

The **STANDARD BEARER**

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

... once God has earned for you and me a place in His kingdom through the death of His Son, it is God's good pleasure to lead us to that place only in the way of true righteousness. The kingdom of heaven is a kingdom of righteousness. How inconceivable that God would lead us to this kingdom in this life along the path of sin and depravity ...

See "The Righteousness That Exceeds"

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Editor-in-Chief: Prof. Homer C. Hoeksema

Department Editors: Rev. Ronald Cammenga, Rev. Arie den Hartog, Prof. Robert D. Decker, Rev. Barry Gritters, Rev. Cornelius Hanko, Prof. Herman C. Hanko, Rev. Ronald Hanko, Mr. David Harbach, Rev. John A. Heys, Rev. J. Kortering, Rev. George C. Lubbers, Rev. Thomas C. Miersma, Rev. James Slopsema, Rev. Gise J. Van Baren, Rev. Herman Veldman.

Editorial Office: Prof. H.C. Hoeksema
4975 Ivanrest Ave., S.W.
Grandville, Michigan 49418

Church News Editor: Mr. David Harbach
4930 Ivanrest Ave., Apt. B
Grandville, Michigan 49418

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Business Office: The Standard Bearer
Mr. H. Vander Wal, Bus. Mgr. PH: (616) 243-2953
P.O. Box 6064
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49516

New Zealand Business Office: The Standard Bearer
c/o Protestant Reformed Fellowship
B. Van Herk, 66 Fraser St.
Wainuiomata, New Zealand

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MEDITATION

James D. Slopsema

The Righteousness That Exceeds

For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 5:20

These words were spoken by Jesus in His great sermon on the Mount.

The theme of the Sermon on the Mount is the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness. In this

sermon Jesus emphasized that the kingdom of heaven is essentially a kingdom of righteousness, so that only the righteous can enter it. Quite in harmony with that theme, Jesus said that except our

righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, we shall in no case enter into the kingdom.

Now righteousness has the idea of obedience to the law of God. That which conforms to God's law is righteous. Hence, what Jesus is saying is that except our obedience to God's law exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, we shall in no case enter into the kingdom.

* * * * *

Perhaps a word ought to be said about the scribes and Pharisees.

The Pharisees were a religious sect in Israel who prided themselves in the keeping of God's law. Very religiously they observed all the commandments of God given to Israel at Mt. Sinai through Moses. In addition to this they also faithfully observed the traditions of the fathers. These were man-made rules added to the law of God, which, it was claimed, must also be kept if one will truly keep God's law in its essence. All these the Pharisees very carefully observed. In a word the Pharisees were the doers of the law.

If the Pharisees were the doers of the law, the scribes were the students of the law. They made it their business to study and know the law of God. They knew the law of God backwards and forwards. We may call the scribes the theologians of their day.

The scribes and the Pharisees therefore were very closely related to each other. They both dealt with the law: the one as the doer of the law; the other as the interpreter of the law. And for that reason they were highly esteemed in Israel. There was a parable that if only two men were to go to heaven, one would be a scribe and the other a Pharisee.

What a sledgehammer blow it must have been when Christ announced that except the righteousness of the people exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, they would in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. These words of Jesus ran exactly contrary to all thinking in Israel. They were words that shocked the multitudes. We will appreciate this especially if we understand the exact meaning of Jesus' words. For Jesus is not saying that the scribes and Pharisees were basically going in the right direction but simply had not gone far enough in their obedience to God's law. No! What Jesus is saying is that we must have a different kind of righteousness than that of the scribes and Pharisees. The righteousness of the scribes and

Pharisees is essentially a false righteousness. If we will enter into the kingdom, we must have a true, genuine righteousness.

There were especially two things that characterized the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees that made it false.

First, their righteousness was only an outward, external obedience to the law. The scribes and Pharisees had a very shallow, superficial conception of the law. They imagined that the law only governed their outward life and had nothing at all to say about their inner thoughts and desires. Consequently, their obedience to the law was only external. They ordered their outward conduct according to the law, but not their inner thoughts and desires.

Jesus made this plain in what follows of the Sermon on the Mount. The Pharisees were angry with their brother without a cause, they called their brother names, they would insult and tear down their neighbor; but just so long as they did not take the life of their neighbor they imagined they had kept the sixth commandment of the law, "Thou shalt not kill." In like manner they frequently looked upon the neighbor's wife to lust after her in their hearts. Yet never did they consider this to be a violation of the seventh commandment against adultery. One committed adultery only if he laid his hand on the neighbor's wife.

Consequently, Jesus called the Pharisees in another place whited sepulchres. He compared them to a cup clean on the outside but filthy on the inside.

The second characteristic of the righteousness of scribes and Pharisees was that it was a righteousness completely devoid of love. The very essence of God's law, as Jesus Himself more than once made clear, is that we love God and our neighbor as ourselves. This love was completely lacking in the hearts of the scribes and Pharisees. There was only one whom each scribe and Pharisee loved — that was himself. Each was filled with a sinful love of self which made him concerned only with himself. We may ask, why then did they bother to keep the law of God even in its external form? The answer is that this external obedience served to advance their selfish goals. The external righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees served to gain them the praise of men. It also served to elevate them to positions of power and influence in Israel.

And now imagine! The scribes and Pharisees believed that on the basis of this external obedience, God would receive them into His fellowship and reward them with eternal glory.

Small wonder that Jesus proclaims their righteousness to be false!

Our righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. Our righteousness must be a true righteousness.

A true righteousness is one, first of all, rooted in love.

As we have just noticed, the great commandment of the law is that we love God and the neighbor. Now what does it really mean to love God and the neighbor? From a very practical point of view, to love God means that you seek at all times God's honor and glory. One who loves God as he ought does not seek his own glory; he seeks God's glory. He desires to honor God in all that he does and says. In like manner, to love the neighbor means to seek the welfare of the neighbor. One who loves the neighbor isn't concerned first of all with his own desires and interests; he's concerned with what's good for the neighbor. For the neighbor's welfare he will gladly sacrifice, if need be, his time, his money, and even his own desires.

Now our righteousness is genuine only when our keeping of God's law is motivated by this kind of love. If, for example, we do what God commands us because we are afraid of hell or because we think that somehow our obedience will earn us a place in heaven, then our righteousness is false. It's essentially the same as that of the scribes and Pharisees. So too is our righteousness false if performed to avoid criticism by others or even to make ourselves look good before others. Our righteousness is true and genuine only when it is motivated by love and is thus done consciously either to glorify God or to promote the welfare of the neighbor.

Following from this, a true righteousness is, in the second place, one that conforms the whole of our life to the law of God. Not only must our outward behavior be pure according to the law, but also our inner thoughts and desires. And the key to this is love. If we truly love God as we ought, we will not be content to conform just our outward life to His law. In our desire to honor and glorify Him, we will also live according to His law inwardly. In like manner, if we truly love the neighbor so that we seek his good, we will not only refrain from killing him but will also refrain from being angry with him without a cause, insulting him or tearing him down. And if we truly love the neighbor's wife we will not only refrain from committing the outward act of adultery with her, we will also refrain from lusting after her.

* * * * *

By nature it is impossible for us to walk in true righteousness. This is due to our depravity. When we fell in Adam in the beginning, we all became corrupt and depraved. The sad fruit of this depravi-

ty is that we are no longer capable of walking in true righteousness. All that the depraved and fallen sinner can do is perform the false righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees.

If we will live in true righteousness, we must be transformed by the wonderful grace of God in Jesus Christ.

This transformation is possible only if we first have the righteousness of Jesus Christ Himself.

We must understand that our depravity by nature is God's punishment for our sin. When we sinned in Adam originally, we became guilty before God. God appropriately punished us by giving us over to sin and depravity, which eventually leads to hell. What this means is that if we will ever be delivered from our depravity and the false righteousness to which it limits us, our sins must be removed from before the face of God. So long as there remains so much as one sin of ours before God, we are legally bound to our depravity and this false righteousness. Freedom from our depravity requires that somehow we appear before the tribunal of God in perfect righteousness, that is, as those who have never sinned but who have kept all obedience.

This is possible only if we possess the righteousness of Jesus Christ. In the cross of Christ there is perfect righteousness. For at the cross Christ paid the price that covers for all times the sins of all of God's people. At the cross Christ also walked the way of perfect obedience and righteousness on behalf of all of God's own. There is a perfect righteousness at the cross! And if we will be righteous before God so as to be freed from the terrible penalty of sin, we must possess that righteousness.

This righteousness of Jesus Christ is a free gift of God to all His people. They receive this righteousness by faith alone in Jesus Christ. When the children of God come before their God in true faith, God accounts the righteousness of Christ as their righteousness so that they are righteous before Him in Christ's righteousness.

And being righteous before God by faith, God's people are delivered by God's grace from their depravity and its false righteousness. Through the same faith by which they have laid claim to the righteousness of the cross, God in Christ renews and strengthens them so that they walk in true righteousness. They do this only in principle (and thus imperfectly) in this life, but completely and perfectly in glory.

Are you walking in true righteousness?

Will you grow in this righteousness?

Cling to Christ by faith!

How very important it is to live in true righteousness!

For only those who walk in true righteousness will enter into the kingdom of heaven.

No! This does not mean that somehow a life of righteousness and obedience to God earns us a place in the kingdom. Our place is earned only by the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ.

However, once God has earned for you and me a place in His kingdom through the death of His Son, it is God's good pleasure to lead us to that place on-

ly in the way of true righteousness. The kingdom of heaven is a kingdom of righteousness. How inconceivable that God would lead us to this kingdom in this life along the path of sin and depravity, along the path of a false righteousness. The God-ordained way to heaven is the way of His transforming grace, the way of true righteousness.

Are you on that way?

Let us in the power of grace and the cross walk in the righteousness that exceeds!

EDITORIAL

Reformed Revival or Ongoing Deformation?

Not long ago (Dec. 15, 1985 issue) Prof. Decker commented rather extensively on "Alive '85" in *All Around Us*, criticizing it chiefly because of its Arminianism, but also calling attention positively to what the churches need in order to be "reformed and always reforming." His comments were pertinent.

Recently the same Dr. John Guest who was the "evangelist" of "Alive '85" was back in Grand Rapids under the auspices of the Shawnee Park Christian Reformed Church. This event became the occasion of some editorial comment under the title, "Reformed Revival," by Editor A. Kuyvenhoven in *The Banner* (March 31, '86, p. 5). After commenting on the fact that this is a relatively new phenomenon in the Christian Reformed Church, as well as stating that "many of us will continue to observe revival religion from a distance and with suspicion" while "others of us have decided that it is exactly what we need," he describes the current trend as follows:

All of us can make revival religion's best products our guests by turning on the television. Perhaps that's where we first got used to the style. Then we decided that the best way to set young Calvinists afire was to invite popular evangelical speakers to their conven-

tions. And then we gave our youth the opportunity to make a commitment (see News, Sept. 16, 1985). [The reference here is to an altar call at last year's Young Calvinist Convention. HCH] A number of our churches are heavily involved in revival religion's style by means of paradenominational organizations: some go on spirituality retreats, Iowa church members have adopted the Cursillo movement (News, Mar. 3), and the other part of old colony's heartland, western Michigan, is dipping into revival religion using a man whose name is symbolic of the new evangelism tools we are borrowing: Dr. John Guest (News, Mar. 17).

Included in the list might have been extensive participation by three southern California Christian Reformed Churches in Billy Graham's Anaheim Crusade (News, Mar. 31, 1986, p. 23), although such participation, at least on an unofficial scale, has been going on for almost a generation already.

Under the sub-title "Hang Loose, Brethren," Editor Kuyvenhoven tells us:

I witnessed the return of Guest to Grand Rapids on a Sunday morning in March, when he led a "commitment service," sponsored by the Shawnee Park Christian Reformed Church, in the gym of Grand Rapids Christian High School. On the previous evening, a young people's rally had brought Guest, loud music, colorful lights, and the claims of the Lord to the same

gym. On Sunday morning about 1,100 people came. I sat on the bleachers. Shawnee Park Church had done much hard work, and I enjoyed the service with a spiritual joy. Of course, we are still a little awkward at a revival-type meeting in a gym. The "service of reconciliation" (or, law) seemed curiously out of place; the choir was excellent but too refined for the setting (so was the organ); and the pastor was trying hard to find the style of this thing. The song leader fit right in, but he could not get the people to say "Amen," and he did not press harder. But Guest is a pro. He holds his Bible the way Billy Graham does; he is tall, handsome, and speaks with a British accent. He is extremely articulate. He knows and likes Christian Reformed people, and he was out of step only once, when he talked about going to a restaurant after church.

People could respond to Guest's challenge by marking one of four different choices on a card, or they could go and meet him in a "counseling room." That's as close as we came to a sinner's seat.

I think that every congregation needs to do something now and then that's different from the ordinary. So does every couple; it is good for every person.

After telling about observing three young women who apparently paid no attention, the editor writes:

How does Jesus come to us? By his Spirit. And how does the Spirit come to us? With the Word. We have always known that.

Sometimes people have to be in a new environment or hear a new preacher, but it's just another way of meeting the same Jesus. And if we don't meet him, nothing happens.

The concluding section of the editorial is subtitled "Clarity." It concentrates on "method." In the first place, it proposes, referring to "the methods and techniques that other Christians employ to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ," that "We could learn to introduce such opportunities and confrontations in a way that's appropriate to methods and manners with which we are familiar." In the second place, it calls for understanding:

All of us need shaking up from time to time, and I don't really care how it is done, as long as it is done. But all leaders in the church should know what the connection is between faith and method and between theology and liturgy. The congregation needs clarity about the operation of the Spirit and some understanding of how all this squares with our Reformed confessions.

Notice, the question is not *whether* it squares, but *how* it squares. And, in the third place, Editor Kuyvenhoven cautions that consistories must know "what we're buying into when we import unfamiliar methods. Some are refreshingly new. But let's keep far away from the methods of the salvation engineers with which North America is so richly endowed."

Now there is much that can be said about all this.

One wonders, for example, about the title, "Reformed Revival." No evidence is adduced, for one thing, to show that any genuine revival is taking place — though revivalism seems to have more and more of a place in the CRC. In the second place, the editorial seems to assume that this revival is *Reformed*. Little or nothing is said on that score, while all the emphasis appears to fall on the matter of *method*, not on *content* and *message*. In the third place, one wonders whether the time has come, from the church political point of view, that "there is no king in Israel, but everyone does what is right in his own eyes." There was a time when the power of hierarchy was very strong in the CRC, especially when one did not conform to CRC synodical decrees. Now apparently a CRC consistory can officially invite an Episcopal minister to its Sunday morning service with impunity; and even the editor of the denominational magazine refers to "Reformed Revival," and speaks of having "enjoyed the service with a spiritual joy." And he speaks in the past tense about the CRC attitude toward revivalism: "We used to describe American-frontier revival religion as emotional, individualistic, and, yes, Arminian." But then he speaks of the present: "Well, very many of us will continue to observe revival religion from a distance and with suspicion. But others of us have decided that it is exactly what we need."

What has happened in the CRC?

Very simply put, what has happened is that the doctrine of the general, well-meant offer of the gospel has taken root, grown, and is now bringing forth fruit!

This revivalism is not a sudden, overnight development; but it is the fruit of a long process. The process began in 1924, when the error of the well-meant offer was attached to the First Point of Common Grace. Henry Danhof, Herman Hoeksema, and George M. Ophoff warned then of its incipient Arminianism and prophesied that universal atonement and the denial of sovereign reprobation would be the fruits of it. It took many years, during which the poison of the common grace doctrine was slowly but inexorably injected into the life-stream of the church from pulpit and in catechism class, as well as in seminary. For many years the process was hardly noticed by many. But then, as the late James Daane put it, during the fifties the winds of change began to blow through the CRC. In the 1960s the church was unable to condemn the error of general atonement when clearly confronted by it; it was only "ambiguous and abstract." Then, in the late 1970s and early 1980s the doctrine of sovereign reprobation was radically

revamped (even though Dr. Boer's gravamen apparently — but only apparently — failed).

Is it any wonder, considering the facts of history, that Arminian revivalism has found its way into Christian Reformed evangelism? No, it would have been a wonder if this had not happened. The whole process was inevitable!

And there is no solution — except the only solution which but a few have been willing to consider. That solution is the repudiation of the First Point of Common Grace and its insidious offer-doctrine and a wholehearted return to the truth of sovereign, particular grace.

Would to God that many would see this! HCH

THE DAY OF SHADOWS

John A. Heys

A Cry From the Belly of Hell

Although Jonah was not the author of Psalm 130, what is written therein expresses what lived in his soul. And remembering the story of Jonah as we find it in Holy Writ, we can see that had he known the versification of it, as we have it in our *Psalter*, there was a moment in his life when he would have sung it. I have in mind these words:

From the depths do I invoke Thee,
Lord to me incline thy ear;
To my voice be Thou attentive,
And my supplication hear.

The way Jonah did put it was: "I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and He heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and Thou heardest my voice." And the affliction to which he refers is the heavy hand of God upon him because of his sin in refusing to go to Nineveh, as he was called, to preach unto God's people in that great city.

God had sent a storm of unusually great force to buffet the ship which Jonah was using to flee to Tarshish. Shipwreck seemed imminent. And God had so guided the lots which were cast, that there was no doubt in anyone's mind that this storm was because of Jonah's sin. He confessed it before the sailors, telling them that he was trying to flee from God's presence. He was even more specific. For he

told them in no uncertain terms, "I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you."

Jonah did not yet see that thousands of Ninevites could also perish because of his sin, namely, that of refusing to go and warn them of God's wrath against them because of their sin. There were elect children of God there, as subsequent history shows; and they would have perished with the children of the devil. For he did not understand how God could want to save these people, who in Jonah's mind were so far out of the covenant sphere.

Having been given grace to acknowledge his sin before these mariners — who likewise were Gentiles, even as the Ninevites were — so that he instructed them to cast him overboard, so that they might be saved from the destructive power of this storm, Jonah now has the awesome experience that in a matter of moments, rather than the forty days before Nineveh's destruction, he will face God in death! The God, from Whose presence he sought to flee, will now confront him here outside the promised land. He is walking in sin, and he is outside the covenant sphere because he wanted to leave it. Try to put yourself in his position as the sailors pick him up and he sails over the side of the ship and begins to descend to those waters whipped up by that unusually powerful storm. Indeed he would get wet; but after that would not the fire of hell change things completely for him? And as he

descends to the bottom of the sea, what thoughts must have flashed through his mind, now that no one less than God Himself had told him that this storm was because of his sin.

The picture, however, is often distorted, particularly in Bible story books with illustrations drawn or painted to try to get the idea clearly before the minds of the children. It is presented as though the fish is right there, just under the surface of the water and right next to the ship, so that Jonah is at once transported from the safety of the ship — safe in the sense that there he could breathe the oxygen he needed for his life — and into the fish's belly, where oxygen again is provided for him. But in Jonah 2 we get a different picture. In verse 5 we read, "The waters compassed me about, even to the soul; the depths closed round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head." Then too in verse 6 he speaks of going "down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever." Plainly Jonah had fallen to the bottom of the sea. The fish may have been there near the ship, and even near the surface. But he did not immediately swallow up Jonah and give him a place of safety to enjoy, with no moments of stark fear and terror gripping his soul. No, he says that the waters compassed him, even to the soul. He had sunk to the depths of the sea, and he had gotten tangled in the weeds. In that sense "From the depths do I invoke Thee" was characteristic of Jonah's prayer. Those weeds that were wrapped about his head, as he states in verse 5, were not inside the fish's belly. Note that he continues in the next verse by stating that he "went down to the bottom of the mountains; and the earth with her bars was about me forever." Even if he could swim, this was now impossible because of the thick weeds into which God's hand had guided him, as he fell deeper and deeper to the depths of the sea. All this was before the fish found him and swallowed him. All this was also before he was safely inside the fish with a divinely prepared supply of much needed oxygen.

In Jonah 2:2 we read that he cried from out the belly of hell. This does not refer to the belly of the fish. In the KJV of the Bible there are several words that are translated as hell, but they do not all mean exactly the same thing. The one we find here is the Hebrew word *sheol* and means the grave. Jonah was in his grave when he cried to God. This word means, as far as its derivation is concerned, that which is hollow, as is a cave wherein men in those days buried the dead, or a hole in the ground, as is our custom. And that word does not necessarily or always mean the place of torment, and the fire of God's wrath. Every unbeliever will with his soul go there at death. But his body goes into the hollow place, called the grave. Jonah considered himself in

his grave, before the fish came and swallowed him up, and before he was supplied with the oxygen he needed for his life.

Thus the word is also used in Psalm 16:10 when, prophetically, we read of Jesus: "For Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell." This is explained in the next clause, "Neither wilt Thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." That is the corruption of the body in the grave. In the Greek there are three words that are translated as hell. There is the word *hades*, which we find in Acts 2:27 as a fulfillment of what we find in Psalm 16:10. It plainly means the tomb, the grave. Then there is the word *gehenna*, which means the place of torment, the place of the fire of God's holy wrath. And there is the word *tartarus*, used only once and by Peter in II Peter 2:4. We may safely conclude that what Jonah speaks of here is his grave. He did not go to the place of torment, although he had every reason to fear that. He is crying to God from the moment he was thrown into the waves, and fell deeper and deeper in the sea, and while he became entangled in the weeds. He expressed his thanks to God after he was picked up by the fish; and he knew that his life was spared. Then he stated what we read in verse 2: "... and Thou heardest me."

No, the fish was not a moving grave for Jonah. When in the fish, he was already out of his grave. That fish was a special "ship" prepared by God to bring him back to dry land, so that he could still go to Nineveh.

Certainly we do not deal here with a fish story. We have a true story of a real fish. This is not a bit of fiction with a spiritual meaning. It is no fable. Consider what the Son of God Himself said. He assured us that so as Jonah was in the fish's belly for three days and three nights, so He would be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights. If Jonah's was fictitious, then so was Christ's. Perish the very thought! That would mean that our sins were not actually blotted out, and that He did not conquer death and the grave for us. Then we would have a fictitious salvation. And we would be the people of whom Jonah speaks when he says in verse 8, "They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy." More of that next time. But keep it in mind.

Now as to the fish, we do not know what kind of fish it was. The KJV in Matthew 12:40 has the word *whale*. But it is interesting and striking to note that the Hebrew, which records the actual event in Jonah's life, has a word that means a whale. We find that word already in Genesis 1:21 where we read that God created great whales. But that is *not* the word that we find here in Jonah 1:17 and 2:10. The word in Genesis is *tannin*; and the word in

Jonah is dag. They neither look alike nor sound alike. And the word in the Greek of Matthew 12:40 cannot be limited to the whale. It simply means a large fish. Some translations, as the Philips and the New English Bible have "sea monster." The reason why men think it was a whale is the fact that a whale breathes air, and it takes its oxygen out of the air, while other fish have gills and take it out of the water. This would indeed be better for Jonah's life. At least in our way of thinking, God would pick a fish like that.

What we are to note carefully is that we read that God prepared a great fish. He did not send one, or find one already adapted to supply Jonah with air. He prepared one. If now it was a whale, we would still have to maintain that it was one especially formed and adapted to supply Jonah with air in its belly, where Jonah was. He was not in the lungs of the fish, but he was swallowed, and went into the belly. God could have prepared another kind of fish as easily as He could change a whale. The point is that God prepared, and performed special work. We do not know all the fish that could have been in the Mediterranean Sea at that time. Huge land beasts roamed our continents years ago, and they are not in existence anymore. Could God not have spared a particular fish, other than a whale, to be there for Jonah's life?

God performed a special work here. And salvation always is a special work. Did He not send us a Son and Saviour in the special way of a virgin birth? Did He not do that when the royal line of David had ended in a woman, and there was no man of that royal line left to beget a son to sit on David's throne? And even apart from that, did He not do a special work at the Red Sea to save Israel and destroy the enemies? Salvation was a special work there. At the River Jordan it was the same thing. In each instance God prepared the way and saved by *preparing* a way when in an ordinary way His work would never have given them salvation.

Yes, out of the belly of hell Jonah cried. And we ought to try to put ourselves in his place, when he was thrown overboard into his grave, with the finger of God pointing at him as one who deserved this fierce wrath, this terrible storm with such billows and waves. If we do, we can appreciate those words of Jonah when he summarizes the whole ordeal: "Salvation is of the Lord." Jonah was no Arminian. He knew better than to attribute the smallest part of his salvation to works which he performed. His works brought him into that belly of hell. And there was no condition he could fulfill. Surely there was no way in which he could now go to Nineveh and do the work he refused to do. Of this we will have more to say in a future installment.

FROM HOLY WRIT

George C. Lubbers

The Hope of Heaven and Earth (1)

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Gen. 1:1

INTRODUCTION

It has been said by very astute and studious, scholarly saints that he who preaches well on Genesis 1:1 also preaches well on Revelation 22:18-22. He preaches the Alpha and Omega, the Lord God Almighty. He preaches Christ Who is yesterday, today, and forever the same.

We heartily agree!

Such preaching is the true application of the Reformation principle of the *Sola Scriptura*.

Genesis 1:1 is the revelation of God, the Creator of heaven and earth. It is a basic Article of the Christian faith. Fact is, that unless this Article is believed with the heart and confessed with the mouth we cannot be saved in Christ Jesus. He who denies the creation of the world by God has re-

jected the very foundation of all pure religion before God the Father.

Hence, our point of departure must be, "I believe in God" (John 4:1; Acts 27:25)!

Scripture teaches us that it is by faith that we understand that the worlds (the ages = *tous aionous*) were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen are not made of things which appear (Heb. 11:3). By faith we believe what God the Creator, our Father in heaven, tells us as to the wonder of the "becoming" of the heavens and the earth.

Such is our vantage-point of faith. Yes, such is our vantage-point of hope in the creation of a new heaven and a new earth, which shall be realized by the power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the death. With this hope in our hearts we open our Bibles and we read in glad anticipation of hope that He Who created the heavens and the earth in the beginning with all that are in them, all the hosts, will also one day usher in a new heaven and a new earth where righteousness shall dwell (II Peter 3:13). Compare Isaiah 60:21; 66:22.

Yes, here in Genesis 1:1 we do have a revelation of the "beginning" of God's works; but here is also the foundation laid for the "ending" of God's works in the eternal Sabbath, when the Tabernacle of God shall be with men. Truly, rightly considered, we have in Genesis 1:1 an overview of history as it unfolds till the time when all of the present earth shall perish and vanish away (Ps. 102:25 ff.; Heb. 1:10-12). Do we not read of this heaven and earth, which the LORD did lay in the beginning, "they shall perish; but Thou continuest, and they shall all wax old as a garment, and they shall be changed, but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail"?

Yes, here we already have a prophetic perspective of all of history, as the unfolding of the counsel of God; here is already the more sure prophetic word which shines more and more unto the perfect day. Let it never be overlooked or forgotten that Moses penned these words as a part of the "Law" which he gave to Israel, the "Church in the wilderness" (Acts 7:38). He is not standing here on the morn of creation, when he pens these words, but he is standing in the midst of the church as the "man of God." He is standing on the mount Sinai, where the tabernacle of God was planted, and where the passover was kept, and where the glory of God had filled the Tabernacle from off the mercy-seat (Ex. 40:34).

Here in the wilderness Moses wrote Psalm

90:1-4. In the Spirit of Christ (I Pet. 1:11) Moses addresses the great Adonai, Lord of the universe. And he confesses in deepest reverence that this Jehovah-Adonai has been the "dwelling-place" of the church in all "generations." Moses' gaze in the Spirit goes back across the history of the world up till this point. It is a time of over two thousand years of the generations of the church. And this is the church which the Son of God fathers, defends, and preserves from the beginning of the world to the end out of the entire human race, a church elected unto everlasting life, gathered in the unity of faith. (Heid. Catechism, Ques. 54; Eph. 1:1-5; I Peter 1:19-21).

What a vision of Moses in Psalm 90:1-4!

It reaches beyond the "beginning" into eternity. Yes, before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the (inhabitable) world, even from everlasting to everlasting Thou art God! (Ps. 90:1, 2).

This is the Moses that also writes Genesis 1:1!

Here the Holy Spirit gives us commentary of Genesis 1:1. And it is infallible Poetry, in which we see something of the reaches of eternity "before the foundation of the world."

IN THE BEGINNING (Gen. 1:1; John 1:1-3;
I John 1:1-4)

The Jews called the entire book which we call "Genesis" by the name *bereshith*. This really meant the "head" of all things. It was also the designation of the "firstfruits," and the "firstborn" (Gen. 49:3). In Proverbs 8:22 it refers to the firstfruits of things created by God. This is in line with the thought of Revelation 3:14 where Christ calls Himself the "beginning of the creation of God." (Compare Colossians 1:15-17.) In the Septuagint translation the term is translated "Genesis." We do not consider it going far afield to see here in Genesis 1:1 the first rays of what Matthew writes, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ." This thought, as we hope to point out here subsequently, is further expressed in Exodus 2:4: "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth"

It is, however, true that Moses does not at all speak explicitly yet of the Christ, the Seed of the woman. The date of this revelation of Christ as the firstborn of all creatures must wait till after the account of the "Fall" by one man (Gen. 3:1-7; Rom. 5:12-20).

The realization of the eternal hope is wrought by God by means of a good creation of all things in heaven and on earth, all things sanctified into His service on the seventh day; further, by means of the "Fall," "the transgression" of one man,

through which all men are under sin and condemnation; and, lastly, by means of the great redemption and reconciliation of all things in Christ Jesus (Gen. 1:31; 2:1-3; Rom. 5:12-20; Gen. 3:16, 17; Col. 1:20-22).

Briefly stated this is: Creation-Fall-Recreation!

We do well to pause here a minute and to reflect.

Did God in the beginning really make all things through Christ the "firstborn" of all creatures? Was it in Christ in the womb of the counsel of God that Christ is the center, the beginning of all creatures both in heaven and on earth? We understand full well that the first creature which God made was the "earth void and without form" upon which the Spirit of God brooded, causing it to pulsate with life and the potentiality to be formed in the six days of the creation week into one harmonious Cosmos! But the Spirit could not brood upon this earth were it not for the Word, the Logos in creation. Of this Logos we read in the Gospel of John, chapter 1:1-4. This was the Word which was in the beginning. And this was the Word which was with God, *facing* God (the preposition in Greek is "pros"), and the Word which was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made which was made.

Here the vistas of the Divine thoughts and of the revelation of them are opened to us. Yes, here we see wondrous things out of God's Word. The glory of God shines in every creature of God as His handiwork. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard (Ps. 19:1-4). Yes, their line is gone out through all the world!

Here we see set before our eyes the "manifestation" of the Eternal Wisdom, the personal Wisdom (*Chokmah*) of Proverbs 8:1, 11, 12 etc. This is especially true in what we read in Proverbs 8:22-31. We do well to take our Bible and read this section carefully and repeatedly and with a devout heart and mind. For here the depths are sounded by the Holy Spirit concerning the "deep things of God." The vail is lifted upon this already in the Old Testament by the Spirit, and we get to see something of

the glories revealed in the Prologue of John's Gospel. Yes, the Word was *with* God, as God.

Could it be said better than in Proverbs 8:22 ff.? "The LORD *possessed* me in the beginning of His way" (the first of His works of old), or better translated "before His works of old." And Proverbs continues, "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, before the earth was." Yes, when God had not yet made anything, neither earth nor heaven, *then* the Wisdom, the Logos, was with Him! Writes the Personal Wisdom, "I was daily His delight, rejoicing continually before Him, rejoicing in the habitable part of the earth, and my delight was with the sons of men"!

Thus it was in the beginning!

Yea, thus it was before the beginning.

From out of this "before" the beginning arises our daystar of hope, the bright and morning star when all the morning stars sang together! What a glorious *Tris-Hagion*, Holy, holy, holy to the Lord God Almighty arises from the Counsel of Wisdom.

Here we begin to obtain an inkling of what it means that Christ became for us from God the Wisdom of God in the Cross. Here we take the shoes from off our feet, and humbly confess that this "Wisdom" is not after the Fall ours except in Christ Who has become to us "righteousness, sanctification, and complete redemption" (I Cor. 1:30).

We also see that he who preaches well on Revelation 22:16 preaches well on Genesis 1:1.

Let us say it together: He that glories, let him glory in the LORD.

For God made all things for His own glory.

Both the first Sabbath of Creation spoken of in Genesis 2:2, and the eternal Sabbath which remains for the children of God, resound with the doxological praises to God.

"Worthy art Thou, our Lord and our God, to receive glory, honor, and power: for Thou didst create all things, and because of Thy will they are and were created" (Rev. 4:11).

*Take the time to read and study
the Standard Bearer.
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ALL AROUND US

Robert D. Decker

Lady in the Pulpit News Briefs

Lady in the Pulpit

The teaching of Holy Scripture on the place of women in the church is so clear that even a child can understand it. The Bible says, "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety" (1 Timothy 2:11-15). The inspired apostle Paul is speaking of the place of the woman in the church. She must learn in silence, not usurp authority over the man, and she shall be saved in childbearing in the way of faith, love, and hope coupled with sobriety. The passage teaches that God does not want women in the office of the ministry or that of elder. No one can deny this.

This means that the question of women in office which continues to plague many of the Reformed churches is not a question of what the Bible teaches or does not teach. It is a question of how one views the Bible, and it is a question of what standard one uses to arrive at his or her conclusions on this matter. An example of this appeared in a news story carried by *The Banner* (March 10, 1986). According to this report:

Rev. Gordon Van Enk and the consistory of Crenshaw Christian Reformed Church, Los Angeles, are still at odds with classis over Crenshaw's use of a female seminarian for preaching last year. The church allowed Calvin Theological Seminary intern Leanne Van Dyk to preach about once a month during the 1984-85 school year.

Church visitors recommended that Van Enk and his church be reprimanded for allowing Van Dyk to exhort.

Classis reprimanded Van Enk in January. Christian Reformed Home Missions, which oversees Van Enk's work, also reprimanded him, and the seminary, in a stern letter, dissociated itself from Crenshaw's action.

Rev. Douglas Warners, one of the church visitors who worked on the case, said in a telephone interview that Van Enk knew the rules and the position of the church but ignored them.

Van Enk and the consistory of the multiethnic Crenshaw congregation insisted that they were "faced with a moral dilemma which (they) could not ignore."

"We acted," they said, "the only way we felt our Christian consciences directed us. We felt impelled by the Holy Spirit to give Leanne this opportunity to ascertain her gifts and calling . . ." They also said that they regretted any embarrassment to the seminary or Home Missions. "This is as far as we can go in good conscience," they concluded.

Has Van Enk apologized? "No. To apologize would be to declare that we were wrong. We don't think we are," he said. Van Enk also said he does not regret that the matter has become public knowledge. "The more exposure this gets, the better for everyone concerned. Some church had to take the initiative to support women like Van Dyk who feel called to the ministry."

Van Enk said he feels so strongly about women's calling to the ministry that he is "willing to risk (his) professional future" to take a stand on the issue . . .

Are our actions to be based on what we *feel* to be right or wrong? Is the Christian's conscience shaped and guided by the clear teachings of Scripture or is it a standard of right or wrong independent of Scripture? The answers to these questions are obvious. How I may or may not feel about an issue is of no consequence. What the Bible teaches is of eternal consequence.

News Briefs

"American Lutheran Church bishop David Preus has urged Lutherans in the United States to enter altar and pulpit fellowship with the Presbyterian

Church (U.S.A.), the Reformed Church in America, and the Cumberland Presbyterians. Advocating 'unity in reconciled diversity,' Preus also called on Lutherans to continue 'interim sharing' of the Eucharist with Episcopalians while searching for more complete agreement, to 'pursue with patience' the goal of altar and pulpit fellowship with Roman Catholics, and to be willing to explore agreement in the gospel and sacraments with other Christian churches" (*The Banner*, Feb. 10, 1986).

Ecumenism, or the ecumenical movement, obviously is very much alive. A sign, this is, of the nearness of the end of all things.

Instructor of Feminist Theology appointed at Kampen Theological School "The general synod of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (GKN) has decided to appoint a part-time instructor in feminist theology at the Theological School in Kampen. The current rector of the school, Professor K.A. Schippers, argued that the opening of such a position was not a fad inspired by the modern world; about half of the students in Kampen are female. For centuries women have been neglected and oppressed" (Reformed Ecumenical Synod, News Exchange, RES NE, January 7, 1986). One has long since ceased to be shocked at what goes on in the Dutch churches. One need not wonder what the fathers of the GKN would have thought of this. How far these churches have strayed from the course set for them through De Cock, H. Bavinck, A. Kuyper Sr., et. al. May God in His mercy preserve our churches in the truth of His Word in these troubled times.

Leuvenberger Talks To Be Continued: It is not only in North America that Lutheran and Reformed Churches seek closer fellowship. The same is happening in Europe, as this and the following news item indicate. Both are taken from the RES NE, March 11, 1986. "[Leidschendam] The third general meeting of the Leuvenberg Church Fellowship will be held in Straatsburg next year. The last general assembly (1973) produced the Leuvenberg Concord between Reformed and Lutheran churches which declared that the former anathemas of the Reformation time were no longer in effect and churches of the two traditions should establish altar and pulpit fellowship. The Concord derived its name from the town Leuvenberg near Basel, Switzerland, where preparatory talks were held.

"The Leuvenberg Concord has been subscribed to by 80 European and a few Latin American churches. Both the Netherlands Reformed Church (NHK, State Church, R.D.D.) and the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (GKN) will participate in the talks."

Threesome?: "(Hoekelum, the Neth.) The Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Netherlands has asked the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (GKN) and the Netherlands Reformed Church (NHK), to be admitted as a participant in their Together on the Way (Samen op Weg) reunion process. The historic decision to make this request was taken by the 36 member Lutheran synod meeting here in November 1985. Less than 30,000 in number, the Lutherans have always been a minority in the Netherlands yet they operate their own seminary in Amsterdam. They already make use of the common hymnal of the GKN and NHK and are a full member on the Dutch Council of Churches. In 1968 they entered into an understanding with the Roman Catholic Church regarding baptism. Trigger for the decision to join the reunion process was the desire to be more fully involved in Dutch church life."

Christian Schools In The Netherlands Attract Many Non-Christians: "(Grand Rapids) The January news bulletin of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (GKN) reports that declining church statistics in the Netherlands are not reflected in the number of students attending Christian schools. Although the GKN has lost 5 percent of its members since 1975, enrollment in Christian Schools (Protestant and Roman Catholic) continues to climb. Enrollment in Christian schools on the elementary level is greater than in the public schools. This blessing of students from non-Christian families is not without its drawbacks, for the non-Christian presence drastically changes the character of the school. Particularly the influx of children from Muslim families of immigrant-laborers from Turkey and Morocco makes it more difficult to maintain the schools' Christian identity. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that those native Hollanders who have severed their ties with the church or have become non-active church members but continue to send their children to the Christian school give little moral support to the school. The question now is, How should a Christian school with its unique Christian identity, relate to Muslims and to mere nominal Christians? In an effort to be of help, the GKN general synod has decided to appoint a person to prepare educational materials for the encounter with Muslims in education and related activities" (RES NE March 11, 1986).

It would be too much to hope, we fear, that these educational materials will be soundly Biblical and Confessionally Reformed. Is the problem, perhaps, that the children of Muslims and nominal Christians find themselves in a friendly environment in the Christian schools of the Netherlands?

Read & Study The Standard Bearer!

Together On The Way — Twosome To Become

TAKING HEED TO THE DOCTRINE

Ronald J. Hanko

The Counsel of Peace (2)

We have seen that the counsel of peace referred to in Zechariah 6:13 does not refer to the intra-trinitarian covenant of friendship but to the union of the priestly and kingly offices in Christ. This is evident from the passage itself. In verse 13 we have an example of Hebrew parallelism, where two thoughts, really expressing the same thing, though in different ways, are used to explain and interpret each other. Here the parallel thoughts are that "he shall be a priest upon his throne" and that "the counsel of peace shall be between them both." The counsel of peace, therefore, is realized between priest and throne.

Our previous article emphasized the fact that the union of these two offices was foreshadowed in the co-operation of Joshua, the High-priest, and Zerubbabel, the governor, who was of the royal seed of David, during the years following the return of the Jews from Babylon. This co-operation was necessary in the work of rebuilding the temple. This co-operation between these two men was, of course, only a very dim figure and type. That is clear first of all from the fact that although their co-operation was very close, it did not result in the actual union of the two offices of priest and king in one man. It was also evident from the decline of both offices. In the days of Zechariah's prophecy neither the office of priest nor the office of king retained its former splendor. Especially is this true in the case of Zerubbabel, who was not really king, but only a regional governor under the King of Persia.

Zechariah's prophecy, then, looks far beyond these two men and their work, for Zechariah prophesies concerning one man, whom he calls The

Branch, who will be both priest-king and temple builder in the highest possible manner. That man, The Branch, is unmistakably our Lord Jesus Christ. He receives this name, The Branch, also in the prophecies of Isaiah (4:2, 11:1) and Jeremiah (23:5, 33:15). In other places, similarly, He is called "A rod out of the stem of Jesse" (Is. 11:1), and "a tender plant and . . . a root out of a dry ground" (Is. 53:2). That these names all refer to Christ is clear from Revelation 5:5 and 22:16, where Christ Himself is called the root and offspring of David.

These names emphasize, of course, Christ's coming suddenly, unexpectedly, and gloriously out of the ruined line of David. That in itself is a subject worthy of further study, but it is not the subject of these articles. We only wish to prove by this reference to The Branch that Zechariah is indeed describing Christ Himself in His offices when he speaks of the counsel of peace.

That Christ is both Priest and King means that He is unique in the whole history of God's church. The only ones at all like Him in this respect were Moses and Samuel who were both of the priestly family while at the same time serving as leaders of Israel. Nevertheless, neither Moses nor Samuel were the High-priest, and in each case one or the other of their offices is all but obscured. In Moses' case it is the priestly office. So much does his position as leader of God's people take prominence that most of the time we do not even remember that he was also a priest. The opposite is true of Samuel. His priestly office and duties are so much on the foreground in his history that we often do not remember that he was one of Israel's judges and thus the civil ruler of Israel in the days prior to the Kingdom.

The book of Hebrews also emphasizes this uniqueness of Christ, first of all by reminding us

several times that He is a priest, not after the order of Aaron and the levitical priesthood, but after the order of Melchizedek, who was not only priest of the most high God, but also King of the City of Peace. This Melchizedek, a strange, shadowy figure, is, more than anyone else in the Old Testament, a type of Christ, so much so that even today many commentators make the mistake of actually identifying him with Christ. Yet it seems that Melchizedek himself is all but forgotten in the Old Testament and left in the shadows, exactly because he was almost too clearly a picture of Christ who was to come. It is as though he had to be mentioned, so that the saints in later ages would have a point of reference in respect to Christ's offices and work, but that at the same time next to nothing is said about him in order that we might not forget that not he but Christ was the one promised.

The book of Hebrews also emphasizes Christ's uniqueness as a priest by telling us that He came out of the tribe of Judah, rather than out of the tribe of Levi, something for which the law made no provision and by which the weakness of the law as a means of salvation is revealed (Heb. 7:11-19). Thus we are able to see that Christ is the better hope by Whom perfection comes and we draw nigh to God (Heb. 7:19).

What especially concerns us, however, is the significance of this union of the priestly and kingly offices in Christ. That Zechariah and other writers in the Old Testament (notably David in Psalm 110) as well as the book of Hebrews emphasize this union shows its great significance for the salvation of God's church and for the work of redemption.

This union, then, is significant first of all as far as the offices themselves are concerned. Each of the two offices needs the other to complement and complete it. The kingly office gives power and authority to the office of priest, and the priestly office tempers the authority and power of the kingly office by its own unique gifts.

Without the power and authority of the kingly office, therefore, the priestly office was weak. That was its great lack in the Old Testament, too. Hebrews 10:18 speaks of this when it mentions the weakness and unprofitableness of the commandment. This passage is not talking about the law in general, but about the specific commandment concerning the priesthood. Because the commandment that generated the priesthood was weak, the priesthood itself was weak; and because the priesthood was weak, its work was also weak and could not save. This is all explained in the following verses of chapter 7, where the Word of God tells us three things about the levitical priesthood: (1) that that priesthood had no oath of God to guarantee its

work and continuation, (2) that this was reflected in the death of each priest, by which the work of that priest was discontinued, and (3) that this weakness was evident in the very work that the priests did. Their weakness was finally this, that they themselves were sinners and unworthy of their office, so that in their work they had to make sacrifice first for their own sins before offering for the people. The result of this was not only that the people were left still waiting for a better priest, but also that they were reminded of their sins, by those very sacrifices that the priests offered, so that they continued to be plagued with a conscience of sin (Heb. 10:2, 3).

The authority and power that the priesthood needed was found in the office of king, for that office had as its support the oath of God Himself, by which its continuation was guaranteed (Heb. 7:21, 22, cf. also Ps. 89:35-37, Ps. 110:4, II Sam. 7:16). This kind of a powerful priesthood is revealed in Melchizedek, who as Priest-king had the authority and power to claim from Abraham the spoils of Abraham's victory over the five kings of Mesopotamia, a claim which Abraham himself recognized.

This weakness of the Old Testament priesthood was critical as far as the spiritual life of Israel was concerned. This was evident in the many times in the Old Testament that the temple was shut up so that the whole worship of God ceased. This happened time and again when ungodly and idol-worshipping kings sat on the throne of David. The priest did not have the authority or power to maintain the worship of God during such times. That power belonged to the king; and when the king was wicked, the priest was helpless.

All this is also true with respect to the building of the temple. It was not the priesthood, but the line of David that received the command and thus the authority to build and later restore the temple (II Sam. 7, II Chron. 24:4ff., 29:3ff., 34:3ff.). There was, therefore, implicit in the very history of Israel in the Old Testament, the need for a better priesthood, that would be always and intimately supported by the power of the kingly office. Only in that way could the temple of God be built and the worship of God maintained.

The kingly office, however, also needed the office of the priest. The priestly office tempered the authority and power of the kingly office, by constantly bringing to bear upon it the Word of God. Apart from that Word of God the office of king always degenerated into tyranny and wickedness, so that rather than being a blessing to God's people, it became to them a curse. The priestly office itself was a constant reminder to the king that he was

himself a servant of God, called to rule the kingdom of God. The priestly office was such a reminder to the king because in its very nature it was an office of complete consecration and service to God. But the priests also had the duty of actually anointing the king to his office as a reminder of these things, and of instructing him and teaching him "the manner of the kingdom," as Samuel did with Saul (I Sam. 9:25-27, 10:25). For this reason many of the priests were also prophets, not just to Israel as a nation, but especially to the royal house (Samuel, Elijah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Zechariah, etc.). Israel's kings could not even know "the manner of the kingdom" without the priests.

Also the authority of kings of David's line to build, restore, and rebuild the temple was useless without the priesthood, for without the priesthood there could never be any temple worship, since even the king was forbidden to enter the temple or to offer sacrifices (cf. the examples of King Saul and King Uzziah). Only the priest had the gifts and con-

secration necessary for those duties. Thus Israel needed not only a better priesthood, a royal priesthood, but she also needed a better government, and that priestly.

Zechariah in his prophecy sees the coming of these better things. He lived at a time when not only the offices themselves had lost much of their splendor, but when also the temple had been rebuilt but without its former glory. That decline of the offices went hand in hand with the decline of the temple itself. But all that was necessary according to the purpose of God, for it was time for a better king and a better priest to come who would build the better temple; and it was Zechariah's great duty to remind the people that they must not cling to the Old Testament pictures but begin to look for the reality to which those pictures pointed and for the glory and salvation that would be revealed in that great Priest-king and in the house that He would build.

BIBLE STUDY GUIDE

Jason L. Kortering

Exodus — God's Dealing with His Nation (concluded)

We are busy outlining the section of Exodus that deals with the covenant broken at Sinai by the worship of the golden calf and how God renews His covenant (31:18-35:3). Moses interceded for the people's sins, asking that his name be blotted out. God replied that each one must bear his own sin. Moses was to lead Israel to Canaan in the presence of the Angel (32:30-35). The Lord assured Moses He would give the land of Canaan to Israel, but the people must first be disciplined for their sin. He instructed the people to take off their ornaments as

the tabernacle was removed from among the people (33:1-7). Moses went out to the tabernacle and God came down in a cloud to talk with him. Moses talked with God and told Him that without His presence, represented by the cloud, there would be no point in continuing their journey. God assured him His presence would go with them. Jehovah passed by while Moses was in the "clift of the rock" (33:8-23). God instructed Moses to prepare two new tables of stone and to come up into the mount. Moses did this and the Lord came down in the cloud. Moses spent forty days and forty nights in the presence of Jehovah. While God renewed the covenant with him, He also warned Moses that His

Jason L. Kortering is pastor of the Protestant Reformed Church of Grandville, Michigan.

covenant excluded the Canaanites. They must be destroyed or driven out completely. He reminded Moses to observe the ceremonies, the feasts of unleavened bread, the redemption of the firstborn, the sabbath, the feast of firstfruits, the passover (34:1-28). Moses returned to the people, his face shone as the light, a reflection of being in God's presence. He gave the people all the laws which God gave him (34:29-35:3).

12. The preparation, construction, and activities associated with the tabernacle (35:4-40:38). Moses instructed the people to contribute of their jewels and possessions for the tabernacle (35:4-19). The people were stirred in their hearts and contributed willingly of their possessions. The women spun the cloths of purple, scarlet, and fine linen; the rulers contributed precious stones and spices (35:20-29). Bezaleel and Aholiab were instructed to supervise the actual construction of the tabernacle (35:30-36:3). The people were finally restrained from contributing any more, since there was sufficient (36:4-7). The making of each part is described: the supports, curtains, coverups, and veil (36:8-38), the ark with the staves, mercy seat, cherubims (37:1-9), the table of shewbread with its vessels (37:10-16), the golden candlestick (37:17-24), the altar of incense with the oil (37:25-29), the altar of burnt offering (38:1-8), the courts with their hangings (38:9-20). In all they used up twenty-nine talents and seven hundred and thirty shekels of gold, and one hundred talents and one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five shekels of silver (38:21-31). The cloth which the women spun was used for the making of the holy garments. These were described as the ephod (39:1-7), the breastplate (39:8-21), the robe of the ephod (39:22-26), the various coats (39:27-29), the golden crown with the words inscribed, "Holiness unto the Lord" (39:30-32). Moses inspected all the finished products as they had been made and he blessed them (39:33-43). The Lord instructed Moses to set up the completed tabernacle on the first month and place each part in its proper place and to anoint it with holy oil (40:1-16). Moses did this and afterwards the tabernacle was spread before Jehovah in the presence of the congregation (40:17-33). The cloud of Jehovah came down upon the court and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. The cloud will now continue to lead Israel through their wilderness journey, being light by night and cloud by day (40:34-38).

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. Why did God want to make a great nation of the family of Jacob? What is the importance of the history of Israel as a nation? Is the application of the typical significance of Israel's national history, political or ecclesiastical for us?

2. The parents and mid-wives refused to kill the sons born to the Israelites. May we conclude from this that the government of Egypt overstepped its boundary when it legislated their death? How would this be applied today?

3. The history of the Exodus sets forth Moses as mediator, a type of Christ. Make a list of the ways, recorded in Exodus, in which he acted in this capacity.

4. Explain the relationship between Exodus 7:3, 4, 14, "Pharaoh's heart was hardened," Exodus 8:15, "he hardened his heart," and Exodus 9:12, "The Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh."

5. What do the ten plagues upon Pharaoh and Egypt tell us about God's attitude toward the wicked? Show how the doctrine of common grace, "God's attitude of favor toward the reprobate wicked" can be refuted by this history.

6. What lessons concerning God's love for His people are given to us in the wilderness sojourn (chapters 12:37-19:6).

7. How did the external display of divine power at Mt. Sinai (Exodus 19) demonstrate the antithetical character of God's law. Prove that the same law (10 commandments) are to be enforced today.

8. What was the spiritual significance of the tabernacle? What was the relationship between the law and the tabernacle?

9. How did the idolatry of the golden calf at Mt. Sinai (Ex. 32) serve to demonstrate the need for Christ? Did Moses over-react? How could we be guilty of worshiping the golden calf?

10. The details of the tabernacle which are given in Exodus tell us that the tabernacle was very beautiful. Describe some of this beauty. Why did God place so much emphasis on external things: gold, silver, linen? Wasn't that wasteful? Can we use this to justify beautiful church buildings today?

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GUIDED INTO ALL TRUTH

Thomas C. Miersma

Meaningful Translation (2)

(Reply to Correspondence)

In this article we continue a response to one of our readers, Mr. Harv Nyhof, who raised certain questions concerning an article in the December 15, 1985 issue. As we also quoted the paragraphs in question in the first part of our response the reader is referred to that preceding column. It was in that connection that Mr. Nyhof responded,

I am tempted to say, "Come on, Pastor Miersma, you can't be serious." If the spoken or written word is not understood, be it ever so beautiful or descriptive, it has no value. To me the KJV is a beautiful translation with majestic language. Most younger English-speaking people, however, will receive no enlightenment from the phrase "bowels of mercy." They will easily understand the word "compassion." I too believe in careful and accurate translation. Is it not the aim of accurate translation to reproduce in meaningful language for the reader what has been written in a tongue foreign to him? To read in Zeph. 1:12 that men are "settled in their lees" will not be comprehensible to the majority of English speaking people. To read that men are "complacent" can be easily grasped.

The central issue which you raise, it seems to me, has to do with the question of what constitutes a meaningful translation. Here the first question must be one of standards. It is certainly true that the beauty or merely descriptive character of the language of a translation cannot be the standard, if by this is meant simply "art for art's sake." In fact, if God had given us His Word in slang language it should be translated in slang language. The beauty of the KJV is rooted in its reverence for the text as God's Word not in its artistry or majestic language per se. I do not find the word "bowels," for example, to be particularly majestic. Nor is our use of the

KJV based on its artistic beauty. The concern you express for a meaningful translation however is a proper and important concern. The reformers were concerned to give unto the church the Word of God in the language of God's people. This is a matter of Reformed principle to which we must hold. God gave us His Word that we might be taught out of that Word by His grace and Spirit. It was exactly for that reason that the reformers quickly set about the labor of translating the Word of God at the very beginning of the reformation. Nor were they content with the existing translation of the Bible approved by Rome, the Latin Vulgate. Latin was the scholarly language of a few which the vast majority of the people could not understand or read. It was with this in view that Luther began his translation of the Bible into German, and the other reformers also labored to translate God's Word into the other languages of the Reformed churches. For the sake of putting the Bible into the hands of God's people in their own language, men like Tyndale were willing to risk their lives and even to lay down their lives as martyrs for the cause of God's Word of truth.

If we were to continue to use our KJV merely because of the artistry or poetry of the language, or because of its long standing, or because of tradition, when it had in fact become incomprehensible to the people of God, we would be guilty of departing from the foundation laid down by the reformers and returning to the principles of the church of Rome. If it ever becomes the case that the KJV is no longer understood and meaningful, Reformed principle would require us to abandon it for another, or to translate God's word anew. We are not opposed in principle to a new translation if there is a need for it.

This has nothing to do however with the modern

Thomas C. Miersma is pastor of the Protestant Reformed Church of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

trend of perpetually tampering with the translation currently in use for no good reason, with the result that today we are confronted with a host of different versions or translations of varying quality, continually issued under the banner of being current, modern, or more meaningful. This present vogue for new Bible translations has created nothing but confusion in the Christian community and presently has taken on all the characteristics of the changing trends in the world of fashion.

Nor has the multiplying of so-called more modern and meaningful versions of the Bible solved the basic problems they were supposed to cure, such as indifference to the study of God's Word by young people, or more serious interest in God's Word or its study. The fact is that there is probably more fruitful and serious Bible study being done today with the *KJV* than with any other version, and that exactly because it is both meaningful and clear, and faithful and accurate, and also lends itself to careful Bible study.

To answer the question therefore as to what constitutes a meaningful translation we must look beyond the question of how easy it is to read, to the more serious question of the standard by which a translation is to be judged a good or meaningful one. There are at present two opposing standards.

The first is the historic Reformed standard rooted in the principle that the Bible is the infallible, verbally inspired Word of God. According to it a good translation is one which faithfully and accurately renders into the English language what God said, and does so as carefully and literally as is possible within the boundaries of English language. According to this standard every word and expression of Scripture has meaning which is of divine origin, God's meaning, and that extends even to the way in which God spoke His Word to us. A meaningful translation therefore is one which is in harmony with the content and meaning God gave His Word, as He spoke that Word to us. Therein lies the only basis for judgment.

To refer to the examples we have been using, the Holy Spirit had a reason for saying "bowels of mercies" instead of simply saying compassion, which He could have done. This is actually the case. The word "compassion" merely expresses the *idea* of the expression "bowels of mercies." It fails however to express *all* that the text expresses, for in the vivid picture of "bowels of mercies" God is, at the same time, directing us to the *nature* of that compassion which is an inward yearning after another person in his need and not merely outward actions. It also directs us to the *intense character* of that compassion. It is in this sense that I spoke of bowels as drawing a "vivid picture" in my article,

not as a matter of artistry or poetic beauty, but as a matter of a full and complete translation which conveys the full meaning of the original. Admittedly, "bowels of mercies" is not as easy to grasp as the word compassion; it takes study and reflection, but it is also more meaningful and less superficial, as well as being accurate.

The other standard, which is the one commonly underlying many of the modern so-called translations of Scripture, I consider an inherently unbiblical one. It basically sets up the "average reader" as the standard of Bible translation. The "average reader" is, according to his perceived level of comprehension, breadth of vocabulary, and presumed reading skills, supposedly on about the level of a high school sophomore or lower. The root principle of this approach is not the doctrine of divine verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, but the principle that the Bible must be so translated as to be easily read and understood by this "average reader" as he stands in the mind of the committee doing the translating. Ultimately this makes the committee itself and its ideas and conceptions the standard. Fundamentally such an approach presumes to be wiser than God, and to sit in judgment on the Word God has given us, and to pass that judgment by declaring this word too difficult to read and that word too hard to understand. And having made that judgment it presumes to intrude its own interpretation or words into the text, or subtract from them, in the place of what was actually said. Now there are certainly times when because of the differences between the original languages and the English language, words must be inserted or expressions must be differently expressed; but this is a far cry from taking something which can easily be rendered into English and mis-translating it on the basis of one's own presumed wisdom, as is the case with the examples mentioned.

Nor is this root principle in harmony with the Word of God. This principle and standard presumes that the Bible *ought* to be easy reading and therefore proceeds to *make* it easy reading. Now while it is certainly true that the Scriptures are clear and understandable, this does not mean that God intended that the Scriptures should be easy reading or easily grasped, which I understand to mean "comprehended by effortless reading without work involved." The fact is that the Scriptures are comprehensible in the form God gave them but they require us to study them. We are told not simply to read them but to search them (John 5:39; Acts 17:11), to compare spiritual things with spiritual (I Corinthians 2:13; II Timothy 2:15), that there are in them things hard to be understood which the unlearned and unstable wrest to their own destruction (II Peter 3:16). Likewise we are

called to meditate upon them and to think upon God's Word day by day (Psalm 119:15, 34, 35, 54, etc.; Psalm 1:2; Psalm 19:7-11).

The philosophy of easy reading ultimately caters to spiritual laziness on the part of many while making serious Bible study more difficult for those who would faithfully study God's Word. Moreover, when the standard of translation becomes the wisdom of a committee of men who presume to know better than God how to express His Word, the matter becomes serious indeed. The fullness of God's Word is taken out of the hands of believers by what a committee in its arbitrary judgment deems meaningful, in the place of God's Word. The result is that a new priesthood of scholars is erected in the form of Bible translators who stand above the

Word of God on the one hand, and who, on the other, by their very actions are condescending to what becomes the ignorant masses for whom they are translating the Bible. I find this intolerable. It is demeaning to God's Word and to Christ's church. Moreover the apparent motivation behind much of this seems to be that if only we make God's Word simple enough and understandable enough *then* men will believe it, as if the reason for man's unbelief lies in the difficulty of reading the Bible. Such thinking is inherently Arminian and unreformed and reduces what is a matter of God's grace working faith by His Word to mere lack of comprehension. The fact is that man will never find God's Word meaningful apart from God's grace, for he is by nature a blind sinner.

QUESTION BOX

Cornelius Hanko

Admitting Children to the Lord's Supper

The following questions have been received:

I am writing to you in the Question Box because I have a question which I have been concerned about for some time, and I would like to see an answer in print so I can read and study it.

My basic question is "Why are our covenant children not permitted to come to the Table of our Lord? Does not our Lord invite children as well as adults to His fellowship at His Table?"

In connection with this, I have some related questions which I would like to see treated:

1. What is the Scriptural basis for requiring a public confession of faith as a condition for taking the Lord's Supper for our covenant seed, as distinguished from those coming into the church from the outside?
2. Does not the self-examination of I Cor. 11 apply to adults walking in sin? Does this apply

in some way to one's ability to understand also? If so, how?

3. Our Baptism Form reads, "and though our young children do not understand these things, we may not therefore exclude them from baptism; for as they are without their knowledge partakers of the condemnation in Adam, so are they again received unto grace in Christ." Why does this not apply to the Lord's Supper as well?

Thank you in advance for your help.

Article 61 of our Church Order states that, "None shall be admitted to the Lord's Supper except those who according to the usage of the church with which they unite themselves have made confession of the reformed religion, besides being reputed to be of a godly walk, without which those who come from other churches shall not be admitted."

This article is based on the Scripture passage found in I Corinthians 11:28, 29: "But let a man ex-

amine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." Since children are still incapable of properly examining themselves, this requirement of Scripture cannot be fulfilled by them, at least until they come to "years of discretion."

In your first related question you ask why public confession is required from the covenant seed before they can partake of the Lord's Supper, while this is not required from those coming into the church from the outside. The article in the Church Order states that those who are admitted from other churches must also have made confession of the Reformed religion, besides being reputed to be of a godly walk. Our consistories require of those who come from other churches that they confess agreement with the doctrine as taught in our churches and with the godly walk required by our churches. Those who are not thoroughly indoctrinated are instructed before they are accepted as members among us.

In regard to your second related question concerning self examination, our Communion Form mentions that we must examine ourselves during the week of preparation, but also as we partake of the Holy Supper. This is in harmony with I Corinthians 11:28, which states, "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." We are told that this self-examination must arouse in us,

1. A deep awareness of our sins and of God's curse due to us for them, so that we abhor and humble ourselves before God.
2. Faith in God's promise that all our sins are forgiven "only for the sake of the passion and death of Christ," and assurance that Christ's righteousness is imputed to us as our very own.
3. A firm purpose henceforth to show true thankfulness to God in all our life, and a firm resolve to walk uprightly and in true love and peace with our neighbor. (Communion Form, page 60 of *The Psalter*).

You will notice that these three things are mentioned in our Heidelberg Catechism as necessary to know, in order to enjoy true comfort and to live and die happily. These three are also mentioned in a slightly different manner in our Baptism Form as a confession of the principal parts of the doctrine of baptism as confessed by parents who present their children for baptism. This necessarily implies that the communicant not only understands these points of doctrine, but also sincerely confesses

them and lives accordingly. Celebrating the Supper of our Lord is a repeated confession of our faith, as was once done publicly before the consistory and the congregation.

Your third related question points out that our Baptism Form teaches us that "Although our young children do not understand these things, we may not therefore exclude them from baptism." You ask, "Why does this not apply to the Lord's Supper as well?" Here we actually come to the heart of the matter. The difference between the sacrament of Baptism and the sacrament of Communion is such that our children cannot be excluded from baptism, but must be excluded from the Lord's Supper until they come to years of discretion.

Baptism is the sign and seal of our entrance into God's covenant, while the Lord's Supper is a sign and seal of our active participation in the life of the covenant. In the former we are passive, we are baptized; in the latter we are active, we participate.

In Titus 3:5 baptism is referred to as "the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." This takes place in our subconsciousness; we are not aware of the time of our regeneration, nor do we in any way participate in it. The idea is that we are conceived and born in sin, members of the fallen human race in Adam. But God in sovereign mercy separates us from the world, the fallen human race, so that we die unto the world, to be raised in newness of life (Rom. 6:4). God separates us by causing us to die in Christ, to be buried with Christ in His death and burial, and to be raised with Him in newness of life, separated from the world and brought into God's covenant. That is signified in baptism. Thus baptism signifies and seals to us by His Spirit in our hearts that God has chosen us in Christ, has redeemed us by His blood, sanctifies us and blesses us by taking us into His covenant life, with the assurance, "I will be your God and the God of your seed after you!"

From this follows that by a conscious faith we experience covenant fellowship with our God, as is signified and sealed in the Lord's Supper. Therefore the Supper is:

1. A remembrance feast, in which we commemorate Christ's broken body, which was broken on the cross for our sins, and His shed blood that was shed to deliver us from eternal death and to merit for us eternal life with God in glory.
2. A pledge of God's love and faithfulness whereby He feeds and nourishes our souls into everlasting life, as surely as the bread is broken before our eyes and the cup is given to us, and we eat and drink the same with our

mouths in remembrance of Him (John 6:51, 54-56).

3. An act of faith and trust in the one perfect sacrifice of the cross as the only ground and foundation of our salvation.
4. Thus we are assured by the Holy Spirit that we are ingrafted into Christ, and thus become members of His body, knit together in brotherly love, which we are to show in word, but also in very deed toward one another. (The Communion Form, page 61 of *The Psalter*, second column, middle of the page, and continued on page 62).

From this it becomes evident that our children cannot participate in the Lord's Supper until they come to years of discretion, for the simple reason that they cannot give expression to the conscious faith in the measure required by the self-examination and the celebration of the Supper of our Lord.

From this it also follows that the church must require a confession of the Reformed religion and a reputation of a godly walk. According to article 64 of the Church Order, it is the responsibility of the consistory to supervise the celebration of the Holy Supper, lest condemnation fall upon the congregation. (See I Cor. 11:30.) The consistory must require a confession of the *faith* of the individual — not a mere confession *that* he believes, but also of *what* he believes, namely, the faith once delivered unto the saints and taught in that church. I fear sometimes that both young people and consistories regard this matter of confession too lightly, to the detriment of the individual, but also of the congregation.

This does leave us with the question, when should a young person be considered ready to make confession of his or her faith? Partly, this is a question that the young person of the congregation must answer, deciding when he or she feels ready and has a strong desire to make public confession and to partake of the Lord's Supper. Young people should consider this matter very seriously, considering the

public confession before the consistory and the congregation to be a very weighty responsibility, but also a very great privilege! This step is as important, if not more so, in the life of our covenant youth as choosing a vocation and entering into the marriage state! All of which should be preceded by a thorough understanding of the truth of the Scriptures, serious self-examination, and very much prayer! Only then will this confession remain a high point in our lives!

But the responsibility also rests with the consistory. The elders of the church must be sure that the children of the congregation have been *given* a thorough indoctrination, but also that they have been *receptive* to it, have digested it, and made it part and parcel of their souls. Our Catechism speaks of saving faith as consisting of knowledge of all that God has revealed to us in His Word. This must be more than a mere intellectual knowledge. It must include heart and mind, a knowledge that confesses: I know whom I have believed! Moreover, faith is an assured confidence that we are personally participants of Christ and all His benefits (Lord's Day 7).

That raises the question, at what age should public confession of faith be made? A common practice among us is that young people wait until they have been thoroughly indoctrinated and have become stable in a godly walk. This practice, I think, is a good one. But sometimes the question is raised whether some studious and serious-minded teenager should be allowed to confess his faith at an early age, say, at 14 or 15 years of age. Prof. H.C. Hoeksema has discussed this question in the past in the *Standard Bearer*, volume 37, pages 112, 137, 162, 185.*

This, to my mind, answers your basic question. If not, write again.

*Note: Rev. Hanko asked me to fill in the reference here. I am not certain which article(s) he means. But the above are references to articles on, "Should Adolescents Be Encouraged To Partake Of The Lord's Supper?" HCH

Book Review

HOSEA, LOVE'S COMPLAINT, by Herman Veldkamp; Paideia Press, St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada; paper, 240 pp., \$7.95 (\$9.95, Canadian). (Reviewed by Prof. H.C. Hoeksema)

This attractively published little work is a translation from the Dutch of a book by this rather well-known minister of the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands under the title (in Dutch), "The Son of

Beer." It consists of 43 rather brief chapters on various texts from the prophecy of Hosea.

The work is not a commentary, though there are indeed some interesting and helpful exegetical insights in it. It is rather in the nature of a book of short meditations which include a good many practical insights and applications. Though I do not have the original, and therefore cannot make a comparison, it appears to be a good translation into smooth-flowing English. The book would make

good devotional reading.

As far as I can discern, there is little or no thematic approach in the book. I do not get the impression that the author has grasped the fundamental theme and thrust of the prophecy. And as one who has worked his way through the prophecy some years ago, there are points at which I definitely disagree with the exegesis and the applications.

Nevertheless, I recommend this book for interesting and helpful devotional reading.

News From Our Churches

David Harbach

March 31, 1986

The committee planning the officebearers conferences has asked me to provide you the following report on the last conference. On March 3 & 4 a conference on "Historic Presbyterianism" was held in South Holland Church, Illinois, in conjunction with the meeting of Classis West. The purpose of the conference was to learn more of the Bible Presbyterian Church (BPC) of Larne, Northern Ireland, with whom our churches have established sister church relations. This conference was especially suited for this purpose since the BPC had sent her pastor, Rev. George Hutton, and a deacon, Mr. John Clark, to attend the meeting of our Classis West.

On Monday evening, March 3, Rev. Hutton gave a public lecture on "The History of Scotch-Irish Presbyterianism." On Tuesday, Prof. H. Hanks gave a paper on "A Comparison of the Westminster and the Reformed Confessions." Rev. Hutton also gave a paper on "Presbyterian Principles of Worship." The conference was attended, not only by most of the delegates of Classis West, but also by men from the Grand Rapids area, and a few visitors from other churches, who contributed significantly to the discussion. This was a worthwhile conference which served to give us a deeper appreciation for the Presbyterian tradition.

The Scholarship Fund Committee is taking applications for future teachers/ministers for the 1986-87 school year. If you are interested, please contact Mike Rau, 4165 Jenison St., Grandville, MI 49418, for application forms. An essay of 300 words or more is also required on the topic "The Protes-

tant Reformed Minister's/Teacher's Calling to Set Forth the Antithesis in Preaching and Teaching." The deadline for receiving applications is June 1, 1986.

Rev. Joostens' move to the Montego Bay area puts him in close proximity to the churches in Mt. Salem and Dias where he has started new labors. He has begun sick visitation and will continue to work his way into both of these congregations. In regards to the labors in the Cave and Belmont Churches, he advised the Cave Church congregation to call Brother Brydson to be their pastor. He accepted and Rev. Joostens had the privilege of ordaining and installing him February 16. Rev. Joostens preached on II Timothy 4:1 & 2. Rev. Brydson is a capable young man and Rev. Joostens can gladly leave the labor that he was doing there in Brother Brydson's hands. Rev. Joostens' work in Belmont was alongside that of Rev. Williams. Rev. Williams has now moved into a home adjacent to the church in Belmont. These two congregations can now continue with a minimal amount of guidance, which is a good step toward making these churches indigenous and self-sufficient.

Rev. De Vries gave a public lecture, March 18, on the theme "The Bleak Economy and the Black Horse." Rev. Moore spoke to a Ladies' League meeting, April 8, on "The Effect of the Home on the Character of the Child."

In Holland Church, Michigan, there will be a spring Sunday School Teachers' Mass Meeting April 17. Rev. Heys will be the speaker. In Hope Church, Michigan, Rev. Heys will speak to the League of Eastern Men's and Ladies' Societies, on April 22. The Spring Lecture in the Grand Rapids, Michigan area will be held May 1 at the Dutton Christian Reformed Church. Rev. Bekkering will be the speaker.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On April 25, 1986, the Lord willing, our parents and grandparents, MR. AND MRS. RAYMOND BRUINSMA will celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary. We are grateful to the Lord for the years they have shared and for the abundant love and covenant instruction they have given us. We pray that they may continue to experience the blessings of our faithful God in the years to come.

"But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them." (Psalm 103:17, 18)

Jim and Kathy Bruinsma

Kristen, Ryan, Eric

Jim and Lois Rau

Carol, Cheryl,

Kimberly, Rodney

Jerry and Marti Bruinsma

Karen Bruinsma

NOTICE!!!

The Free Christian School of Edgerton, MN, is in need of a Principal/Teacher for the 1986-87 school year. If interested please contact Allen Hendricks at (507) 442-5221 or Harley Buys at (507) 442-8454.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On April 5, 1986, our parents and grandparents, MR. AND MRS. VERNON KLAMER, celebrated their 30th wedding anniversary. We are thankful to God for the blessed marriage given to them, and for the God-centered love and upbringing they have given us. Our prayer is that God will continue to bless them and keep them in His care in the years to come.

Tom and Vicky Van Overloop

Brandon, Heidi, Heather

Chuck and Verna Terpstra

Corey, Amber, Kimberly, Thad

John and Valerie Van Baren

Jennifer, Jordan, Jill

Bruce and Joann Klammer

Vonda Klammer

Brenda Klammer

Brent Klammer

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Ladies' Society of the South Holland Protestant Reformed Church extends its sincere sympathy in the death of a Great Aunt and Aunt of many, MRS. CATHERINE HOLLEMAN, at the age of 85 years.

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:23)

Mr. Regnerus, Pres.

Sharon Maatman, Sec'y.

THE PROTESTANT REFORMED CHRISTIAN SCHOOL OF SOUTH HOLLAND

is celebrating its 25th anniversary

Friday, May 2, 1986

The school will be open all day for
touring and visiting classrooms in session.

COMMEMORATIVE CHAPEL, 10:00 A.M.: REV. J.A. HEYS
BANQUET KEYNOTE ADDRESS: REV. D.J. ENGELSMA

For banquet reservations it is important to contact:

Sharon Van Baren

RR 1, Box 264F

Lynwood, Illinois 60411

or telephone (312) 895-0643

COME CELEBRATE WITH US!