

The author also enters into the medical dangers of abortion and claims there is a conspiracy of silence on this matter.

His arguments from Scripture are detailed and conclusive and present an excellent Biblical foundation for the position that abortion is murder. The one exception is, and with this the church has almost always agreed, that abortion may be performed to save the life of the mother.

We urge those who are interested in a study of this question to obtain this book.

The author is Associate Professor of Theology at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

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News From Our Churches

David Harbach

The Reformation Day lectures were in abundance again this time of the year, an evidence of the love for the Reformation that God has put into our hearts. Many of us enjoyed the lecture given by Rev. J. Kortering on "Psalm Singing: A Reformed Heritage." This lecture is available on tape from the Lecture Committee of the churches in the Grand Rapids, Michigan area. Perhaps someone would even consider putting this lecture into a booklet form. Rev. R. Hanks gave a lecture in New Jersey on "The Decline of the Reformation" and his brother, Rev. K. Hanks, gave a lecture in the Norristown, Pennsylvania area, on "The Reformation and Christian Liberty." Again, our churches have more than just a passing interest in the Reformation. Rev. R. Cammenga also spoke on "What Was the Reformation?" in Loveland, Colorado. Tapes of this lecture are available for \$2.00 by

writing to: Loveland Protestant Reformed Church, 705 E. 57th St., Loveland, CO 80537.

Several changes have occurred in our churches recently. The consistory of Hudsonville Church, Michigan, has decided to use Psalter no. 196 as their evening doxology. This doxology, used for many years in the past, expresses the response of the congregation to the Word preached — by singing praise to the Name of our Great God. Grandville Church, Michigan, has decided to add two additional elders and one additional deacon to the consistory. The reason for this is the increased size of the congregation, and that they do have nominees available for consideration. Grandville is also in the process of organizing some Sunday evening discussion groups for the purpose of discussing the matter of personal witnessing. The consistory

CONFERENCE ON BIBLICAL MARRIAGE

"For better, for worse . . . 'til death us do part."

SPEAKERS:

Rev. David Engelsma: "Sex in Marriage" and "The Scriptural Teaching on Divorce"
 Rev. Jason Kortering: "Marriage's Divine Institution" and "The Goal of Marriage"
 Rev. James Slopsema: "The Cause of Marital Problems" and "Biblical Solutions for Marital Joy"

PURPOSE:

To honor and defend God's institution of marriage. The devil and ungodly society have always attacked and slandered marriage. This influence has had devastating effects, so that much of modern Christianity has joined the world in lowering God's ideal standards for marriage. Come, hear inspiring speeches and discussions, proclaiming God's intent for marriage.

TIME:

Friday, November 22, 7:00 to 9:30 P.M.
 Saturday, November 23, 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.

LOCATION:

Elmhurst Holiday Inn, 624 N. York Rd., Elmhurst, Illinois [From I-294 (the Tri-State E-way) take I-290 West; exit York Rd. North]

REGISTRATION:

Registration donation is \$10/person. Registration is limited. Reserve yourself and a friend or loved one a place by mailing in your name and registration donation. Motel reservations at group rates can be made when you send in your registration.

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of Southwest Church, Michigan, has granted the deacons permission to sit with their families in harmony with a decision made in 1967. The Council of Southwest has also decided to establish a "Seminary Sunday" once each two months to provide opportunity for the professors to preach in the churches and for the students to speak a word of exhortation in the churches. This decision will be placed into effect when Southwest has a minister of their own. And finally, the consistory of Loveland Church, Colorado, has made the decision to have the Sunday School meet from June through August, rather than during the winter months.

Mr. Jaiki Mahtani, our seminarian from Singapore, has been licensed by the faculty of the Seminary to speak a word of exhortation in our churches. We rejoice with him as this gives him the opportunity to gain experience in the work of preaching and to become better acquainted with our congregations.

Rev. den Hartog's new address is: 43 Blair Road, Singapore 0208, Republic of Singapore.

David Harbach is a teacher at Adams St. Prot. Ref. Christian School, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Ladies' Society of the South Holland Protestant Reformed Church expresses sympathy to Mrs. Catherine Holleman in the death of her sister, ALICE DEKKER.

"For this God is our God forever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death." (Psalm 48:14)

Mr. John Flikkema, Vice Pres.
Sharon Maatman, Sec'y.

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Ladies' Society of the South Holland Protestant Reformed Church expresses sympathy to Mrs. Teresa Haak and Marilyn De Jong in the death of a mother and grandmother.

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

Mr. John Flikkema, Vice Pres.
Sharon Maatman, Sec'y.

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Martha Society of the Doon Protestant Reformed Church extends its sincere Christian sympathy to one of its members, Mrs. Clarence Klein and family, in the recent death of her step-mother, MRS. MARTHA KUIPER.

"The Lord is good, a strong-hold in the day of trouble; He knoweth them that trust in Him." (Nahum 1:7)

Rev. M. Kamps, Pres.
Mrs. Henry Bleyenburgh, Sec'y.

Rev. and Mrs. Joostens and family have secured a house about a mile away from the Bruinsmas. They also have a foreign car for their use. Their new address is: Redgate, Cave P.O., Westmoreland, Jamaica.

The Evangelism Committee of South Holland Church, Illinois, has prepared an attractively boxed set of cassette tapes of Rev. D. Engelsma's recent series of sermons on the history of Gideon. There are six sermons: "The Call of a Mighty Deliverer," "Putting Our Own House In Order," "Thinning the Ranks," "Deliverance by the Sword of the Covenant," "Divisions Within," and "Deliverance . . . and Departure." If there is a good response, the Committee hopes to produce similar sets in the future. These tapes make a worthwhile gift. Contact the church for more information.

Remember the conference on the subject: "Marriage: For Better, For Worse," to be held Friday from 7:00 P.M. to 9:30 P.M. and Saturday, from 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M., November 22 & 23, at the Elmhurst Holiday Inn, 624 N. York Road, Elmhurst, Illinois (312 - 279-1100) sponsored by the Northwest Chicago Mission of our Protestant Reformed Churches In America.

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Council of Hope Protestant Reformed Church, Walker, Michigan, expresses its sympathy to Elder Don Lotterman in the death of his mother-in-law, MRS. PIPER.

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." (II Corinthians 5:1)

Cal Kalsbeek, Assistant Clerk

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On November 23, 1985, the Lord willing, our parents, REV. AND MRS. RICHARD G. MOORE, will celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary. We, their children and grandchildren, are thankful to our heavenly Father for blessing us with God-fearing parents. And we are grateful for their love and covenant instruction in God's ways. We pray that God will always be near them and bless them in the years to come. We are thankful also for Rev. Moore's faithful preaching in our churches, and our prayer is that they may continue to be a blessing to us and our church.

"He will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord." (Genesis 18:19)

Brian and Carolyn Tolsma
Derek, Cindy and Curtiss
Henry and Lee Ann Ferguson
Ashley and Scott
Denise Moore
Brenda Moore

David Moore
Melanie Moore
Joel Moore
Rachel Moore
Stacie Moore
Stephanie Moore