

the **Banner** *of Truth*

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The Official Periodical
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Congregations of the
United States and Canada

In this issue...

Great Grace

Delivered from the Law

Sense and Meaning

For our young readers...

Ready to Enter the Land
of Canaan

Help

*"When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained;
What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visitest him?" PSALM 8:3&4*



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Meditation

Great Grace

Rev. H. Hofman, Kalamazoo, MI

“*And great grace was upon them all*” (Acts 4:33b).

Today’s world focuses much on that which is great. Great accomplishments, great inventions, great buildings are generally what impress people. That which is small is often despised or considered insignificant. Unfortunately, *great* most of the time refers to such things which are physical and visible but crumble at the Lord’s blowing. Human power and strength in the Bible are compared to the grass of the field which today is and tomorrow is cast into the oven. One area where greatness is particularly met and contended with in yet another fashion is the greatness of opposition to free and sovereign grace. This happens over the length and breadth of the world.

The Book of Acts mentions the word *great* several times, but, here, great truly means great—great *power*, great *grace* (Acts 4:33), great *fear* (Acts 5:11), great *joy* (Acts 8:8). Certain things which the Bible calls great are often despised and considered insignificant in the eyes of man. When the Lord Jesus called faith great, it had the opposite appearance; think of the Syrophenician woman. When Gideon was told to “go in this thy might,” only three hundred men were with him to face the Midianites who lay in the valley like grasshoppers for multitude.

It is especially after Pentecost that great power and great grace were manifested in a special way in the Church. The evident presence of the Holy Ghost empowered men, weak and unlearned in themselves, to stand firm for the cause of their Master. They certainly did not have such power of themselves. Think of Peter. As soon as his flesh got the upper hand, he denied His Master three times. Yet, in the power of the Holy Ghost, he stood upon firm ground and brought a powerful message. In the spiritual realm it is not by might, nor by power, but by God’s Spirit. This is a hidden power but a very present help in trouble. It pleased the Lord to favor the early Church with the power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This power is still the same today. It is the power to save, the power to encourage, the power to persevere under the most difficult circumstances.

This power is also available for young people, in whatever circumstances you may be. Sadly, it seems that it is less needed though. Why is this? Have we become self-sufficient? Can we help ourselves? At times, this may seem to be the case, but by the power of the Holy Ghost, may it be learned that without the Lord we can do nothing. The church today is best served by members and office bearers who have no power in themselves, who cannot

miss but covet and yearn for power from on High. This power is available after Pentecost in a very special way and measure. Christ Jesus is the source and His Holy Spirit the distributor. Open thy mouth wide, the poet of Psalm 81 sang.

Great power and great grace show also what apparently is necessary if anyone will be conquered by the Holy Spirit. In the first place, does not great grace refer to the gracious reception the apostles received? They received favor and acceptance with the people. In itself that was a powerful token of change. Very recently the crowds had shouted, “*Crucify Him, crucify Him!*” Do you know what this shows? The power and grace of the Lord can break the hardest heart, bend the most wayward spirit, and cleanse the most vile, undone sinner. This grace is universal in the sense that it is the same wherever worked by the Holy Spirit and wherever it is experienced.

Great grace, dear reader, is a remarkable *word*: it serves to underline what grace always is, namely, great—great because it had to be provided and merited by God Himself—not *for* Christ but *by* Christ! What a wonder that such thoughts prevailed in the Counsel of Peace where God, moved in Himself, chose a way in Christ whereby a people totally undeserving of grace could be destined for it (see Ephesians 1:3&4).

Hence, great grace is also a remarkable *message*, for in Christ, after Easter, Ascension, and Pentecost, this is the content of the gospel. Great grace for great sinners—this, not only the apostles but also all God’s servants may freely proclaim indiscriminately and with the love of Christ constraining them. Such a message is sent with the command to repent and believe the gospel. Has this message already conquered our heart and life? To live under the administration of great grace is a solemn responsibility. The Lord does not waste His grace but holds every hearer of it eternally accountable for having heard it. Let this encourage the unconverted to make timely use of the gospel before it will testify against them in eternity.

Finally, great grace points to a remarkable *work*. Great grace makes proud sinners small before God. Great grace makes poor sinners rich. Great grace is a mysterious work; the *smallest* token is experienced as the *greatest* gift and makes the heart rejoice. Great grace for great sinners—is possible, even today, for people like you and me, and the greatest of this work is that God Himself, in and through Christ, holds it fast, works it, and strengthens it. The Church does not need to do this; neither *can* they. This makes great grace only greater. □



Bible Study

The Life of Daniel (18)

Rev. C. Vogelaar, Clifton, NJ

“Then said He unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words” (Daniel 10:12).

It is such a great privilege if there are those who bring the needs of the nation but also of the churches before the Lord. The prophet Daniel was such an intercessor. In this chapter he was now an old man of eighty-nine years. It was already seventy-three years ago that he had been deported from his beloved land of Judah. Two years had gone by since Cyrus the king had allowed the faithful remnant of Israel to return to Jerusalem. It is evident that Daniel did not return to Palestine but remained in Babylon; his work there was evidently not yet complete. We may believe that his heart was with those who had returned, but the Lord called him to remain in the place of exile.

A divine visit

Daniel began a season of special prayer. The reason was perhaps that he had received a report concerning the difficulties the people were meeting in the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the restoration of national life. He probably desired to know what would befall his people in the future. One thing is sure; we read that Daniel was troubled and sad.

We read in verse 2, “In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks.” This mourning was expressed in fasting. This may have been occasioned by what he had heard about matters not going well in Jerusalem concerning the rebuilding of the temple, as Calvin mentions, but on the other hand it may have been caused by reflection on the sins of his people. Daniel abstained from delicacies and pleasant food, also ordinary food and drink. That he fasted so long was an evidence of his deep and sincere humiliation.

Verse 4 speaks of where he was at the time that he received a special visit from heaven. It was three days after the conclusion of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Daniel was physically present beside the great river Hiddekel, which is the Tigris River.

Verse 5 reads, “Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen...” appeared. He described the majesty, the dazzling splendor and magnificence with which this Man visited him. Who was this person? The description of His majesty seems to indicate that it is none other than the Lord Himself. It is a so-called theophany, that is, a pre-incarnate appearance of the eternal Son of God. We read a very similar description of Him in Revelation 1:13-15 as the One whom John sees

walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks which are the seven churches of Asia Minor. The Man was clothed in linen and His loins were girded with fine gold. His body also was like the beryl, which is a beautiful transparent stone; His face was as the appearance of lightning, which shows His heavenly majesty and glory; His eyes were as lamps of fire; His arms and feet like polished brass; and the sound of His words were “like the voice of a multitude.” It is no wonder that Daniel’s companions trembled. It was not because of the thunder and lightning only or because they heard the voice, but because of the nearness of the heavenly Being. Although He was visible to Daniel, they did not see Him. The prophet was left alone, his companions having fled, and then he saw the vision.

We read in verse 8, “There remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength,” so overwhelming were the majesty and the glory of Him who visited Daniel. We all will have to meet Him who appeared unto His servant. How will we stand before His heavenly majesty when He will sit upon the judgment seat? By nature, we are so blind for whom He is. Therefore, we so easily maintain ourselves without the realization that God is a consuming fire and an everlasting burning for those who strive against Him. However, in Daniel’s fear and distress, the Lord spoke His most comforting and cheering “fear not.” This is a word that is often found in Scripture for those who have, by the grace of God, learned to know their weakness, unholiness, corruption, and inability to stand righteously before Him. “Who would not fear Thee, O King of nations? for to Thee doth it appertain.” How many there are who never fear and are sure about their salvation but who have never been humbled before God, who never learned what we read in Psalm 130:3 “If Thou, LORD shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?”

Divine encouragement

The Lord knows our frame, remembering that we are dust. He knows the fears in the heart of His own but also knows how to comfort them. Verse 10, “And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands.” This hand as it were shook him, that is, by way of rousing him so that he was upon his knees. Only after he heard the words of comfort was he enabled to stand upright. What a wonderful message he heard from the heavenly Visitor. “O Daniel, a man greatly beloved.” The Messenger encouraged him by assuring him that he was beloved to God. Can that ever be understood

that a vile, sinful creature who by his sins has grieved a good-doing God, is loved by Him? Did you ever sink away under that wonder when you experienced you deserved eternal death? Has He spoken to you with Jeremiah 31:3b, “Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore, with lovingkindness have I drawn thee”?

The Messenger urged Daniel to give heed to the message and to stand upright since now He has been sent to him. Then the Messenger spoke to him “Fear not, Daniel.” From the time when Daniel first sought to understand the future of his people and humbled himself through fasting and sorrow before God, his words were heard. Upon Daniel’s prayer the Lord would reveal to him what would happen.

Divine explanation

The Lord did not answer Daniel’s prayer on the first day when he began to seek Him. It was not because of a lack of earnestness and humility. Verse 12 makes that clear. It was also not because the Lord had not heard the sighs and the mourning of His servant. Delays to answer do not always mean denials. The Lord explained to the aged intercessor how it happened that he had received no visible answer to his prayer. The explanation was that there had been a conflict between the powers of light and darkness.

“The Prince of the Kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days.” Some believe, according to the marginal notes of the Dutch *Statenvertaling*, that this Prince is not the king of Persia but an evil angel, for the meaning of this is that of a spiritual warfare. This warfare is described in Revelation 12:7, “And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels.” There is a spiritual warfare going on; we see that especially in our days. The powers of the devil

are not omnipotent, and the ultimate success of the powers of light should not be doubted; however, there can be tremendous opposition to the performance of the commandments of the Lord. The devil uses kings, presidents, and earthly rulers for his purpose.

That purpose is to destroy the church, to harm those who confess the name of Christ who is the Chief Ruler. We can read in Revelation 12:12b, “for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.” In the history of the world, it may look like the anti-Christian powers will prevail. Are we not concerned with what is happening in this world and our nation in our days? Do we not see how evil powers assemble together to oppress the church and, if possible, to erase them from this earth—powers of delusion, blinding the people, poisoning the minds of the young, using colleges, universities, and the media to reach their goal that the name of the only King would no longer be openly confessed. We do not have to prophesy, but the Lord has told us what would happen in the last days. Nevertheless, it shall be true: the gates of hell shall not prevail against the church of God. Oh, that prayer may be magnified! Daniel persevered in prayer for three weeks.

Maybe we have to persevere longer, but “pray without ceasing” the apostle says. Such perseverance cannot be in our own strength but through the power of Him who never ceases to intercede for His weak, troubled, fearful, and oppressed people. Jacob said, “I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me.” May the Lord bind us as churches and families, with our children together, in humble prayer at the throne of grace. May He teach us to pray as He taught Daniel. They will not be put to shame that trust in Him. □

(To be continued)

Prayer

Prayer is the mightiest weapon of which a dying soul can lay hold:

- Moses prayed—Amalek was destroyed.
- Hannah prayed—Samuel was born.
- David prayed—Ahithophel hung himself.
- Isaiah prayed—the angel of the Lord slew 185,000 soldiers of the Assyrian army.
- Daniel prayed—the mouths of the lions were kept shut.
- Elijah prayed—a severe drought of three years followed.
- The congregation prayed—Peter was delivered from prison.
- Paul and Silas prayed—the doors of the jail were opened.

Prayer has divided the sea, stopped the flow of rivers, subdued the power of the flames, and rendered the poison of adders harmless. What has prayer not done! It even brought a man out of the depths of the sea upon dry ground.

However, let us never forget: The Lord does not hear prayer because there is anything that is good in man. He wishes to glorify Himself in the answering of prayer. He hears not because of a prayer—but upon a prayer. It is grace alone.

—Submitted



From Our Inheritance

Delivered from the Law

Rev. C. Hegeman (1914-1981)

(Taken from the July 1962 issue of *The Banner of Truth*)

“But now we are delivered from the law” (Romans 7:6a).

This is a strange testimony of Paul, especially when we observe how he first wrote, “For I was alive without the law once.” Now it is free and sovereign grace that he may write, “delivered from the law,” that is, delivered from the curse, from the condemnation, from the judgment, and also from the righteous sentence of death. Yes, it remains an eternal truth, “By the law is the knowledge of sin.” Thus, we receive the knowledge of our misery out of the law. God had made this law innate in the heart of Adam and established with him a Covenant of Works, and He requires from man a perfect obedience. It is the sovereign power of God that the Lord has revealed this after the Fall in the hearts of His people. Did He not proclaim the Ten Commandments from Mount Sinai when He in His sovereign might established the Covenant of Grace in a national form with His Israel? By this revelation of the Covenant of Grace, which is from eternity, Moses received the law out of the hand of Christ (Acts 7:38), who merited a full salvation for His Church, and also applies it.

The experience of the Apostle Paul was that he realized the holiness of God’s law. Do you, too, reader? When it pleases God to place man before the mirror of His law, then man sees he is worthy to be cursed and doomed. How seldom we hear that one becomes a sinner before God. Did not Paul have to cry out, “For I was alive without the law once”? How necessary it is that God the Holy Ghost uncovers to us the demands and the curse of the law and binds them upon our heart. There will come a moment that men will appear before God’s judgment seat, and the law places them guilty before God. Oh, the righteousness of God comes with its demands, and it experimentally becomes a lost case. There is, however, a great difference between submitting to the righteousness of God or experimentally going lost under the righteousness of God in self. The latter was Paul’s experience.

“Delivered from the law.” No one can deliver himself from the law and from the curse. One-sided grace is necessary to experience this. Man may try everything to make himself loose from the law; one through his religion and another by emotions. Those who are in Christ by faith know that they need not fear condemnation. The law has lost its power. This is the comfort of the confirmed Church of God. This is not so easy to understand. To clearly show us this deliverance, Paul uses an illustration of married life, of the bond between man and wife. We can read this in Romans 7:1-4. Now then, we must understand this aright.

We might try to deliver ourselves from the law but to no avail; this deliverance is not of man but of God. Do you understand this? It is a free and a sovereign deed of God. We might be able to speak much about this, but it is only through the grace of God if we may experimentally speak of it in spirit and in truth. How little we hear of this in these days. As man and wife are bound together by God, so are also the law and man bound together, and man shall not separate what God has bound together. Only by death are they made free, and death has also wrought this deliverance concerning the law, viz., the death of Christ.

We must learn to know the death of Christ experimentally. This was a deed of God’s judgment. Now a question: With which Person of the Trinity does a soul first come in contact when brought into soul’s exercises by the Spirit of God? With God, for it is on account of sin that He has become our Judge. What poor people they are who speak about Jesus Christ without ever having learned to know God as their Judge. In the true experience, God’s people have to do with God and His law. The Lord cannot deny His righteousness, and what does man do? Does he at once bow before the Judge of heaven and of earth? No, he tries everything to satisfy the demands of the law, but the strife becomes greater. He promises the Lord he will do better; he seeks rest in this way but cannot find it. His guilt becomes greater every day. Sometimes he has a little hope, but then afterwards it becomes more impossible again. The curse of the law becomes worse, and he can find no deliverance. Now he submits to the righteousness of God, and oh wonder—Jesus is revealed to his soul. Oh, what a salvation to experience true faith in the Lord Jesus. Still there remains an empty place in the heart, something missing, namely, the justification of a sinner. Many think in these days that they can have this acquittal through the exercise of faith because the curse of the law shall be taken away. This is a grievous error and a despising of the Word of God. Think of the instruction of Paul—man and wife must be separated before the law loses its power.

Many speak about being cut off, but the greatest thing is if we may experience it. There is a people who are placed before God’s righteousness, and they are afraid that they will sink away eternally into everlasting destruction. Everything testifies against them...also the law. There they stand under the eye of the Judge of heaven as one who owes ten thousand talents and has not a penny to pay. The separation shall come, the eternal death sentence, and he will agree to this eternally. He is willing to sign this sentence with his own blood, for he loves God more than himself. It is only

a moment, and then Christ is revealed as all-sufficient. He hears that Jesus took upon Himself the demands of the law on the grounds of His merits; He had fulfilled the sufferings that were demanded by the law to take away the curse of the law, and by His active obedience gave a right to eternal life. What a blessing it is to be acquitted by the Father, then to experience through Christ the liberty of the Apostle Paul, "But now we are delivered from the law."

Now we may write to you that all the children of God have this liberty in regeneration, but only when we receive a true knowledge of this acquittal do we experimentally

know of this liberty. From God's side it lies firm, but before God's children are acquitted by the Father, they are still in their own experience on enemy ground. Do not build each other up in the sweet frames of your soul. When others tell you that you also belong with the little ones in grace, do not rest in it but pray for the assurance of faith in Christ. Is there a happier people than the people of God? Without Jesus there is only eternal destruction and union with Satan, whose slaves we have become. There is liberty in Christ only. In the hand of Moses, the law causes many fears, but in the hand of Christ it has a sweet appearance. □



Doctrinal Studies

Godly Sorrow (2)

Rev. J.J. van Ekeveld, Zeist, the Netherlands

"For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death" (2 Corinthians 7:10).

What is godly sorrow? With every sorrow there is a missing. A husband has sorrow when he misses his wife; a sick person has sorrow when he misses his health. With godly sorrow, a person experiences that he is missing God.

This sorrow concerns the sorrow after God, for His favor, for His communion. It is not a seeking of prosperity, or of the world, not even for heaven. It concerns God. It is a sorrow because I have lost God. It becomes the most important question in my life how I might receive God for my portion. This sorrow drives a person out toward God. It concerns God Himself. Psalm 42 can make clear what lives in the heart, "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?"

Sorrow and love

Contained in this sorrow there is also a sincere sorrow of heart over sin. That brings us to the essential matter which concerns godly sorrow. Sorrow is closely aligned with love. We can sometimes come to a funeral where there is no sorrow. Why is that? Well, it is because the deceased was not known or was not a loved one. Sorrow and mourning are closely connected with love. In conversion, the love of God is poured out in the heart. Then one receives an eye for the fact that God not only is worthy to be served and feared but also that the Lord is of great mercy and that He has never done any wrong. There comes an affinity toward God, the highest and eternal good. The heart in which

the love of God is poured out suffers pain because of sin because one has committed so much evil against so much good. We could call this "sorrowing love," and that is why the heart burns within us. Then there are not only outward tears (which can also be tears of self-love and self-pity, for there are so many tears shed which never flow into God's bottle) but there are many more tears of the soul.

How does this sorrow come about?

Prof. G. Wisse, in his booklet *Godly Sorrow*, asks, "This godly sorrow, from whence does it proceed?" He then answers as follows, "It proceeds from the feeling and realization of being without God. This, in turn, occurs when the love of God is poured out into our hearts. When God displays Himself so manifestly and powerfully in and to us, we come to the stirring awakening that God is the true and holy God, worthy of all love. The soul then perceives that she is not only far from God, but indeed without Him. She feels herself separated from God. At the same time, since God through His regenerating operations is most powerful, she cannot be without Him nor wishes to be. This brings a stirring sorrow, a sustained impression and persuasion, a sense of emptiness; in short, a disposition of the soul that is the clearest manifestation of sorrow."

Calvin explains it so strikingly in his Commentary on 2 Corinthians 7:10: "Sorrow according to God is that which has an eye to God, while they reckon it the one misery—to have lost the favor of God; when impressed with the fear of His judgment, they mourn over their sins."

They are, to say it with the words of Isaiah 66:2b, the "poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My Word." What is their greatest misery? Calvin says that they have

lost the favor of God. That is to say, that they miss God and the light of His gracious countenance. In the heart of such sorrowing ones, Question 12 of the Heidelberg Catechism becomes lively, “Is there no way by which we may escape that punishment, and again be received into favor?” Then it concerns itself especially with the last part, to again be restored into God’s favor and communion.

Humbling

It is also a sorrow which deeply humbles us. Here, the Lord becomes so great, so amiable, so worthy to be served and feared. Here, I become so small because I have sinned against God. Even though our eyes would be a fountain of tears, we could not sorrow enough because of our sins. “Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned” (Psalm 51:4a). With this sorrow we learn to see ourselves as condemnable

and miserable, outside of Christ and His communion, as objects of His wrath.

There is a continuance in this condition. The Lord uncovers us regarding all of our sinful actions wherewith we have transgressed in deeds, words, and thoughts. The Lord uncovers us to the filthy root of sin which lies deep in our heart, wherefrom the filth of our sins flows out. The Lord uncovers us to the cause of sin in Paradise; we begin to experience that we were created perfect by the hand of God but that we have freely and willfully left the Lord. Then we no longer find any reason to minimize our sins because here even our best works become sin before God. In this manner we come to the hearty confession of our sins before God. ◻

(To be continued)



For Young and Old

No Other Gods (2)

C.M. Van Der Sluis

With Farmer Van Aalten

Anna had now reached the age of sixteen years. The older she became, the more she forsook that which her foster parents held before her according to God’s Word. The god of this world had blinded her mind and held her in his clutches. In this condition she went to the Farmer Van Aalten household as a servant girl.

They were people who led a lighthearted and jovial life. It is true that they went to church but concerned themselves little about death and eternity. This was just to the liking of Anna who considered the home where she was reared as a heavy yoke weighing upon her, not because of the care she received but because of the seriousness of life which showed itself there. The family of Van Aalten could get along and associate with everybody; they did not live so “close,” and with them it was God something and the world something. The motto of Farmer Van Aalten was work, work, and more work, in order to earn much money and be prosperous in the world! This in itself was not completely wrong, but with him it was the one and only consideration and God was not acknowledged in it. This is simply a life without any real meaning—poor and empty. Anna felt herself at home with them, which was a grief to her foster parents who continued to warn her against the dangers which surrounded her.

It is true, Anna did go to church, but that was all. After a few years, Rev. Lensveld asked at the catechism class who

desired to make confession and...Anna presented herself. This faithful minister proclaimed the pure Word of the Lord—blessing and curse, the way of life and the way of death. Sometimes Anna felt that she was upon the wrong way, but the love for sin and the world would again take all these impressions away. Did not all things in her life seem to be well? Until...!

The summer was dry, and the hay, potatoes, and corn did not look so flourishing. Farmer Van Aalten was compelled to do away with a few of his cows; sickness came among his chickens, and one thing followed upon the other. Seemingly, it looked as if everything went against him, whereas formerly he had experienced nothing but prosperity. He neither saw nor believed in God’s providence, and his only reply upon all these reverses was to work harder and to live a more reckless life. Now there was no time at all for God or to worship in His house.

“Why do we just at this time have to have so many reverses?” said Van Aalten.

Thoughts sprang up in his mind, and for many weeks the farmer went about with plans which he revealed to no one. Had he not read and heard about emigration? Man outside of divine grace will always attempt to escape God’s smiting hand. Farmer Van Aalten wanted to go to America. There it would be better than experiencing poverty in Holland. There no oppressing government would trouble him, he would be free from binding laws. Everything would

be in his favor, and nothing would be against him in that country. So he thought!

One day he came home greatly excited. He sank into his chair and said to his wife, "Here things are no longer right. Just now at the market I heard that Frank Versteeg is going to America, too. You will see that many more will go; we sit here toiling to get ahead, and what good does it do us? What we were able to save last year must be spent this year to get along."

"What is your purpose in saying that?" asked Mrs. Van Aalten.

"Well, that we, too, are going to America!" said the farmer roughly.

"I don't believe that at all," said his wife.

The hard fist of the farmer came down with a heavy blow upon the table. "I say it will happen as sure as can be. This week I am going for information, and if it suits me, we are going!"

"Man, calm down and think of what we must leave behind here," said the farmer's wife.

"I suppose you mean the family?" answered Van Aalten. "Well, they don't help us either!"

No matter how Mrs. Van Aalten opposed this proposition, nothing helped; the farmer made up his mind, and nothing

could stop him. It was discussed everywhere—in the house, outside the house, on the street, and in the stores as well as in the home of the Brinkmans. Anna would return home, but...this would be otherwise.

Farmer Van Aalten and his wife had urged Anna right from the beginning to move with them. For Anna this was grand. She wanted to go across the ocean and into the wide world, but she feared to speak to her foster parents about it. Whenever Anna had been home, the farmer asked, "Anna, have you told them?"

Each time she had to say, "No."

She dared not. Why? Because her conscience warned her that she was not doing right by going away, thereby causing her foster parents this grief. However, Farmer Van Aalten could wait not longer; the papers must be in order; therefore, Anna was compelled to tell them.

There she sat that evening with her deeply sorrowing foster parents. All their warnings against it, even their pleadings, were of no avail. This was the reward which Anna gave her aged foster parents for all their care bestowed upon her. Were all these sacrifices in vain? Would they soon be compelled to take leave of her, a farewell for always...possibly forever? □

(To be continued)



Biblical Exegesis

Sense and Meaning

A Reflection upon the Interpretation of the Holy Scriptures

Rev. A. Moerkerken, Capelle a/d IJssel, the Netherlands

(Zin en Mening, Een bezinning op de uitleg van de Heilige Schrift, Ds. A. Moerkerken, Den Hertog, Houten, 2010, ISBN 9789033123436)

The words which form the title of this book are frequently spoken by the lead elder in the consistory room prior to the service where he lays the needs of the minister and the congregation before the Lord, and asks if His servant may bring the message according to the "sense and meaning of the Holy Spirit." This book primarily consists of a practical explanation of biblical exegesis in its object, its concepts, its methods, its practice and its application. A number of examples of difficult exegesis are included which Rev. Moerkerken shows how they can or cannot be explained. One of the questions asked is, "Is it proper to say that the Ethiopian in Acts 8 was cursed because of his black skin?" In view of the increasing tensions in our nations between white citizens and citizens of color, and even wrong conceptions within our own circles, we include this article to provide some instruction to our readers. The following is a translation of pages 149-156 of the above-mentioned book, with permission from the publisher. (Ed.)

In the past, the opinion was sometimes defended that the Ethiopian mentioned in the history of Acts 8 was cursed because of his black skin. Or to say it more accurately, his black skin was a token of the curse which had been placed upon him as a descendant of Ham. We wish to consider this question somewhat more closely. For this we will use Scripture as our guide. He who wishes to examine this subject in more depth will discover that several different questions can be posed. We will name some of them. What does the Bible mean when it speaks of an Ethiopian or of Ethiopia? Also, who was actually cursed by Noah in Genesis 9, and what did he actually mean? Subsequently, did an Ethiopian have black skin? Finally, can the question be asked if Scripture gives grounds to speak of the color of the skin of an Ethiopian as a token of a curse?

In the first place, then, what is the meaning of the biblical words referring to a Moor (Ethiopian in the KJV) or Ethiopia?

The sons of Ham

The name Ethiopia (Morenland in Dutch) is the translation of the Hebrew word Cush in the *Statenvertaling*. The word appears as the name of a person as well as the name of a people or country. We will pass by Psalm 7:1 where it appears that a man with this name was a hostile courtier in the court of King Saul. The name written there is completely independent. The Cush mentioned in Psalm 7:1 was a Benjamite, and therefore has nothing to do with a Moor, or Ethiopian.

It is different with a man of whom we already read in Genesis 10. There, a certain Cush is mentioned as a son of Ham. Ham, the son of Noah, appears to have had four sons, namely, Cush, Mizraim, Phut, and Canaan. The oldest, Cush, we will let be for the time being. Concerning Mizraim, this name is the original name for Egypt. We can read of that in Psalm 105 where the psalm is set to melody:

*He wholly broke the staff of bread
And called for famine sore,
And He prepared His people's way
By sending one before.
To Egypt (read as land of Ham) Israel followed then,
And there grew great and strong,
Until their friends became their foes
And did them grievous wrong.*

—Psalter 289:8&11

There is not much known about Ham's son Phut. It is likely that his descendants settled in the delta of the Nile River where it empties into the Mediterranean Sea, therefore in the northern part of Egypt. We still have to consider Canaan, the youngest son of Ham. Genesis 10 speaks quite extensively about Canaan and his children. Eleven sons of Canaan are mentioned in Genesis 10:15-18. In order to answer the questions with which we are presently occupied, it is very important that we realize that these descendants of Canaan (who was explicitly cursed by his grandfather Noah) went to live in the land of Canaan or in the neighborhood thereof. It was precisely these people that Israel was commanded to destroy when they took possession of the land of Canaan. Therefore, Cush is an uncle of Canaan.

The sons of Cush

What do we know about Cush? Six sons are attributed to this son of Canaan (Genesis 10). The most well-known of them is undoubtedly Nimrod, of whom the Bible tells us that he was a mighty hunter before the Lord. The translators of the Dutch *Statenvertaling* tell us with a bit of irony that he did not only hunt animals but also hunted people. They do not see the words *before the Lord* as an indication of his fear of the Lord, rather his fearlessness and shamefulness. Subsequently, Seba is also named as a son of Cush and is the father of the later Sabeans. Then Havila is named (which appears earlier in Genesis 2), Sabtâh, Raamah and Sabtechâh.

In a certain sense all of these descendants of Cush can be called Moors. It is good for us to remember this fact. The Hebrew word for Cushite is *Cushi*. We also know this name from Scripture as the name of an individual. It was the name of the runner who received the command from Joab to notify David of the death of his son Absalom (2 Samuel 18:21). The translators of the *Statenvertaling* remark about this text that it can also be translated as "Moor" or "Arabian." Some say, however, that they believe it is a personal name. It is interesting to note that in today's age the fastest long-distance runners frequently come from Ethiopia.

Cush as the name of a country

In other places in the Old Testament, Cush is used as the name of a country, but which country? There, the meanings vary somewhat. When considering this, the Ethiopian spoken of in Acts 8 comes to the foreground. The Greek text calls him an *Aithiops*. This of course makes us think of Ethiopia, but the Ethiopia of biblical times is not the same Ethiopia as we see depicted in our World Atlas of today. Present Ethiopia lies far southeast of the biblical land of the Moors. The biblical land of Cush encompassed what we today recognize as Nubia, the northern part of the country of Sudan. It bordered on Egypt as can be noted in Ezekiel 29:10. It is also mentioned in one breath with Egypt in the Old Testament. Just think of Psalm 68:31, "Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God."

When we speak of Cush as the country of the Moors, we must realize two things. In the first place, it is not the same country as today's Ethiopia; in the second place, there are also reasons to consider that the Bible speaks of a country of the Moors in Arabia. The writers of the marginal notes of the *Statenvertaling* have acknowledged this problem. We can realize this, for example, we read of Zipporah, the wife of Moses. She is called an Ethiopian (Cushite) in Numbers 12:1. Marginal note 2 on this text remarks that Moses' wife was not a descendant of the Cushites which descended from Ham but from the Midianites, therefore from the line of Shem! I cite as follows: "It appears that the Holy Scriptures with the name Cushites does not only include the Moors but also Egyptians, Arabians, Midianites, and people who lived toward the south." In marginal note 21 attached to Genesis 10:6, we read something similar, "Of this Cush are the Arabians and the Moors." With the first instance of the country of Cush mentioned in the Bible, namely, with the description of the four rivers in Paradise (Genesis 2:13), the writers of the marginal notes are of the same opinion. In a book from the eighteenth century, *Bijbels Zakelijk Woordenboek (Concise Biblical Dictionary)* by Rev. J.G. Staringh, who was a minister in the Dutch City of Gouderak for sixty years, an interesting observation is made. He writes that according to his impression, the reason that Ethiopia was also called Cush is because a few descendants of Cush who originally lived

in Arabia found that land too barren and had settled in Ethiopia by way of Egypt.

We must therefore bear in mind that the Moors (the descendants of Cush) have not lived only in Africa. If we return for a moment to the six sons of Cush, then we will see that Nimrod began to live in the neighborhood of the later Nineveh (Assyria) in present day Iraq. We would not expect to find a “Moor” there. Seba apparently settled on the western coast of the Red Sea in the eastern part of Egypt. Havila is likely the site of an area in the center of Saudi Arabia. Sabra would have lived somewhat to the south of Havila. Raamah lived to the west of this area, and it is difficult to place Sabtechä. It is clear that of the four sons of Ham, only two have settled in Africa (Phut and Cush), and that most of the descendants of Cush have never lived in Africa (actually only Seba) but in Asia. The remark in marginal note 20 on Genesis 10 is therefore quite correct, namely, that the descendants of Ham partly lived in Asia, and partly in Africa, and some of them for a time in Palestine.

Who and what has Noah meant with his curse?

We come to the next question. Who was actually cursed by Noah in Genesis 9? We know the sad history of the drunkenness of God’s child, his lying naked in his tent, and the mockery of his son Ham. When Noah awakens and becomes aware of what his son has done, he utters the following words, “Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be to his brethren.” It is immediately apparent that Noah cursed *Canaan* and not Ham whom we would have expected. It is often noted that Canaan, the grandson of Noah, was of the same mindset as his father Ham. That is quite likely. Yet, the arrow lies somewhat further. It is documented in Scripture that the most painful way to be stricken is to be stricken in our descendants. We do not need to provide proof texts for this as every regular reader of the Bible will know them. The writers of the marginal note for Genesis 10:25 correctly remark that Noah with his curse did not only direct it to the son (Canaan) but also to Ham and the *descendants of the son*. Here, we are faced with something very essential. Who were the descendants of Canaan? We just saw that they were the people who ages later had to be destroyed by the Israelites when they took possession of the land of Canaan. It must have been very poignant for Moses, the writer of the book of Genesis, to pen this judgment against Canaan long before the strife against the Canaanites began.

We asked the question, who was meant with Noah’s curse? Another question that comes to mind is, what did

Noah mean with his curse? “A servant of servants shall he (Canaan) be to his brethren!”

The expression “servant of servants” is a typical Hebrew expression and points to the most severe form of slavery. Now we cannot deny that the heathen nations which had come forth out of Canaan, and who had lived in Palestine, had been subjugated for a long time by the descendants of the brothers of Canaan (now taken literally), namely, Cush, Phut, and Mizraim. Especially these three had the rule for centuries around the area of the Mediterranean Sea. Noah, therefore, could have literally meant that the children of Canaan would be under the subjection to the brothers of Canaan.

In the light of what we have so far found in God’s Word, it would not be tenable that Noah’s words meant that all of the black people from Africa would be kept in an oppressive position under the yoke of white people for ages. Further-

more, the thought that his words would be a justification for the horrors of slave trade and slavery is plainly condemnable. The truth demands us to admit that among us in the past this subject was spoken about in an unbiblical manner. Also among us black people were spoken about in a derogatory manner. We should pay attention to the fact that in different places the Bible speaks very positively about the black Ethiopian. Just think of Psalm 87, Jeremiah 38 (the Ethiopian Ebed-Melech who took Jeremiah up out of

The truth demands us to admit that among us in the past this subject was spoken about in an unbiblical manner. Also among us black people were spoken about in a derogatory manner. We should pay attention to the fact that in different places the Bible speaks very positively about the black Ethiopian. Just think of Psalm 87, Jeremiah 38 (the Ethiopian Ebed-Melech who took Jeremiah up out of the pit) and, of course, the Ethiopian in Acts 8.

the pit) and, of course, the Ethiopian in Acts 8. He who will still have a good word about the earlier slave trade would do well to absorb himself in the autobiography of the sixteenth-century minister and poet, John Newton, who in his younger days had been a slave trader. We also must not forget that the Apostle Paul was born in the eastern part of what we know today as Turkey and that Augustine was a North African.

A black skin?

We now wish to consider whether the Ethiopian, as God’s Word speaks about him, had a black skin. That depends on what mankind considers to be black. What we would today call a Negro is a name or color which we reserve for the people who live in the central part of Africa, to the south of the Sahara Desert. The Ethiopian did not come from that area. It is possible that Simon, the minister of the Christian congregation in Antioch (Acts 13:1), was a black or a Negro because he had the surname of Niger, but that is only a guess. If we would assume that the Ethiopian of whom we read in Acts 8 had the same skin color as the people who live in the area from where he came, then we certainly

would not visualize him as a white person but also not as a black person. He would have had a dark brown skin.

That brings us to the last part of this question. Is it true that Scripture gives us any grounds for the thought that the color of the skin of the Ethiopian can be seen as a token of the curse spoken by Noah? To speak of it even more forcefully, can someone solely and alone be considered a cursed one because of the color of his skin? We do not find proof for that anywhere in Scripture, not even in Jeremiah 13:23, “Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.” These words should not be considered as having to do with a black skin as a token of a sinful nature—but of the absolute impossibility to leave sin behind (see marginal note 44). God’s Word teaches us that we all lie under the ravages of sin—not because of Ham or Canaan, and not

because of the color of our skin, but we lie under the curse of God’s law because of Adam’s breaking of the covenant in Paradise. The Ethiopian lay under this curse as a child of Ham, but also Philip as a child of Shem who could bring the eunuch the gospel of salvation. All the children of Japheth also lie under this curse.

God’s Word teaches us that he who may be in Christ is released from the curse. It may be asked of what curse? If we are a carrier of the curse of Noah, then also we may be released from this curse but, above all, from the curse of the law. The question as to what color of skin we will have had here upon earth shall pale in the light of another question, namely, will we wear that white wedding garment of Christ’s righteousness? Or will we wear the garment of eternal sorrow? □



Questions & Answers

Questions from Our Readers

Rev. H. Hofman, Kalamazoo, MI

A few months ago, in a closing paragraph of an article, you referenced to “letting a summer and winter pass over it” as a biblical expression. Can you clarify this?

The matter in question referred to a few expressions at the end of an article that explained what “losing one’s conversion” means. Behind the expression “let a summer and winter pass over it” I placed the text of 1 Timothy 5:22, “lay hands suddenly on no man” more as a reference than a clear proof text. The very attentive reader of my article pointed out that this text strictly refers to office bearing and not to “the accepting a person as a believer too quickly.” The same reader also wondered about the entire expression actually being unbiblical. Let me try to relate a few thoughts with respect to this expression.

First, the reader is right that 1 Timothy 5:22 does not specifically refer to a new convert. Whether this text, therefore, is exclusively limited to and only applicable to an office bearer is debatable. Are the words of Christ directed to His disciples applicable to office bearers only? May others not learn from them as well? Is not all the Scripture profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction? Do we go too far if we consider matters in the spirit of Scripture also? Is what is necessary for the office not necessary in spiritual life? What is actually meant in Scripture by the laying on of hands needs to be carefully

studied here and certainly be placed in the context and the rest of the text because there is more written in the text. The resources at my disposal show that laying on of hands refers more to a gesture of reconciliation than to the gesture of equipping the office bearer. The highly esteemed Dutch Marginal Notes explain 1 Timothy 5:22, stating, “that is, without having made due and sufficient trial of the person, his life and his doctrine.” It is clear from this statement that the matter does not only refer to outward qualifications for the office but also to the inner (spiritual) life.

Secondly, there are many texts in the Bible which seem to oppose the idea of “letting a summer and winter pass over” a spiritual matter or experience (see Matthew 13:29, Matthew 18:6&14, and Ezekiel 34:4). Contrariwise, think of Elijah’s statement to Naaman about worshipping in the house of Rimmon, his god, and more. Here, I would like to maintain that there is a difference between judging someone’s state for eternity and providing biblically wholesome, constructive, pastoral guidance. Scripture clearly separates the precious from the vile. Jeremiah, as God’s servant, is emphatically commanded to do so if he is to be the Lord’s mouth (Jeremiah 15:19). Lydia said to Paul, “If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there” (Acts 16:15). In nearly every parable of Jesus a clear separation takes place, either earlier in the parable or certainly in the end. Hence, the element of what

is truth and what is lie, what is of God and what is of man must be brought out both in the preaching and in pastoral guidance. Unfortunately, much guidance is often rather quickly interpreted as ill-judging. Having said this, I in no way want to give the impression that office bearers never make mistakes or that they are infallible. Who is of himself sufficient for these things? Who can do this carefully enough and prayerfully enough?

We live in confusing and complicated times. I am sometimes afraid that many a spiritual discussion focuses so much upon some kind of approval of man. The same counts for labeling all that is said and takes place—labels such as converted, forgiven, saved, knowing Jesus, child of God, etc. Does this not sometimes occur too early? What is often the fruit of such language spoken to others by others? Are these 'labels' the sealing of the Spirit of which Scripture speaks? By whom does this take place? I would plead with every person who is serious-minded and concerned about the ways of the Lord to ask and plead that the Lord *Himself* would lead, instruct, and guide. I believe this is more scriptural and testifies of more spiritual wisdom than both the swift approval or disapproval of man. "Say to my soul, I am Thy salvation" (Psalm 35:3b).

Finally, I admit that writing regularly about expressions such as mentioned here is a somewhat precarious matter and certainly may lend itself to debate. I admit that an expression not literally found in Scripture often lends itself to a better one and sometimes leaves something to be desired. This is the reason why we try to explain such expressions, and yes, let our conversation be scriptural. Then we need to live close to the Scriptures. Still, just because they are not literal quotations from Scripture does not mean that they have no value at all. Not all customs we consider good customs are literally found in Scripture, but they better be according to the rule and in the spirit of Scripture. To "let a summer and winter pass over" a spiritual matter is such an expression. For the following reasons:

1. A matter may be clear to the Lord but not (yet) to man; think of Samuel's calling and Gamaliel's advice: "But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it." The same may be true for office bearers who feel they need more light and wisdom before giving advice.

2. A matter may need deepening, more time to ripen: "Judge nothing before the time" (1 Corinthians 4:5a).
3. A matter may need more clarity from above in the way of discovery and further light.

If an office bearer judges this to be the case, there is nothing wrong with leaving the matter in the Lord's hand, beseeching the Lord that it be made beautiful in its time. Whether that is called "letting summer or winter pass over it," "leaving the matter in God's hand," or "not speaking good or bad" is acceptable as far as I am concerned.

I once heard a true instance of "letting a summer and winter pass over it," according to Rev. G.H. Kersten. It was on a Sunday evening in his home where some visitors were speaking about what had taken place that day. Suddenly, the doorbell rang. Mrs. Kersten got up and opened the door, but it was obvious that the deeply troubled teenage girl at the door needed to speak to the minister and not to his wife. A few minutes after meeting the girl, however, Rev. Kersten was back in the living room.

The surprised eyes of the visitors seemed to ask for an explanation of the minister's swift return. Then he explained that this young girl had, in the anguish of her soul, asked him if she could still be saved. Rev. Kersten then related that he had sent her away, telling her that she had come to the "wrong address." He also told the people there that he would have pressed the girl to his heart if he had let his emotions overtake him, but he did not do so. He said that then she would have been able to cling to that last little straw of clinging to something of man, and he would have been the obstacle, but she needed to lose that last little straw of clinging to man. Rev. Kersten said that he believed the matter would be solved for that girl the same night, as indeed did happen. Dear reader, Rev. Kersten wisely "let a summer and winter pass over it," but it ended up being a very short summer and a very short winter... however, it was good for this girl, do you not agree? □

Please send your questions to Rev. H. Hofman, 112 Pratt Road, Kalamazoo, MI 49001, or hofman@premieronline.net.

For these six thousand years God has been multiplying pardons, yet free grace is not tired. Christ undertook to satisfy, and He hath money enough to pay. 'Twere folly to think that an emperor's revenue will not pay a beggar's debt. Mercy is an ocean ever flowing, yet ever full. The saints carry loads of experiences with them to heaven. Free grace can show you large accounts and a long bill cancelled by the blood of Christ.

—Thomas Manton



Current Events

Celebrating Pride Month Is Celebrating America's Destruction

In June corporate America openly celebrated and promoted "Pride Month." Every logo suddenly had a rainbow, and many companies seem eager to promote the forced acceptance and celebration of debauchery and hedonistic sexual ethics, and the continued, ongoing destruction of our Christian heritage and end of basic American values. It was not all that long ago that "family friendly" corporate America promoted morality and even Christian ethics in its advertising. Christians are increasingly unwelcome in corporate environments and, even if they are tolerated, most are forced into silence about their beliefs and values. Think about what June now truly represents: the destruction of America! Corporate America has spent 30 days celebrating and aiding the activities that will destroy Christians and families here in America, which may lead to the end of America as a viable country. Why is much of corporate America choosing to openly celebrate destructive sin, and support the organizations who will destroy our country? The answer is simple, actually—fear of the raw power of the LGBT movement and anti-Christian elites, and a lack of faith in God.

—FPIW.org

Bill C-6 Passes the House of Commons

In June a majority of MPs voted in favor of Bill C-6, pushing the bill to criminalize "conversion therapy" into the Senate. No one opposes the principle of banning coercive or torturous therapies. However, Bill C-6 defines conversion therapy so broadly that many groups, even some members of the LGBTQ+ community have urged amendments. "We support a bill banning conversion therapy, but not this bill, because it bans more than conversion therapy," said ARPA Canada's Director of Law and Public Policy. He further explains: "Experts in law and medicine, and advocates from a wide variety of groups across this diverse country are rightly concerned about the impact this bill will have on reducing the availability of psychological and spiritual help for those struggling with deep existential questions. We are now looking to the Chamber of Sober Second Thought to make simple amendments so that parents don't risk five years in jail for asking a counselor to help them work through gender dysphoria issues with their child."

—ARPCanada.ca

Keep Remembering Leah Sharibu

May 14 was Leah Sharibu's 18th birthday. Leah is the lone remaining schoolgirl in captivity from the town of Dapchi in Nigeria, where more than 100 girls were taken from school by a faction of Boko Haram. Since that time, several rumors have arisen of Leah being killed, being married to a Boko Haram fighter, and giving birth to children. None of these rumors have yet been confirmed, though she is confirmed still alive. Leah was taken when she was just 14 years old. She has likely been forced to learn Islamic rules and Arabic. They have also likely used physical torment and mental attacks to try and break her faith in Christ. Her family has been asking the Nigerian government and even the British government for aid in securing the release of their daughter. Despite promises from the Nigerian government that they are doing everything in their power to secure Leah's release, there has been no information provided proving such efforts. The government was able to secure the release of 104 other girls. All those girls were Muslim. This has led some to claim that the Nigerian government does not care about Leah.

—Persecution.org

Good News for Children and Religious Freedom

It is not often that we hear of government bodies agreeing on a decision. Yet in June, the U.S. Supreme Court issued a unanimous judgment in favor of children and religious freedom. Catholic Social Services (CSS) is a longstanding faith-based nonprofit that serves the foster children of Philadelphia. They exist to help children in need find forever homes. They have many guidelines—including that there be a married mom and dad in the home. When the city discovered CSS's beliefs about marriage, they forced the organization to make a decision: change your beliefs or the city will stop contracting with you. The organization rightly recognized that this was a violation of their constitutionally protected religious freedom and took that argument to court. After years of litigation, Supreme Court justices issued their verdict: Philadelphia violated CSS's religious freedom. This decision is good news not only for CSS, but for the many children they serve. When CSS is allowed to participate in Philadelphia's foster care system, it not only offers a distinctly Christian option, but also increases the sheer number of foster providers—and that matters greatly.

—FamilyPolicyAlliance.com

Students Required a Minute or Two of Reflection or Prayer

The governor of Florida signed a bill requiring public school students "to reflect and to be able to pray as they see fit" for one or two minutes each day during first period. Florida law already "encourages" students to participate in "silent prayer," but this law will require that minute-or-two of reflection. "It's something that's important to be able to provide each student the ability, every day, to be able to reflect and to be able to pray as they see fit," said the governor during a press conference. "The idea that you can just push God out of every institution, and be successful—I'm sorry, our founding fathers did not believe that." Florida is also one of fifteen other states that encourage public school students to participate in a moment of silence.

—FoxNews.com

Nigerian Reformed Church—Nigeria Villages Attacked

On Sunday, May 30, a band of Fulani herdsmen in Nigeria attacked villages near Izzi in Benue State where there are several churches associated with the Nigerian Reformed Church (NRC), a Word & Deed partner ministry. The death toll currently stands at 136 people, with many others injured and homeless and some still missing. The attackers burned down homes and businesses in these villages, leaving many of the survivors with nothing. The synod of the NRC has requested help in three phases for about 675 people. The first phase being the provision of food, clothing, and medical care. The second phase will focus on education support for children who have lost parents in the violence. The third phase will assist in rebuilding homes for those left homeless. In early June a team of church leaders in Nigeria visited these villages. These church leaders reported that they were able to meet many of the victims personally and share God's Word with them. They also reported on the devastation left behind—small children who are the only survivors in their family, many who are grieving, and many more are bereaved, homeless, and unemployed. They will also continue to offer spiritual and trauma counseling. The government has agreed to cover most of the medical bills for those who were injured. Please continue to pray that God's Word would go out with power, comfort, and conviction in Nigeria.

—ADFIInternational.org



Timothy FOR THE YOUNG

The Confession of Faith (20) **Article XXV: Of the Abolishing of the Ceremonial Law**

Rev. A.M. den Boer (1929-2004)

In the previous articles we have written somewhat about sanctification and good works, but this time it is a totally different subject, namely, the abolishing of the ceremonial law.

When the Lord established His covenant with Israel, He gave them the Law at Mount Sinai. This Law was the rule of conduct for the children of Israel in all things. The laws which the Lord gave there were of three kinds: the Moral Law, the Civil Law, and the Ceremonial Law.

The Moral Law, or the Ten Commandments, is an everlasting law. This was already evident when it was given, for it was written in two tables of stone. This did not take place when the other two laws were given, and thus the Lord manifested the everlasting character of these Ten Commandments. We do find some ceremonial things in this law, for example, the Sabbath. It is definitely not for the Jews only, but for the whole world unto the end of time. This was also explained by the Lord Jesus Himself when He said, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.”

The second law we mentioned is the Civil Law, which concerns the civil and political life of Israel. Israel was a theocracy, which means that it was ruled immediately by the Lord. He was Israel’s God, King, Lawgiver, and Judge. Him they had to obey in days of peace and in time of war, in prosperity and adversity, and they were to act according to His will. When Israel was no longer a nation (which became reality in the year 70), these laws were no longer in force.

This article speaks particularly about the Ceremonial Law. These were the laws of Israel’s religious life. Everything therein was dictated by the Lord. It was not a human institution but a commandment of the Lord and was in force during the time of the Old Testament for the children of Israel. It also contained much instruction for them. Why only under

the Old Testament times? It was the time that the Lord Jesus had not yet come, but His people were waiting for Him as He had been promised. These ceremonial laws point to Christ and explain His work. They are a visible instruction for Israel by the Lord, and they tell about the sacred persons, places, seasons, and things. We will try to explain these briefly.

Among the sacred persons, we think first of the High Priest. His title already testifies that he is the head of the priests. His office was to do the most holy work as we can find in Exodus 28, Leviticus 8, and Numbers 16. Next, we mention the priests who explain the law, bring the offerings, pray for the people and bless them in the name of the Lord. Then follow the Levites who served in the sanctuary in the place of the firstborn. As you will recall, the Lord required the sanctification of the firstborn in His service after the angel of destruction had gone through Egypt. The firstborn belonged to the Lord. However, at Sinai only the tribe of Levi was faithful to the Lord and had not danced around the golden calf. At that time, this tribe of Levi was appointed by the Lord to serve in the sanctuary in place of the firstborn (Numbers 3:12).

God’s Word speaks of the Gershonites, the Kohathites, and the Merarites; according to Numbers 3 they each had a different task. God’s Word also speaks of the Nethinims who originally were the inhabitants of Gibeon. They deceived Joshua and the people, and a covenant was made with them without asking the Lord. Thereafter they had to cut wood and bring water to the tabernacle. Thus, we find in the Ceremonial Law a complete program regarding the duties of the sacred persons. Where was their work to be done? In those sacred places of which the Ceremonial Law also speaks.

What were the sacred places? According to the commandment of the Lord, Moses made a tabernacle in the desert; it was divided into three parts—the most holy place or the holy of holies, the holy place,

and the court. Only the High Priest was allowed to once a year enter the most holy place. As he entered, he must close the veil behind him, and no other priest was allowed to be in the holy place because the Lord had strictly forbidden that even one glance be cast into the holy of holies. It means that man cannot exist before a holy and righteous God; a sacrifice has to be brought before one can appear before Him.

The priests daily entered the holy place, and in the court the sacrifices were brought. The Israelites came to the sanctuary to bring their sacrifices for (ceremonial) atonement, especially at the time of the three great feasts each year. All these things were described by the Lord in the ceremonial laws.

The three great feasts were among the sacred times which were appointed for the children of Israel.

Each morning and each evening an animal was offered to the Lord, but prayer was then also sent up to Him. Each Sabbath was sanctified to the Lord; also, on the first day of the new month and on the day of the new moon, no work was done. The next time, D.V., we hope to say more about the importance of the three great feasts.

In our life, do we each morning and evening draw nigh to the Lord? Do we begin our day and end our day with the Lord? I am so afraid that our lives are offered more to the Moloch of this world than to the Lord. Especially, Sunday is not observed as the Lord's Day, but is become more and more a day of visits rather than of serving the Lord. May the Holy Spirit work the necessary change among us.



Bible Stories for Little Ones

Ready to Enter the Land of Canaan

(Based on parts of Deuteronomy and Joshua 1)

Finally—the children of Israel were to enter their new homeland. Yes, finally, after years and years and YEARS of traveling through the wilderness, the children of Israel were almost at the border of the land of Canaan. They were now ready to enter.

How happy they were to be there. Just think about it. The children of Israel had not been settled in a home for forty years. Forty years is a long time. ONE year is how long it takes from one birthday until you have another, and this was not just one year, but FORTY years.

So many things had happened in those forty years. People had died, and babies had been born. In fact, all the people twenty years old and older who had left Egypt at the beginning and were numbered in the wilderness had died, either by sickness, punishment, or old age. Only two people, yes, only TWO people out of all the thousands of those Israelites were still alive to see the wonderful land they would call home.

Two people? Who were those two persons? Was one of them Moses?

No, Moses had died, too. What a sad time for the people of Israel when he died. Moses was very old when he died, but the Bible tells us that he was still as strong and as healthy as a younger man. The Bible tells us that never again was there a prophet in

Israel like Moses. Few men knew the Lord as Moses knew Him, for he had often been in His presence.

Moses loved the children of Israel as much as your father loves you, and before he died, he talked to them. He begged them to remember the Lord. He told them the whole story again of how the Lord had helped their fathers and mothers, even though they had grumbled. He showed them what would happen if they followed God and what would happen if they forgot about Him. Then he told them, “Today I have shown you the right way and the wrong way. I have shown you the way of life and the way of death. Now, please—please choose the right way, the way of life, that you and your children may follow God and live.”

Moses could not leave the children of Israel all alone, could he? They needed someone else to lead and guide them, so God told Moses to make JOSHUA their new leader.

Joshua—do you remember who Joshua was? He was one of the twelve spies who had first gone ahead to check out the land of Canaan. Ten of the spies told the Israelites to forget about the land because they could never fight the people there, but Joshua and Caleb had told the people that God would help them. These two men were the only two men of

twenty years of age or older at that time who would be allowed to see their new home.

Now this man who had trusted in God would be the new leader of the Israelites. What a big job he had ahead of him, but Joshua knew God would help him. God had told him three times, “Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid; for I will be with you.” When God is with us, nothing can hurt us.

All of us are on a journey, too, just as the people of Israel were. No, we are not traveling to the land of Canaan. We are traveling through this world, approaching the last day of our life when we will enter our real home. Then our journey will be over; we will enter heaven or hell. We do not all have a journey of forty years like the Israelites. Some people

have a life journey of eighty years; however, for some it may only be ten years, but when life’s journey is over, God’s people will be eternally happy. When it is time to die, they can often look beyond the fearful of death. They will be entering a new land, a wonderful, blessed land just as Canaan was. They will be entering heaven, the Canaan for which they have been longing.

Are we traveling to that land of Canaan, too? Or are we traveling to another place? It’s an important question for us.

Now, for the children of Israel that special time had arrived. It was the end of their journey, and the time had come to enter their new homeland. What would be inside this new land?



Bible Quiz

Help

Dear Boys and Girls,

As I am writing this, we have men working outside our house. We haven’t had water for almost a week, and they are trying to figure out if the well has collapsed by lowering a camera into it. Our need was plain to be seen by all who walked into our house or heard of our problem. “Can we take showers at your house?” I asked a sister-in-law.

“Of course!” was the immediate reply, and when we came, we were instantly also supplied with paper plates and plastic forks and spoons to take home.

“Can I come to fill some bottles with water?” I asked a brother.

“Of course!” was the answer, and I was asked if I needed laundry done as well.

“May we hook a hose up to your house to get some water?” I asked the neighbor after a few days. The neighbor stopped stacking his firewood.

“Yes, yes! I have more hoses; wait a moment!” He began to connect hoses and a little later arrived with some large bottles for us to use as well.

It seemed that each time I asked, more was given than I even asked for. When my daughter-in-law walked in and saw that all the dishes in my kitchen were dirty, piled, and stacked everywhere, she began

to put them in bags. “I will wash them at my house, and give me some laundry, too. I’m going to make you pasta tonight when you come to pick up everything.”

We often cannot do as much as we would like to do for others, but every little bit that we are ABLE to do goes a long way. It means much and helps much. We are not expected to neglect our duties so that we can help others, but sometimes small opportunities come our way to help even while we are busy with our own tasks as well. When everyone does a little, how much the help becomes! When someone asks you for help, do you try to do so?

A police officer helps at an accident or crime, and a doctor helps someone who is seriously sick. A person who runs a soup kitchen can help many beggars and homeless people at once, and a president or prime minister is able to do something good for a whole country, but we do not all have to help in such a way. You, too, can help—perhaps someone just needs you to listen, or someone needs a friend. Maybe your mother looks tired, or your sister is not able to complete all her chores. How happy they would be if you would help them a moment!

There are times we cannot help because of our own burdens and needs or because our help would

not be sufficient—then, there is still something we can and must do. We can pray for them. There are times we have to say “no.” When it is something that is not good or right, we should say no, and when it is beyond our power or too much for us to handle, we also may say no. Although we say no, we know that if we *could* have, we *would* have. It is not because we don’t want to. It should not be simply because we don’t *feel* like it.

Helping is being kind. When you are not kind, you only make the burden heavier. If a person needs help and you show that you don’t care, or if a person is having a rough time and you are speaking badly about him, you make the burdens heavier.

Has a boy who always drives fast had an accident? Don’t talk to others about how fast he drives, and perhaps he can be warned or reminded himself at a later time.. Is a boy’s family running out of money so that he comes to school with holes in his pants? Don’t laugh at him behind his back. He will only feel worse.

Do you know a girl who is so shy she has a hard time making friends? Don’t turn your back on her or leave her out. She cannot help it, and you have made her problem worse. Is there a little girl, younger than you, whose home life is different from yours? Perhaps she lives with her mom part of the week and with her dad the other half, or maybe she doesn’t know much about the Bible. Do you talk about her to others? Why? Are you better?

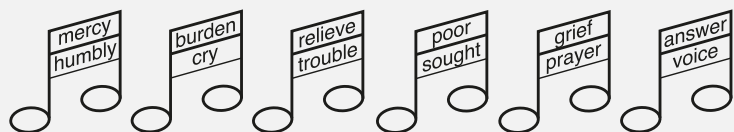
Sometimes there is a boy or girl who absolutely cannot sit still. He or she cannot help it. He or she might be loud or say whatever comes to mind all the time. Do you snicker behind his or her back? You are not helping at all. What if *you* were that person?

The Lord is a help to those in distress. He is able to give MORE than we ask for. Often, when we go to Him for our needs and cares, He will supply all that we need and more. Do you remember to tell the Lord about your burdens?

The Lord is Almighty, and His ear is open to the cries of needy ones. He especially loves to hear the cries of those who need Him for their soul—those who pray like the publican, “God be merciful to me a sinner.”

* * * * *

1. Use the words from the music notes below to complete the psalter verses in the column at right.



The _____ of the sorrowful
The Lord will not despise;
He has not turned from those that mourn,
He hearkens to their cries.

On God alone my soul relies,
And He will soon _____;
The Lord will hear my plaintive cries
At morning, noon, and eve.

To God will I direct my cry
And He will make my needs His care;
I trust Him still, though in my _____
No answer yet has brought relief;
With hands stretched out through all the night,
Uncomforted I _____ for light.

Bow down Thy ear, O Lord, and hear,
For I am _____ and great my need;
Preserve my soul, for Thee I fear;
O God, Thy trusting servant heed.

O Lord, make haste to hear my cry,
To Thee I call, on Thee rely;
Incline to me a gracious ear,
And, when I call, in _____ hear.

Lord, the God of my salvation,
Day and night I _____ to Thee;
Let my prayer now find acceptance,
In Thy mercy _____ me.

To God for help will I repair,
To God will I direct my _____,
And surely He will answer me,
His great salvation I shall see.

To Thee, O Lord, I _____ cry,
To Thee my supplication make,
To Thee I bring my sad complaint,
To Thee my bitter grief I take.

To God my earnest _____ I raise,
To God my voice imploring prays;
Before His face my grief I show
And tell my _____ and my woe.

Unscramble the words.

2. “And they helped David against the band of the _____ (vesorr): for they were all mighty men of valour, and were captains in the host” (1 Chronicles 12).

3. “Then _____ (maec) she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me” (Matthew 15).

4. "And oftentimes it hath cast him into the _____ (erfi), and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us" (Mark 9).

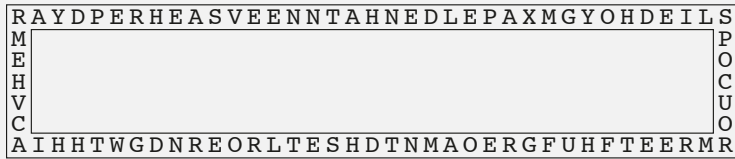
5. "And they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to _____ (skni)" (Luke 5).

6. "And a _____ (snivoi) appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us" (Acts 16).

7. "But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? _____ (dib) her therefore that she help me" (Luke 10).

For the Older Children

Hidden in the border of letters below are two texts. Find them by starting at the correct letter and then reading every second letter, going in a clockwise direction. If you start at the right letter, you will be able to read the first text. The remaining letters spell the second text.



8. _____

9. _____

_____ r t h.

Fill in the blanks

10. "Give us help from trouble: for _____ is the help of man" (look in Psalms 55-70).

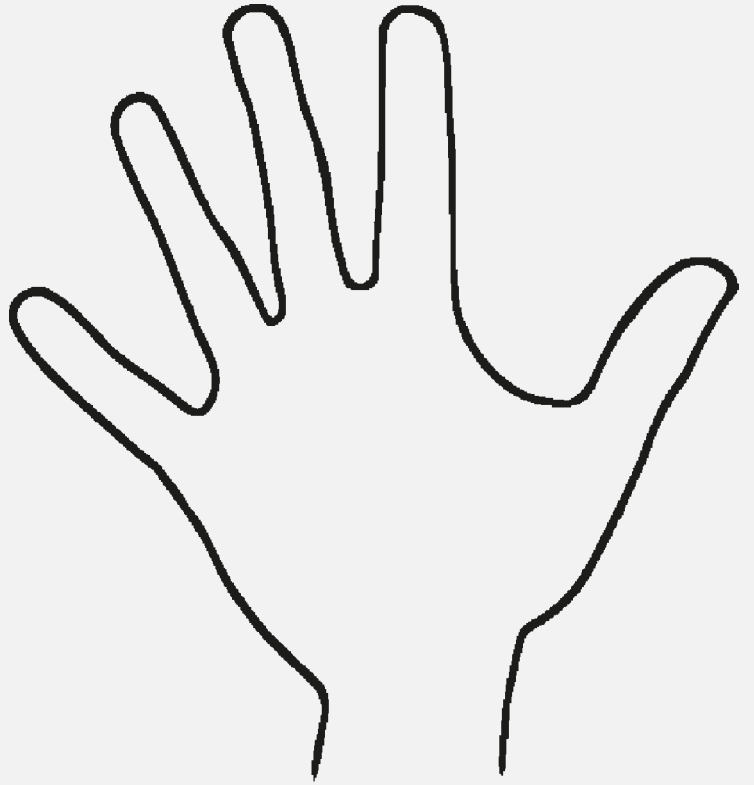
11. "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose _____ is in the LORD his God" (look in Psalms 135-150).

12. "For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will _____ thee" (look in Isaiah 35-45).

For the Younger Children

Fold a sheet of paper in half and then in half again. Trace or copy the hand onto the front of the folded paper. Make sure that the thumb and pinkie touch the folded edge on each side. Cut it out so that all the layers of paper are being cut but the hands stay

connected like a chain. On each hand, write in marker something you can do to help someone. On the last hand, write the words of Luke 6:31. Then color each hand a different color with crayons and hang it up.



* * * * *

Answers to July's "Birds of Prey" quiz:

- 1. Wings Job 39:26
- 2. Cuckow Leviticus 11:16
- 3. Branch Ezekiel 17:1-3
- 4. Bare Exodus 19:4
- 5. Ospray Leviticus 11:13
- 6. Pelican Deuteronomy 14:17
- 7. Swift Deuteronomy 18:49
- 8. Fluttereth Deuteronomy 32:11
- 9. Swifter 2 Samuel 1:23
- 10. Prey Job 9:26
- 11. Nest Job 39:27
- 12. Youth Psalm 103:5
- 13. Heaven Proverbs 23:5
- 14. Raven, Eagle
- 15. Owl, Night hawk, Cuckow, Hawk
- 16. Little owl, Cormorant, Great owl
- 17. Screech owl
- 18. Great owl, vulture
- 19. Cormorant, Bittern, owl, raven
- 20. Isaiah 40:31
- 21. Eagles 25. Owls
- 22. Eagle 26. Pelican
- 23. Eagle 27. Owls
- 24. Eagles 28. Owls

Answers to previous quizzes were received in June from:

Jenina Blom 22
Lawrence Blom 16
Martena Blom (2) 26
Willem Blom 14
Carly Brouwer 3
Derek Brouwer 21
Thomas Brouwer 11
Nathaniel DeKorne 1
Kylie DeVisser (3) 4
Cody Driesen 23
Kacie Driesen 19
Toby Driesen 23
Lindsey Driesse 6
Kaylynn Ekema 24
Weston Ekema (2) 12
Kari Groen
Kurtis Groen
Kate Hoogendoorn 12
Jack Kamp 1
Autumn Kegel (3) 7
Sophia Kegel (3) 7

Anthony Knibbe 9
Ashley Knibbe 22
Caylea Knibbe 22
Courtney Knibbe 22
Jarynne Knibbe (2) 20
Lindsey Knibbe 22
Meredy Knibbe 3
Sienna Knibbe (2) 14
Whitney Knibbe 22
Marlisa Korevaar (2) 13
Rebekah Korevaar (2) 13
Rebecca Krygsman 23
Sarah Krygsman 25
Cody Maassen 7
Lydia Mol 13
Madeline Mol 11
Olivia Mol 15
Teddy Mol 13
John Murphy (2) 16
Blake Pannekoek
Lauren Pannekoek (2)

Andrew Remijn (2) 17
Lauren Remijn (2) 13
Averie Renner 1
Logan Rozeboom 19
Mindy Rozeboom 20
Erica Schortzman 3
Carlyn Stubbe
Marla Stubbe
Colin Ten Hove 16
Hannah-Jo Ten Hove 3
Aaliya Timmer
Drake Timmer
Ashton Timmermans 6
Austin Van Den Top (2) 8
Caleb Van Den Top (2) 8
Collin Van Den Top (2) 8
Maurice Van Garderen 20
Emmalyn Van Garderen 20
Lydia Van Manen (2) 25
Rosalee Van Manen (2) 23
Kaiven Van Middendorp 23

Konner Van Middendorp 23
Taylina van Wingerden
Alivia Vande Hoef 25
Micah Vande Hoef 20
Wyatt Vande Waerd 9
Jayden Weeda
Anthony Wessels (3) 21
Johanna Wessels (2) 24
Heidi Ymker 21
Julia Ymker 6
Lane Ymker 2

Lauren Ymker 6
Paxton Ymker 14
Quentin Ymker 11

**15 Bibles were sent to
Bolivia this month.
The total is 405!**

Please send your answers to the
address shown below:

Aunt LenaBeth
180 Jacobs Road, Newfoundland, NJ 07435
E-mail: auntlenabeth@gmail.com



Letters to My Young Readers

Averie Renners

Welcome to our quiz pages, Averie. I hope you will continue to enjoy doing the puzzles. Are you having a good summer? Can you tell me more about grading in 4-H? That sounds interesting. Yes, the best day of the week should be Sunday, shouldn't it? It is such a blessing that we may hear God's Word. Ask the Lord often if He will place it in your heart. You asked me what I like to do and if I do anything that is fun—besides the regular things a mom does. One of the extra things I'm always happy to do when I have time for it is taking care of my chickens and my garden. I also helped in school this year and enjoyed that very much. Do you like school?

Welcome to our new members:
Jack Kamp and Averie Renners.

Love,
Aunt LenaBeth



■ The Banner of Truth in Audio Format

Monthly copies of the articles which appear in *The Banner of Truth* are available on MP3s and CDs for those who have reading difficulties such as poor vision. These MP3 files are produced by a committee in Norwich, Ontario, with the support of the Norwich consistory, and they make the MP3 files available to the consistories of the end user. Consistories then distribute the MP3s and CDs which are provided at no cost to the end user.

You may contact Mrs. Tillie Lamain at 616-242-0291 or blamain@netscape.net to arrange for a free subscription or discontinue receiving *The Banner of Truth* on CD.

News & Announcements

Ministerial Calls

Extended:

To Rev. J.M.D. de Heer of Middelburg Center, the Netherlands, by the congregation of Corsica, South Dakota.

To Rev. H. Hofman of Kalamazoo, Michigan, by the congregation of Lethbridge, Alberta.

To Rev. B.J. van Boven of De Valk-Wekerom, the Netherlands, by the congregation of Brant County (Bethel), Ontario.

Declined:

By Rev. J.M.D. de Heer of Middelburg Center, the Netherlands, to the congregations of Grand Rapids (Beckwith), Michigan, and Corsica, South Dakota.

By Rev. H. Hofman of Kalamazoo, Michigan, to the congregation of Lethbridge, Alberta.

Obituaries

DIBBET, Jacob, Jr. "Jack" – Age 89, July 5, 2021; Rock Valley, Iowa; Wife – Priscilla (nee Van Voorst) (deceased); Children – daughter-in-law Gloria & Gary Teunissen, daughters Darla & Dan Lais, Julie & Ralph Van Zweden; 10 grandchildren, 19 great-grandchildren, 1 great-great grandchild; Sister – Arlene Hoogendoorn; Sister-in-law – Henrietta "Girlie" Dibbet; predeceased by son Rodney, brothers John and Richard, and sisters Alice (Van Voorst), Gertrude (Draayer) and Joan (Maassen). (Rev. H. Hofman, Proverbs 30:26.)

HEGEMAN, Gertrude "Truus" (nee Van Wingerden) – Age 99, June 12, 2021; Lynden, Washington; Husband – Rev. C. Hegeman (deceased); Children – Johan & Hanneke Hegeman, Lona Hegeman, Trudy Hegeman, Neal & Sandy Hegeman, Benjamin & Christine Hegeman; 11 grandchildren, 27 great-grandchildren; Siblings – Jennie Van Vugt, Christine de Groot, Case Van Wingerden, John Van Wingerden, Arie Van Wingerden, William Van Wingerden, Abraham Van Wingerden; predeceased by sister Cornelia and brothers Art and Leonard. (Rev. J. den Hoed, Psalm 37:18.)

VANDE STOUWE, Margaret (nee Vande Hoef) – Age 94, June 17, 2021; Rock Valley, Iowa; Husband – Jake (deceased); Children – Sandra & Loren De Jager; Greg & Eleanor Vande Stouwe; 7 grandchildren, 13 great-grandchildren, 1 great-great grandchild; Sisters – Jeanette Van Kekerix & Henrietta Van Beek; Brothers- and sisters-in-law – Gert Vande Stouwe, Gerrit & Lois Vande Stouwe, Clarence & Faye Vande Stouwe; predeceased

by 3 brothers, 2 sisters, 5 brothers-in-law, 3 sisters-in-law. (Rev. J.J. Witvoet, Isaiah 9:2.)

In Memoriam

With profound sadness we have taken notice of the passing away of

Mrs. Gertrude Hegeman
(nee Van Wingerden)

beloved wife of our first pastor,
Rev. Cornelis Hegeman,
who served us from 1966-1970.

Together they both mean much
for our congregation.

May the Lord comfort the mourning
family and may He sanctify this calling
to all of our hearts

Members of the NRC Markham
June 20, 2021

In Memoriam

Mr. Jacob (Jack) Dibbet

On July 5, 2021, it pleased the Lord to take away from his family and the congregation of Sioux Center, Iowa, Mr. Jacob Dibbet at the age of eighty-nine years. He served the congregation as deacon for twenty years. He left behind many relatives and friends.

— *The Sioux Center NRC Consistory*

50th Wedding Anniversary

The Lord willing,
our dear parents and grandparents,

Tony & Ina Kardux

hope to celebrate
their 50th wedding anniversary
on July 27, 2021.

*"Seek the LORD, and His strength:
seek His face evermore"*
(Psalm 105:4—their wedding text).

9984 Killarney Drive,
Chilliwack BC V2P 5P4

50th Wedding Anniversary

On September 25, 2021
our dear parents, grandparents,
and great-grandparents,

Richard & Gertrude Nieuwenhuis

hope to celebrate their
50th wedding anniversary.

*"O LORD our Lord, how excellent is
Thy name in all the earth! who has set
Thy glory above the heavens.
What is man, that Thou art mindful of him?
and the son of man, that Thou visitest him?"*
(Psalm 8:1&4).

231 County Rt. 519, Belvidere, NJ 07823

Education

CALVIN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, COAL-HURST, ALBERTA, invites applications from teachers of any grade or subject specialty for the 2021-2022 school year, D.V. We anticipate several vacancies and would be thankful to hear from versatile and dedicated applicants to enable continued provision of Christian education to our children and young people. All applicants must be members of the NRC or a closely related denomination, and must be eligible for Alberta certification. For more information about any position at CCS, please contact the principal, Mr. Marc Slingerland at 403-381-3030 or marc.slingerland@ccschool.ca. Should the Lord incline your heart to apply, please submit a cover letter, resumé or c.v., and references to office@ccschool.ca.

EBENEZER CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, SHEBOYGAN, WISCONSIN, is in urgent need of a teacher for the 2021-2022 school year. We have a very small, multigrade classroom school. Certification is not required for this position although it would be helpful. Currently, the school board acts as principal with further oversight by the consistory. May this position and our need be bound upon someone's heart to come over and help us. Any questions regarding this position and all interested applicants, please contact Randal Teunissen at 920-828-0225 or e-mail, rdteunissen@yahoo.com.

Anniversary and other announcements will be placed upon request. A donation for their placement would be appreciated. For consistency, size is limited. Please send your request to the managing editor, James Okken, whose address is shown inside the front cover. Requests for placement should be made **by the first of the month prior to the month of publication.**

MOUNT CHEAM CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, CHILLIWACK, BRITISH COLUMBIA, anticipates an URGENT NEED for the next school year with multiple openings for teachers both in elementary and secondary. Applicants must hold or be eligible for BC certification, and subscribe to the faith identity of the MCCS Society and the Reformed Congregations in North America, which is based on the KJV and the Three Forms of Unity. Wages vary depending upon experience and post-secondary education. Inquiries should be addressed to principal, Mr. Jan Neels, at jneels@mccs.ca. Please send your application, along with supporting documentation, to Mr. Jan Neels and to the Board secretary, Mr. Eric Van Maren, at ericv@vanmarengroup.com, or mail it to 48988 Yale Road East, Chilliwack, British Columbia V4Z 0B2.

NETHERLANDS REFORMED CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, POMPTON PLAINS, NEW JERSEY.

TEACHERS NEEDED

We have openings in both elementary and junior high grades for the 2021-22 school year. Qualified applicants require a teaching degree and an earnest interest in teaching in a Christian school and are a member in good standing of one of Netherlands Reformed congregations or a denomination with similar teachings.

ADMINISTRATOR NEEDED

The school administrator will strive to direct the school according to the Word of God, the Three Forms of Unity, the Constitution of the Netherlands Reformed Christian School, the policies of the NRC School Board, and the regulations of the New Jersey Department of Education. The primary duty of the administrator is to maintain productive relations with the school board, students, faculty and staff, parents and community.

For more information or to apply, please contact Tim Mol (education chairman) at 973-204-5677 or email tjmol@yahoo.com, or John Van Der Brink (administrator) at 973-628-7400 email nrcs_office@nrcsnj.org.

NETHERLANDS REFORMED CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, ROCK VALLEY/SIOUX CENTER, IOWA, has openings for the 2021-2022 school year in elementary classrooms, special education, and secondary science, Language Arts, and/or computer technology. We are also seeking a music teacher to begin at any time. The focus of this position would be instrumental (grades 5-12 band/orchestra) along with other opportunities in K-12 music. Full or part time inquiries encouraged. Please contact the principal, Mr. Daniel Breuer, at 712-476-2821 or danbreuer@nrcsia.org for further information. Visit www.nrcsia.org to learn more about our school. Log in to the main site by registering as a new user and wait for approval.

PLYMOUTH CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN, a K-12 NRC school, is accepting applications for a high school English teacher for the 2021-2022 school year. Interested applicants should contact the principal, Mr. Nathan Bleeker, email nbleeker@plymouthchristian.us or phone 616-458-4367, to request an application or to ask questions about the position.

PROVIDENCE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN, invites inquiries from teachers interested in teaching in our small K-9 school. We presently have an opening at the elementary level. Please contact our principal, Tom Kwekel, at tkwekel@psckzoo.com or 616-644-2661 for more information.

REHOBOTH CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, NORWICH, ONTARIO, is looking for a Director of School Operations. The director is the chief executive officer and educational leader of our school. He will strive to direct the school according to the mission, vision, and guiding principles of our Christian school, relying on the Word of God, the Three Forms of Unity, and the policies and procedures of RCS.

The director reports to Board of Rehoboth Christian School. Primary duties are:

- **Leadership**—The director administers the school internally through principals, vice-principals, curriculum co-ordinators and the office team.
- **Instruction and Curriculum**—The director is responsible for the implementation of the school's educational program.
- **Personnel**—The director is responsible for the supervision of all RCS personnel.
- **Students**: Along with the administration, the director is responsible for the education, safety and conduct of the students of RCS.
- **Operations**—The director provides oversight of all school operations, including the following of board policies and directives.
- **Communication**—The director represents RCS within our local community and to the public.

The successful applicant shall have the following qualifications:

- NRC male member in good standing with a solid knowledge of the Scriptures and Reformed doctrines.
- A strong desire for the spiritual and temporal welfare of our students.
- Good written and verbal communication skills.
- Strong management skills.
- An educational degree is strongly preferred, but not necessary for this position.

For more information, or to apply for this position, please email schoolboard@rcsnorwich.com or contact the RCS board president, Evert Veldhuizen, at 519-537-1139.

We are welcoming applications for the 2021-22 school year and have several openings at the elementary and secondary levels. We also invite inquiries about our locally developed

teaching training program for those who hold a bachelor's degree. Please visit our website at www.rcsnorwich.com for more detailed information or contact the director, Mr. John Heikoop, at director@rcsnorwich.com or 519-863-2403 ext. 223. Submit cover letters and resumes to hr@rcsnorwich.com.

TIMOTHY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, CHILLIWACK, BRITISH COLUMBIA, is seeking British Columbia certifiable elementary teachers who are interested in joining us in a motivating and exciting elementary learning environment. We present an interesting curriculum that focuses on knowing, doing, and understanding while including self-assessment strategies for learners. Teaching this curriculum through a Christian worldview requires teachers who thrive in a dynamic educational environment where they work together with a unified goal and purpose—education of the whole child as the Lord requires. If you are interested in joining us and are a member of a conservative Reformed denomination, please contact the principal, Mr. Doug Stam, at dstam@timothychristian.ca or 604-794-7114 for more information and an application package.

TRINITY REFORMED CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, SUNNYSIDE, WASHINGTON, welcomes applications for a teacher/administrator for our small school. We are an approved school for grades K-8 but currently have students in the lower grades. We have a four-day school week to allow for adequate preparation and administrative time for our multi-grade classroom. To apply or request more information, please contact the school board president, Mr. Arthur den Hoed, at 509-786-2354 or email artdenhoed@gmail.com, or Maaiké Van Wingerden at 509-840-0437 or email trinityrcs@embarqmail.com.

Come 2 Carterton, New Zealand **PONATAHI CHRISTIAN SCHOOL**

Our long-standing principal is nearing his retirement and is considering his future. We are seeking expressions of interest for a successor. Please check out the exciting information about our school, church, and local community by visiting our school website at www.ponatahi.school.nz (vacancies). For further information, please contact the Ponatahi Christian School Board of Trustees via email at come2carterton@gmail.com.

Please visit advertising.nrcea.education for an up-to-date listing of job openings in NRCEA schools as well as links to the school websites for more information about the positions and the schools. When accessing the job bank on the NRCEA SharePoint, please use the following:

User: advertising@nrcea.education
Password: **Schooljobs!**

“Who Is Able to Stand Before This Holy Lord God?”

(1 Samuel 6:20)

A portion of an application taken from *Contemplations* by Augustus Toplady (1740-1778)

And yet, before this holy Lord God, every soul must one day stand. “We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ,” says the apostle, “that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done.” In some sense, we may be said to stand before Him now: “He be not far from every one of us”; nay, “In Him we live, and move, and have our being.” The consequence of this is that there is no creature which is not manifest to His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes “of Him with whom we have to do.” With regard therefore to His own omniscience and omnipresence, we already stand before this holy Lord God. He is about our bed, and about our paths, and is acquainted with all our ways; nor is there a word in our tongue or a thought in our heart but He knows it altogether. “The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.”

I shall not detain the reader with considering on what occasion the men of Bethshemesh spoke the words of our text but only observe that the miraculous judgment inflicted on them for looking into the ark was that which gave rise to the above question, and made them cry out with trembling and astonishment, “Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God?” In whatever sense the words were meant by the speakers, they certainly contain a most momentous enquiry—an enquiry in which every soul of man is deeply concerned.

If the Lord God, before whom each individual will shortly stand, is a holy God, a God of truth and without iniquity, and of purer eyes than to behold sin with impunity, we may well ask, “Who is able to stand before Him?” “Who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth?” Appear He certainly will, and stand before Him we inevitably must. God only knows who shall be first summoned to do this; but, first or last, the citation will be sent to all. Health is a tender, precarious flower; life is a brittle, slender thread; how soon the one may wither, and the other break. He alone can tell who lent us both. This we know from Scripture only and from daily observation that all below is of uncertain tenure. We are no more than tenants at

will, removable at the pleasure of God, the great Proprietor of all.

Some are dismissed from life in the dawn of infancy, some in the morning of childhood, others in the noon of youth. The sands of some are continued longer, and a very few are permitted to see the night of what is generally called old age. Not a day, not an hour, no, not a minute passes wherein multitudes of all ages are not called away to stand before the holy Lord God. Death, that promiscuous reaper, pays no regard to years or station. The infant of a day and the man of a century are alike to *Him*; he mows the shooting blade and the mature stem; the growing and the grown unite to swell His harvest and augment His spoils. Is that which we term death the offspring of chance or the result of an accident? Surely not. Death is a scythe, but if I may so speak, it is a scythe in the hand of God. Affliction, sickness, and dissolution are messengers of His which come not but at His command. As King William used to say with regard to those that died in battle, that “every bullet has its billet,” or is directed by special Providence. So it may truly be said that every event has its commission from God and is the effect of at least His permissive will. Therefore, though with the regard to the act of dying itself—“All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath”—though good and bad must die, the grave being the house appointed for all living. Yet, we must be aware of thinking—because the holy and the wicked, the useful and the useless, seem to be taken away promiscuously, and without distinction—that therefore death is the effect of that unmeaning thing called chance, for both holy Scripture and sound reason join in supporting the assertion of the celebrated Mr. [Alexander] Pope:

*All nature is but art, unknown to thee;
All chance, direction, which thou canst not see.* □

A Song of Praise to God

To God the universal King,
Let all mankind their tribute bring;
All that have breath, your voices raise,
In songs of never-ceasing praise.

The spacious earth on which we tread,
And wider heavens stretched o'er our head,
A large and solemn temple frame
To celebrate its Builder's fame.

Here the bright sun that rules the day,
As through the sky he makes his way,
To all the world proclaims aloud
The boundless sovereignty of God.

When from his courts the sun retires,
And with the day his voice expires,
The moon and stars adopt the song,
And through the night the praise prolong.

The listening earth with rapture hears
The harmonious music of the spheres;
And all her tribes the notes repeat,
That God is wise, and good, and great.

But man, endowed with nobler powers,
His God in nobler strains adores;
His is the gift to know the song,
As well as sing with tuneful tongue.

—*Samuel Stennett*