

the **Banner** *of Truth*

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The Official Periodical
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United States and Canada

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of the Promised Messiah

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Meditation

Christmas

Rev. W.C. Lamain (1904-1984)

(Taken from the December 1988 issue of *The Banner of Truth*)

Christmas is properly called “The Feast of the Father,” for from eternity the Father ordained His Son to be Surety, Mediator, and Head of the Covenant of Grace. In Isaiah 42 the Son is called “The Servant of the Father.” From eternity He was in the bosom of the Father and coessential with the Father and the Holy Spirit. He thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but He took upon Him the form of a servant. It was His will to do the will of the Father. Not by compulsion but willingly He gave Himself, leaving His throne and His crown to come to this sin-cursed world in our human nature. It was necessary for Him to do this in order that in our human nature He might live, suffer, wage a holy war, die, and emerge victorious. That was the demand of God’s unimpeachable justice. In no other way could the violated justice of God be satisfied, and in no other way could God’s elect Church be delivered.

And now, “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” This love of the Father is beyond all comprehension; it is unfathomable. Because the Father loved Himself; therefore, He spared not His Son. Who can understand this wonder of wonders? It transcends all understanding.

After man broke the Covenant of Works, God Himself announced the Covenant of Grace which has its basis in the Covenant of Redemption. Already in the “mother promise” (Genesis 3:15) Christ was revealed. All the prophets prophesied concerning Him and His coming. They were filled with the Spirit of Christ, and the coming Messiah was the burden of their preaching.

When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law. In Bethlehem’s inn there was no room for Christ, so also, by nature, we have no room for Him in our heart or in our home. He was born in a stable to the end that He could be born in the heart of those people who have learned to say with Asaph in Psalm 73: “I was as a beast before Thee.” In a manger, serving as His cradle, Christ was laid down—He, who is God of God blessed forever. He became like unto us in all things, sin excepted. He became poor that He might bring riches to His people who possess nothing but sin, misery, and debt. He came to deliver them from sin, to restore them to full and blessed communion with God. Christ came into the world to save sinners.

No sinner is too old, none too young, none too hardened and none too miserable. Oh, no! He came from heaven to Bethlehem’s manger to reconcile enemies to God and to justify the ungodly. By His active and passive obedience,

He restored the luster to the virtues of God which we have violated, took away God’s wrath, turned Him away from the fierceness of His anger, and brought forth an eternal righteousness. Christ came to destroy the works of the devil, to purchase His Church, to gather her, to establish her, and one day to glorify her forever.

This, in short, is the real meaning of Christmas. It is above all else necessary that we experience Christmas in our heart. We must have knowledge of a personal union with Christ shall it be well with us for that great and all decisive eternity toward which each of us is traveling. Christ is the unspeakable gift of God. Only He can fill our empty heart. May this become the portion of each of us. This is the real Christmas.

When it pleases God to reveal His Son in us, then we not only will have no desire for the external and worldly observance of Christmas but we will detest and despise to the core all the showy glitter that accompanies the world’s observance of that day.

Then we shall not seek a Christmas tree but the Tree of Life that stands in the center of heaven. The fruit of that tree is precious, and if we possess that tree, then we have also the fruit. When we have Christ, we have all. The longing of our heart shall be to take that blessed Child of Bethlehem in our arms and to embrace Him as did Simeon at the temple. In eternity, before the foundation of the world, Christ embraced His Church when He received the elect from His Father as a reward for His mediatorial work.

Most blessed are they who, by the application of God the Holy Ghost, are given to spiritually embrace this Child by faith and so obtain an assurance of their portion in Him. There is still on earth a people, although few in number, who long for the moment when they are privileged to put their arms around Him in a blessed embrace. In that moment they can believe that for them, too, Christ came into the world. Nothing is more essential than knowing Christ. To know Him is life eternal. In that moment they extol Him as their supreme joy. Then, too, they experience a desire and a longing to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. They continue to desire more of Him. They are forever spoiled for the world. All that the world offers holds no interest for them; it cannot satisfy. The world passes away and the lust thereof, but they who have Christ for their portion have a treasure that ever increases in value.

In Christ, the children of God find all they need for life and salvation. They have moments when they can praise God for that “unspeakable gift of the Father.” For of Him,

through Him, and to Him are all things. They see in the Child of Bethlehem the incomprehensible love of the Father, the unfathomable love of the Son, and the transcending love of the Holy Ghost—a threefold cord that shall never be broken.

Truly, such a Christmas would be unforgettable. May God grant it to each of us for Christ's sake through the Holy Ghost. □



Bible Study

The Life of Moses (13)

Rev. C. Vogelaar, Clifton, NJ

“So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill” (Exodus 17:10).

The Lord had been so faithful to His people. He fed them with manna, and they did eat it for forty years until they came to a land inhabited. After God started to send manna, they journeyed “according to the commandment of the LORD, and pitched in Rephidim: and there was no water for the people to drink.” Then we see again how soon the people of Israel began to murmur against Moses but, actually, against the Lord. The people were even almost ready to stone Moses. However, again the Lord provided. Moses had to smite the rock in Horeb. He did so and water came out of it that the people might drink. The name of the place where this occurred, he called Massah and Meribah. The names mean, respectively, Massah—tempting; Meribah—quarreling. How sad that Israel so often rebelled against the Lord and His servant.

A treacherous enemy

Israel had said, “Is the LORD among us, or not?” God had proven that He knew their condition. We read in verse 8, “Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim.” Amalek was the grandson of Esau, and now his descendants treacherously attacked the traveling people in the wilderness. We read about Amalek in Deuteronomy 25:18a, “How he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary.” Amalek chose to attack those who were walking at the end of the long procession of Israelites—the older people and women with their children—attacking those that were tired and weak. Amalek showed the enmity that was already seen in the conflict between Esau and Jacob.

In spiritual warfare, the devil often also attacks the wilderness travelers, God's people, when they are tired and weak. He knows their weakest places. For one that may be money, for the other honor or lust, and for yet another a tendency to be soon downhearted. It has been expressed that “the adversary is a student of six thousand years,” and

he has studied mankind long enough to know where to attack him.

How remarkable it is that Exodus 17:8 begins with the word “Then”—it was when God had delivered them and removed an impossibility for them. The wilderness is not a land of rest, and when one does not expect it, suddenly, or in a subtle way, the enemy assaults them.

Then Moses gave a command to Joshua to choose men “and go out, fight with Amalek.” Joshua did as Moses had told him.

A fierce war

Joshua had to be in the valley at the head of these people to fight the enemy. However, Moses, Aaron, and Hur “went up to the top of the hill.” There Moses had to stand with the rod of God in his hand. Down the hill a fierce battle took place. Joshua was the captain; his name meant, “The LORD's salvation.” Sometimes, Israel prevailed, but, at other times, Amalek seemed to gain the victory. There was a battle at the bottom the hill but also a struggle on the top of the hill. Moses had the rod of God in his hand and had to hold it up with his hand; as long as he could do this, Israel seemed to prevail, but “when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.”

If we truly are a wilderness traveler, we must expect mighty opposition. Jehoshaphat said, “For we have no might against this great company that cometh against us.” Thus, it is experienced by those warriors who have to contend with three mortal enemies—the devil, the world, and, also, their own flesh. We read of this warfare in Ephesians 6:12, “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” How will weak creatures ever be able to stand in such a warfare? In verse 13 the apostle points to the armor they need, “Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.” The apostle then describes this armor. There is the breastplate of righteousness, there is the shield of faith, and there is the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. It is

the Holy Spirit who enables the weak struggler to be able to stand in this warfare.

Moses had the rod of God in his hand—why was that? The rod was a reminder of the wonders God had wrought. For instance, there was the miracle by the Red Sea, when a path was made through the water. It was as if Moses' uplifted hand showed the rod to remind the Lord of what He had done for His people and to their enemies. The Lord does not forget what He has done, but a needy supplicant may sometimes point the Lord to what He has spoken and has done in the past. "God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: hath He said, and shall He not do it?" Balaam said this in Numbers 23:19a. The Lord will give deliverance even if the battle is fierce and the enemies are mighty.

Aaron and Hur

When Moses' hands were heavy and he let them down, the battle did not go well for Israel. However, the Lord provided support in the fierce struggle on the hill. We read in verse 12b, "And Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands." They placed a stone for a seat so that Moses could sit down, and they held up his arms. It is a blessing when the Lord gives Aarons and Hurs to His servants and to all who at times have to carry heavy burdens. God's servants and people are so weak in themselves that it often looks like the enemy will certainly have the victory. Aarons and Hurs who may feel these burdens may carry them up on the wings of prayer before the throne of God. However, the greatest wonder is that there is One who fights the battle for them. He has obtained the victory on Golgotha; He is mightier than the fiercest enemies and can deliver in the most dangerous situations.

Moses' hands now "were steady until the going down of the sun," that is, until the battle was finished. Christ will never cease to pray, to intercede for His weak and fearful people. His prayer is not just pleading but He has a right to a favorable answer. He prayed for Peter that in the hour of temptation his faith would not cease, and so Peter was kept even after his sad denial.

A final victory

The battle may seem to be endless and the outcome from our side very uncertain. However, the Lord will preserve His own work, and the enemy will not have the victory. We read in verse 13, "And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword." It was a long day of a fierce struggle, but God did not let His people perish by the sword of Amalek. He still will not do this with His undeserving people although they often grieve Him. The poet sang in Psalm 3:3, "But Thou, O LORD, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head."

Moses then built an altar and called the name of it, Jehovahnissi, that is, "The Lord is my Banner." God has sworn that He will continue His fight for them. In Him alone, those who know the true warfare will be more than conquerors. Christ, the greater Joshua, is also on the battlefield today. The Church is sometimes driven into a narrow corner. We may wonder what the future will bring, but He will safely lead His Church into the promised land, the heavenly Canaan. Therefore, we read in Psalm 4:8b, "For Thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety." How true it is! Blessed are they who put their trust in Him. ◻

(To be continued)



A Word in Season

At the Close of 1949

Rev. W.C. Lamain (1904-1984)

(A letter written at the end of 1949)

Beloved Friends:

At the end of this year, we together may well declare: "It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not" (Lamentations 3:22). May deep humility fill our hearts. In the course of this year, several members from among us have been removed by death. They began the journey of twelve months with us but have not finished the journey. The moment, determined in God's eternal counsel that they would exchange time for

eternity, had arrived and, therefore, soul and body were separated, but also a separation took place from those who were near and dear unto them on earth. Some of them were privileged to testify in their life of the hope that was in them, and others we have to leave for the most high Judge, who surely shall do right. This is certain and true, indeed: "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord" and "That servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes."

In these closing days and hours of the year, may God especially remember the mourning families. We commit you to God in all your wants and sorrows. May God fill the vacant places with Himself. To that end He is the mighty One and the Almighty. The All-sufficient and most blessed God can make all things well with Himself. Like a father, the LORD pitieth them that fear Him (Psalm 103:13). Also, as one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you, saith the Lord in Isaiah 66:13a.

May God also remember the aged in our midst. Some of them have been visited with sicknesses; others were brought nigh unto death's door. Several of our members, including some baptized members, had to be taken to the hospital. How many we have visited there, spoken and prayed with them! Most of them were raised from their sickbeds and were permitted, through the good hand of God over them, to recover. Oh, how great has been the care which God has bestowed on us and our children in the year which is almost past.

God did yet bear us and spare us, also for and with each other. This year the Lord gave health, desire, and strength that we might serve you and proclaim unto you, in the name of the Lord, the everlasting gospel. Truly, God's mercies are great and manifold. Oh, that we together might receive a heart from the Lord to fear Him, and in true humility bow before Him in the dust.

God has not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. Great is His faithfulness, yea, it is new every morning. He daily comes into our lives to step in bounties freely given. Outwardly, he caused us to be short of nothing, and, inwardly, the Lord has sent unto us numerous calls and spent much labor of love for our souls' good. Should we be summoned to appear before God's tribunal we cannot answer Him one of a thousand. God is free of our blood in virtue of Creation, but He also made Himself free in virtue of the sending of His Son in the flesh, whose blessed advent in the world we were privileged to commemorate again last week.

Of Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon, we read in Daniel 4:29, that at the end of twelve months he walked upon the balcony of his palace. He also proudly celebrated New Year's Eve, but, alas, in such a tragic manner.

May both young and old stop and consider in the closing hours of this year. May God Himself bring us to a standstill.

Children, God did not cut short your life. Your parents took you along to the house of God. You received instruction at school and catechism. Also, in this year God did take away some children by death, and many thousands and tens of thousands grew up without God's Word. That you may learn to seek the Lord in the days of your youth. He Himself has declared, "Those that seek Me early shall find Me" (Proverbs 8).

Boys and girls, God also prolonged your life, and spent many labors upon you. Many were the words that we were permitted to direct to you and speak with you at catechism regarding that one thing which, also for young people, is indispensable in order one day to be prepared to meet God. Oh, consider that one day you must give account of this to God. I beseech you, this last day of the year, forsake the foolish and live; go in the way of peace and understanding. Next year may well be the year of your death, and then to have to appear before God unprepared and unreconciled!

What a dreadful thing it will be! May God also remember our young men in the service of this country, protecting and converting them.

Fathers and mothers, men and women, old people, it is yet the acceptable time, the precious day of salvation. Harden not your

heart, but come and heed His voice today; He safely leads us in the way. Oh, there are moments when my soul cries in secret for you unto God. We are approaching such an awful eternity. May God yet convert you and magnify His grace in Christ Jesus.

If there are souls among us in bondage, may God yet loosen their bonds and set them at liberty. May He do wonders in the midst of us. The sick and indisposed, who are deprived of attending the house of God, and some who have been unable to leave their homes for many years, may you be visited by the Dayspring from on high. People of the Lord, once it shall become the final Old Year's Day and night. May your soul, united with Christ by faith, look forward to that day of deliverance. May God purge away all our iniquities in the blood of the Lamb, and may He preserve our going out and our coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore. Amen. □

Your well-wishing servant,
Rev. W.C. Lamain

Should we be summoned to appear before God's tribunal we cannot answer Him one of a thousand. God is free of our blood in virtue of Creation, but He also made Himself free in virtue of the sending of His Son in the flesh...

Whatsoever we have over-loved, idolized, and leaned upon, God has from time to time broken it and made us to see the vanity of it so that we find the readiest course to be rid of our comforts is to set our hearts inordinately upon them.

—John Flavel



From Our Inheritance

Rejoicing at the Coming of the Promised Messiah

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

(Taken from the November 1985 issue of *The Banner of Truth*)

“And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation” (Isaiah 25:9).

Confession full of joy

This chapter is a rich chapter as Isaiah may see what will happen in the future. The Lord will do great miracles in destroying the enemies and delivering Israel from Babel. Isaiah may testify of this future: “And in this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined” (verse 6). This points to deliverance from Babel but also to the coming of Christ, which is true deliverance. It is a blessing for Israel when they may return to the Promised Land, but it is a greater blessing that we can return to communion with God. For this reason, Christ had to come, to merit salvation for the Church. There would be great joy when Christ comes. This would become reality when He is born in the manger, and many will say: “And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God.”

Who dares to speak with such freedom? This is the people mentioned before who received the great blessing to take part in the feast of deliverance. Now they may confess with joy, “Lo, this is our God.” It means to be for His account since He called and visited them. “Our God” because the Holy Spirit worked in them true saving grace.

This divinity of the Mediator is of the greatest importance; otherwise, He could not be the Surety and Deliverer. As God, He could fulfill the Father’s requirements; He could bear the wrath of God; He could bruise the head of Satan and overcome all enemies.

It is not enough to confess, “We have waited for Him,” but it must also be an instruction from the Lord Himself. As the Old Testament church was waiting for Christ, likewise, it can be in the life of God’s child. When God works this new life, Christ is hidden for the sinner; he learns that he has sinned against God. Christ is made known in the further way of discovery. How does this happen? It is impossible for the human race to deliver themselves by the works of the law. This is experienced by discovered sinners who are stopped on their path of destruction. They receive knowledge of God and of themselves. They have not a slavish fear but a filial fear. Such convicted persons become unhappy, miss God, cry after God, and their soul thirsts for God. All their works, intentions, and promises do not help, for they are all

imperfect before God. God’s justice requires perfect satisfaction.

Tears may give relief, but they do not give deliverance. It becomes more and more impossible to be saved, and in this they must justify the Lord. This you will never find in the hypocrite. God’s people are convinced that the Lord would be righteous to punish them and even to cast them away forever. When we are truly brought to this place by Word and Spirit, then condemnable sinners will hear of a way of deliverance in Christ Jesus. When there is no way anymore, Christ is revealed as the Way. It becomes such a wonder that Christ is given by the Father. Then they may feast. Think of Zachariah and Elisabeth, Mary and the shepherds, Simeon and Anna at the birth of Christ.

It is likewise the desire of the Church to possess Him. Some of them often have doubts: Was it God’s work in their heart or was it of themselves? They long for the assurance to be for His account. This happens at God’s time and in God’s way, which is always different from our way.

Waiting in submission

The great deliverance which is mentioned must yet be fulfilled in the life of Israel. Isaiah speaks of submissive waiting, “We have waited for Him, and He will save us.” By nature, we do not wait for the Lord. The world, its honor, and vain pleasures are more important. So, we miss the only comfort in life and death.

Isaiah says, “We have waited for Him.” This is the longing of all believers when they have seen death in the world, in sin, and in everything outside of Christ. Nothing can be compared with Him. However, as it was a long time before the promised Messiah was born, it can be a long time for the Church. Between the promise and the fulfilment there is often a long time of waiting. First the soul is given a longing, which is a time of trial, as we can see in the life of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and Jeremiah. It is the same with the Church. That time of waiting is often so difficult. It seems there is no deliverance from debt, sin, and bonds; it seems as if it is getting worse in their life instead of better. This does not mean it is always dark because there are moments when the Lord gives his blessing and strengthens their faith. As in former days sailors directed their ships in the dark night by the stars, so the waiting soul has stars of hope and expectation, according to the pleasure of the Lord.

Do we know such waiting in our life? What grief does it give when we learn that our works are insufficient and our arms too short to embrace Christ. We must lose everything outside of Christ: our choice, our conversion, etc.; not as a

friend, but as an enemy we must be saved. We may have many foundations in ourselves, but they are not grounds. The promise is not the same as the Promiser. Only Christ's righteousness can save from death. Fruit is sweet, but it is not the Person. The Holy Spirit teaches that God's justice requires satisfaction. Christ becomes indispensable, for an angel stands before the entrance of Paradise. How much the necessity is felt that the greater Boaz spread his skirt over us: "Be merciful to me a sinner." "He will save us," is the advent expectation of the Church of God.

Rejoicing by faith

Isaiah could say, "We have waited for Him, and He will save us." Righteousness before God is not in us, but there is hope for the self-condemned in Christ. Think of the men of Emmaus. As the Lord Jesus explained the mystery of salvation to them, their hearts began to burn within them and then, totally at an end with themselves, they hear the truth out of Christ's mouth.

This also becomes the experience of the Church. God takes all foundations away; then, when we may accept the punishment of our unrighteousness and may justify the

Lord even if we are cast away, deliverance is near. "Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom." This is not because we bowed before the justice of God but because Christ gave perfect satisfaction which is applied to the heart, and it is for this reason that the Father acquits the sinner. "We will be glad and rejoice in His salvation."

Already under the Old Testament this joy was tasted. Today, many miss the faith of which Isaiah speaks. Then we are missing that which we need to live and die happily. It is still the time of grace. Labor not for the bread which does not satisfy. The end will be condemnation for all who have not knowledge neither of their misery nor of the coming Messiah of which Isaiah has spoken. Now He has come, and by Him we can be saved.

Salvation is God's work from the beginning to the end. He made the plan from eternity, Christ merited it in the fullness of time, and it is applied by the Spirit. How great is the joy when that precious Mediator is revealed in His willingness in our lives because in Christ, the Child of Bethlehem, we can find everything for time and eternity! Then Advent becomes Christmas. □



Reflections

Jacob: The Experience of a Dying Man (3)

Rev. J. den Hoed, Lynden, WA

"I have waited for Thy salvation, O LORD" (Genesis 49:18).

The deathbed of the man we write about is far away from the Promised Land, the land where his forefathers lived and are buried. His deathbed stands in the land of Egypt. We visit the deathbed of a patriarch; his name is Jacob. He is now one hundred forty-seven years old. He came to Egypt when he was one hundred thirty years old. Standing in the presence of Pharaoh, he said, "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been." When we are honest, is that the same with us? We have been young and now are old. We look back to see what the journey has been. The things of the world fade away, and one question remains; the way to Above—is that way open for me? Do we have in our heart what Jacob carried in his heart, "I have waited for Thy salvation, O LORD"? What a wonder when having come to the end of life's journey one may look up, saying, Lord, I am waiting for Thy salvation. Sometimes God's children may say that, "Lord, I am waiting for Thy salvation to bring me home to the place where I will never sin anymore, a place where I may be with the Lord and thank my Saviour forever and ever."

Lying on his deathbed, Jacob is far from his earthly home but near to his heavenly home. For one coming near to the end of his earthly journey that is most important—not what we have in the world but what we may have with the Lord. As Jacob lies there, he is near to his eternal home. When he lifts his hungering eyes, he may know in his heart that there is a Saviour who sought and saved him. It was at Bethel where he saw that Saviour. It was at Peniel that he held onto that Saviour and felt Him pressed in and unto his heart. Now the time has come for him to leave the world, and the Lord will not put him to shame.

When he looks up, he is filled with a deep wonder; he calls it "Thy salvation," that is a salvation thought out in the stillness of eternity. There is the Holy Father; He has loved those people with an unending love. He has chosen those people to be a people who may one day love the Father with that same unending love. There is the Son who said, "Father, send Me to obtain that salvation," and when He came, He deeply humbled Himself; He assumed a human nature so that He could pay the price which would satisfy His Father's justice. That was the price of blood; in that blood there is a hiding place for a lost and ruined sinner.

Then the Holy Spirit could come, by Word and Spirit, to deeply fallen sinners, enemies of God, who may be stopped and brought upon the way where the blood of Christ has been.

Here, a man coming to the end of a troubled life may lift his eyes and see a wonder of God's grace. Here a dying man may cling to the word of God and say, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The wonder is that in one free, sovereign way these people are sought and saved and brought to these riches. Then, these people mostly become beggars. In every aspect of this new life, the Lord will again and again bring His people back to a beggar's place. Yet, remember God loves a beggar. That is why David said, "I wait for the LORD." Dear reader, what a wonder when we may belong to these waiting people. In the end they will not be ashamed, but He their faithful Saviour will bring them home to a place where they may always be with the Lord.

Come, we may stand around the deathbed of a dying child of God. When he was young, the most important day in his life was when the Lord gave him a Bethel. What is the instruction here? It is a great wonder and a great blessing when in our young life we may be converted. See this man as middle aged—how many struggles, how many sorrows were placed as roadblocks along his way. He was a man

who could cling to the Lord and say, "Lord, I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me." What is the instruction here? That this life is full of struggles and sorrows which the Lord places upon our way. May they be roadblocks where we have to stop, where we have to bow, where we must pray, "Oh, Lord, I cannot let Thee go unless I have a blessing for my soul."

See a man who is old; all of life is now past. This man tells us he is waiting for his Saviour—the eye of faith looks far into the distance, and he tells us that the Lord is on his way to bring him to everlasting glory. You, who are young, seek the Lord while He may be found; then it is possible your deathbed will be one where you may wait for your Saviour. Those of you who are middle aged, how many roadblocks has the Lord already placed upon your way? Soon the end will be here; in the dying hour, may you wait for your Saviour? Those of us who are old, time is fast coming to an end, are we prepared to meet the Lord? Dear children of the Lord, when Paul came to the end of life, he had to say, "For I know that in me...dwelleth no good thing: ...O wretched man that I am!" So, it is with us daily, we sin life away but the wonder is that there is blood, the blood of Christ. Lord, one drop of that precious blood is enough to wash all my sins away. Then the Father will say, "I see no spot or wrinkle in My beloved." □

(This installment marks the end of this series.)

The Life and Dying of Mientje Vrijdag (5)

B. Roest of Scherpenzeel, the Netherlands

(Translated from the Dutch, published by bookstore P. Stuut, Rijssen, the Netherlands, 1977)

As far as it concerns the Church, the Lord has also showed Mientje Vrijdag much out of Jeremiah 12:7. She has also met the Church in Jonah 1:11-13—Jonah overboard, the Church attempted rowing to bring the ship to shore, but the storm became more tempestuous, and, finally, Jonah was prepared to be thrown overboard. She has also met the entire Church in the prodigal son—how that at God's time the entire Church, with the prodigal son, would make confession of guilt and return unto the God of their fathers; that the Lord would return with great mercies so that she has embraced out of the covenant of God the afflicted seed and also the returning Church. Yea, she has even met the old covenant people of Israel, and God Almighty shall cause that people to return. That all occurred with great simplicity and the deepest dependence, along with veneration.

What more shall I testify of all these things? Many of the burdens of God's servants were carried up by her to God's throne. She was united very closely to my spouse. Even after the death of my beloved wife, Mientje has faithfully carried

our burdens and sorrows. I was completely unworthy of that, and it caused me to continually weep with wonderment.

In this manner her life was as a stranger here upon earth. She was not at home here. How she longed to be delivered from her post with patience and watching. Her inclinations and her meditations were continually directed to above. Often, she has lingered above in the spirit. She spoke much of the daily life with her God. Her earthly tabernacle, however, became weaker and weaker. Finally, the hidden disease, cancer which was present in her body, was revealed. Then it became apparent from where the hidden pains and stings came. This laid waste her body, but she dragged herself onward. If her nature had not been so cheerful, she would have been bedridden much earlier; the last months of her life she spent lying in bed. Even in the greatest misery she was very meek and serene. She could testify of the salutary lessons which flowed forth from the continuous Fatherly chastisements. She spoke much of the bitter suffering of her Bridegroom and the comforts of the Spirit. She also spoke encouraging words to all who visited her or warned

them. In this manner she praised the blessed service of God.

She spoke much about her expected home, namely, that upcoming life in heaven where without interruption, without sin, one would reside in blessed communion with God. In the strength of the Lord, she was able to point the enemy to her Surety so that he had to continue to walk away as a thief. If she were left over to herself because of the oppression of the old man and her depravity, then she would come low in guilt and weep a flood of tears. Then she could not endure that any separation had come.

While suffering continual pain she was prepared for death. Finally, her earthly tabernacle was broken down. On the 27th of July, 1943, she entered eternal glory. The gates of the

heavenly Paradise were opened wide upon the full mediatorial work of Immanuel. Her life was Christ, and her dying was gain. Death was not a payment for sin but a dying of sin and an entry into eternal life.

She left behind her father, now eighty-seven years old, her old aunt at eighty years of age, a blessed God-fearing brother, who now held an office in God's church, as well as her son who was thirty-two years old.

"Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace." That was also the case for this blessed widow of fifty-nine years of age. □

(This installment marks the end of this series.)



For Young and Old

Little Scotch Granite

(Taken from the January 1975 issue of *The Banner of Truth*)

Burt and Johnnie Lee were delighted when their Scotch cousin came to live with them. He was little but very bright and full of fun. He could tell curious things about his home in Scotland and his voyage across the ocean. He was as far advanced in his studies as they were, and the first day he went to school they thought him remarkably good. He wasted no time in play when he should have been studying, and he advanced quickly.

At night, before the close of the school, the teacher called the roll, and the boys began to answer, "Ten." The boys were to say ten [credits] if they had not whispered out of turn during the day. When Willie understood, he replied, "I have whispered."

"More than once?" asked the teacher.

"Yes, sir," answered Willie.

"As many as ten times?"

"Maybe I have," faltered Willie.

"Then I shall mark you zero," said the teacher, sternly; "and that is a great disgrace."

"Why, I did not see you whisper once," said Johnnie, that night after school.

"Well, I did," said Willie, "I saw others doing it, and so I asked to borrow a book; then I lent a slate pencil and asked for a knife, and did several such things. I supposed it was permitted."

"Oh, but we all do it," said Burt, reddening. "There isn't any sense in the old rule; and nobody could keep it; nobody does."

"I will keep it, or else I will say I haven't," said Willie. "Do you suppose I would tell ten lies in one heap?"

"Oh, we don't call them lies," muttered Johnnie. "There wouldn't be a credit among us at night if we were so strict."

"What does that matter as long as you have told the truth?" asked Willie bravely.

In short time the boys all saw how it was with him. He studied hard, played when it was time to play; but, according to his account, he lost more credits than any of the rest. After some weeks, the boys answered "Nine" and "Eight" much more often than they used to. Yet, the schoolroom seemed to have grown quieter. Sometimes, when Willie Grant's mark was even lower than usual, the teacher would smile peculiarly but said no more of it being a disgrace. Willie never preached at them or told tales; but somehow it made the boys ashamed of themselves, just seeing that this sturdy blue-eyed boy must tell the truth. It was putting the clean cloth by the half-soiled one, you see; they felt like cheats and storytellers. They stalked him all over, and loved him, and he was so firm about a promise they nicknamed him "Scotch Granite."

Well, at the end of the term, Willie's name was very low down on the credit list. When it was read, he had to work hard not to cry; he was very sensitive, and he had tried hard to be perfect. The very last thing that day was a speech by the teacher, who told of once seeing a man covered up in a cloak. He passed the teacher without a look, but the teacher found out the man was a general, a great hero.

"The signs of his rank were hidden, but the hero was there just the same," said the teacher. "Now, boys, you will see what I mean when I give a little gold medal to the person among you most conscientiously perfect in his deportment. Who shall have it?"

“Little Scotch Granite!” shouted forty boys at once; for the child whose name was so “low” on the credit list had made truth noble in their eyes. “A poor man is better than a liar.”

“Remove from me the way of lying: and grant me Thy law graciously” (Psalm 119:29).

“I hate and abhor lying: but Thy law do I love” (Psalm 119:163).

“Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips” (Psalm 141:3). □



Questions & Answers

Questions from Our Readers

Rev. H. Hofman, Beckwith, Grand Rapids, MI

Can you explain what is meant by a new heart, especially for children?

Dear children, what is meant by your heart? All of us have a heart. It is one of the most, if not the most, important organs of one's body. It is the first organ which lives and beats in a human being and the last organ which dies. A surgeon can amputate a leg and an arm, remove a kidney or the gallbladder, cut out a piece of the stomach, but to remove the heart would immediately lead to death. Look at your heart as a most important treasure where the most important things of your life are kept. We read of Samson that he told Delilah “all his heart”; that means everything! When children step on their parent's heart, it means they really hurt their dad or mom. When the Lord says, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart...” it means totally. David said in his heart, “I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul.” His fears for death bothered him very deeply.

Children, you see that the heart means more than just that important organ in your body. It has more meaning, a deeper meaning. Spiritually, the heart refers to the place in your life where all your desires, emotions, thoughts, and even your will live. It is the place where your feelings are formed and your decisions are made. It is the place where all that is of you is bundled; it is your heart. The Bible tells us, though, that this secret place of yours is no longer a good place. Neither is it a safe place. This is because in Paradise we gave our heart not to the Lord but to Satan. This is why the Bible often speaks about the heart of man in a negative way. Look up in your Bible the following texts: Mark 7:21-23, Jeremiah 17:9-10 and Ezekiel 36:25-27. I know these texts may be difficult for you in some ways, but you will notice that they speak about two things: how bad the heart is and that the Lord can change that heart. Will you ask the Lord daily for this? You need it, and the

Lord is able and willing to give it. David prays in Psalm 51:10, “Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.” Dear children, a new heart is necessary, but I do not tell you only that it is necessary. It is also possible, from God's side. A new heart, given and worked by God's Holy Spirit brings forth good things. It is pleasing to the Lord because He works it. His work is always to His honor and glory.

In the Canons of Dort, we read that the Lord works a new heart in us but without our aid (help.) Usually this takes place under the use of the means such as the faithful reading and preaching of the Word. This is God's common way to work and give it. You and I are unable to give ourselves such a heart, but use the means diligently and faithfully. Remember also, where this is worked by the Lord, all the things mentioned earlier about your evil heart will change. You will receive new desires, new thoughts, and even a new will. Then you learn to strive against all that is wrong with that old heart. You will be sad about all the wrong you do and have done. You will ask for forgiveness of your sins and long for more knowledge of that new heart. You will learn to hate what the Lord hates and love what the Lord loves. Ask your parents or teacher to explain article 12 of the Chapter 3 and 4 of the Canons of Dort to you.

Dear parents and teachers, when speaking about a new heart to our children, do it in such a way as John Flavel did when he wrote: “The greatest difficulty in conversion is to win the heart to God, and after conversion to keep it with Him.” We can never speak too evil of our natural heart and never speak too well about God who works His grace in such hearts. What is impossible with man is possible with God. □

Send your questions to Rev. H. Hofman, 2339 Deer Trail Dr. NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49505, or hofman@premieronline.net.

Christ took our flesh upon Him that He might take our sins upon Him.

—Thomas Watson



Commentary

The Man Born Blind (9)

Rev. H. de Leeuw, Franklin Lakes, NJ

“...He is a prophet...” (John 9:17b).

The healed blind man has given an answer to the question of the neighbors who before had known him as blind. It was the answer that revealed his ignorance; he honestly had to say that he did not know where the Lord Jesus was. Yet, it was a question by which the Lord will bring out the fruits of the wonder when the Lord Jesus Christ may have the highest place in a sinner's life. The way is described as a way of strife because the Bible says they brought him to the Pharisees. The Pharisees were the enemies of the Lord Jesus. Yet, in this chapter the Lord will use the enemies and their tactics to bring this man to confess the Lord Jesus.

Notice first from this that enemies can serve a great purpose. When they attack, it is perhaps hard to see this, but the attacks are directed by the Lord! The Book of Job clearly reveals that Satan is powerful but is also tempered by the Lord's allowing and restraining hand to fulfill His eternal counsel. The enemies are under God's ruling hand.

Notice, secondly, in this history how the Pharisees are working. The standard by which they judge the case is the law of Moses. The commandment by which they find this miracle offensive is the keeping of the Sabbath. The Sabbath must be kept holy by all; that is a commandment still in effect today. How do we spend God's Day? The Pharisees say in this case that the law was broken since making clay is an act which was not allowed to be done on the Sabbath. Here you see how the enemies are busy to destroy the works of the Messiah. Notice then, that with the law of God, these Pharisees are trying to snare the works of the Son of God. What blindness! Man is revealed herein to be a miserable creature in his blindness and ignorance.

Notice, thirdly, since the men deny the Messiah (also evident in the previous chapter) there comes division among them. For them to deny the Messiah was to deny the truth and promise of the Old Testament; how blind they were for this. How true that we must also search our own heart and ways. What is the fruit of our speaking and action in our family, work, school, and church? Is the fruit division? Then we may well fear that it is not a work of God but of Satan. The division that Satan works is to stir up the heart to deny the evident power of the Lord. In this history it is evident that we even can lean on our religious feelings or inclinations to do that. Then it will also manifest itself sooner or later that our sin will come to light as it would with the Pharisees when they soon will cry, “Away with Him,”

and “Crucify Him.” The false religion, the self-righteous religion wants nothing to do with the true Messiah. This is not only because of blindness and ignorance but chiefly unbelief. Calvin strikingly writes about this in his commentary: “Being swelled with a false opinion of their holiness, they were chiefly wounded by the doctrine of the gospel which condemned all their counterfeit righteousnesses; and above all, they fought for their power and kingdom under the pretense of endeavoring to maintain the Law.”

The reason why the Pharisees cling to their interpretation of the law is because they have never yet seen that the Lord Jesus is the fulfiller of the law. They fail to believe that the Lord Jesus is “Lord of the Sabbath.” They have no eyes to see the Lord Jesus as the compassionate Healer who on the Sabbath makes clay to deliver, and who on the Sabbath also fulfills “I must work the works of Him that sent Me.” The Pharisees are so busy maintaining their own status in Israel that they will go to extremes to deny the evident tokens of Messiah's power. How awfully dishonoring is the power of unbelief!

Now the question is asked to the healed man, “What sayest thou of Him, that He hath opened thine eyes?” With this question they put themselves to shame because the answer will testify against them. The healed man will testify to the unbelieving Pharisees who Christ is. “He is a prophet.” What a testimony this man may give of the Lord Jesus. You must understand these words in their timeframe. The prophets were people who revealed the will of God. The prophets were held in high esteem. Everyone knew a prophet was a man sent by Jehovah for the welfare of Israel. This man makes the confession that he was healed by a prophet. This testimony is also to reveal the place Christ had in his spiritual struggles, namely, the highest place.

In the life of all God's true people, Christ will receive the highest place. This is not because they do that themselves but because Christ takes that place. The healed man seems to stand all alone against the self-righteous Pharisees; however, in his clear testimony he reveals who has the highest place, the Prophet who healed him. Notice the Lord Jesus had not yet revealed Himself in His person, but here the sweet fragrance of the life that longs for Christ is sent forth. This takes place in the strife, but this strife will not be put to shame. Christ will appear to him for his joy! What fragrance does our life send forth? The fragrance of life by the power of God or the fragrance of death because of our unbelief? □

(To be continued)



Current Events

Help Stop MAID in the U.S.

Canada's Medical Assistance In Dying (MAID) law will expand in March 2023, extending eligibility to those with a mental illness. A Creighton School of Medicine professor said this would even allow "mature minors" to be euthanized by state doctors without the consent of their parents. He said, "This is what happens when autonomy just goes nuts." Health care has been "hyper-secularized" in recent years and is based on "cost-benefit analysis." We must advocate against these practices, or these polices will make more inroads in the U.S. We need to support, in whatever way we can, health care that is about caring, not killing. There is even a coalition starting a new medical school that is going to focus very clearly on just that, "health care that is about caring, not killing."

—FoxNews.com

Attacks Increase on Pro-Life Groups

Data show there have been twenty-two times more attacks on pro-life groups than pro-choice ones since the Supreme Court leak of the draft opinion that eventually overturned *Roe v. Wade*. "The overwhelming narrative in the media is the claim that those on the right are responsible for most of the politically motivated violence in the U.S. ...with many claiming that there was disproportionate violence against pro-choice providers. Yet, a review of cases shows over twenty-two times more violence against pro-life advocates," said the founder and president of the Crime Prevention Research Center (CPRC).

—FoxNews.com

Parents Extremely or Very Satisfied with Private Schools

According to a new survey from Pew Research Center, "About eight-in-ten private school parents...say they are extremely or very satisfied with the quality of the education their child is receiving, compared with 55% of those answering about a child in a public school." Additionally, "parents answering about a child in private school are far more likely than those answering about a child in public school to say they are extremely or very satisfied with how much input they have in what their

child learns in school." Finally, a majority of parents say the teachers and administrators at their child's private school have values that are very or somewhat similar to their own, compared with 11% of parents of a child in public school.

—PewResearch.org

Increasing Attacks in the DRC

Twenty Christians were killed and several others kidnapped after the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) struck the village of Kainama in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) the night of October 4. A bishop confirmed the attack, terming it "a devastating occurrence that continues to bleed off hope that the DRC has been praying for." Their bodies were lying all over, and houses had been burnt down, other people are missing, taken away by the Muslim fighters. The ADF Islamist militant group has continued to stage attacks on Christians ceaselessly, leaving behind a trail of unfathomable losses, killing innocent believers and destroying shelters, food stores, hospitals, and vehicles. The bishop recounted fifty deaths in October. "We are losing believers almost every night savagely slaughtered...we do not get to know all the cases," he said.

—Persecution.org

Some Encouraging Support to Christians

Recently there were encouraging decisions in several countries that will benefit Christian minorities. The Supreme Court of Pakistan granted bail to three Christians accused of "blasphemy." Also, there was a legal decision in Pakistan affirming that preaching Christianity is in no way a criminal offense. In India, a Supreme Court order makes eight states submit evidence about anti-Christian persecution, also a legal opinion that conversion from one religion to another is entirely legal. In a similar vein, it was encouraging to note the support given by Indonesia's federal government to Christians who are applying for a permit from their local officials to construct a new church building. The permit has not yet been granted by the local authorities, but with federal government support, attempts are ongoing.

—BarnabasFund.org

How Blessed Are They Who Truly See

How blessed are they who truly see
Their emptiness and poverty;
Whose souls are humbled in the dust,
And who in Jesus only trust!

They're vile and poor in their own eyes,
But Jesus' love they highly prize;
They never think they're laid too low
If Jesus on them pity show.

To be the meanest they're content,
So Jesus but their souls present
With pardoning grace and heavenly love,
To fit them for the joys above.

These are the souls whom Christ will bless
With all the riches of His grace;
And these are they who soon shall rise
To a bright kingdom in the skies.

—Samuel Medley



Timothy FOR THE YOUNG

The Confession of Faith (36)

Article XXXI: Of the Ministers, Elders, and Deacons *(continued)*

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

In the first sentence of this present article, our fathers emphasized the necessity of a person coming into an office in the church only in a lawful way. Now a serious warning is added, namely, “Therefore every one must take heed, not to intrude himself by indecent means, but is bound to wait till it shall please God to call him.” It is sad that our fathers had to write this, but in the practice of daily life this situation arises and does take place for various reasons.

It is possible to come into an office of the church in our own strength, without being called by the Lord. This is a serious offence against the Lord, who calls His office bearers to serve His church. It can also be from ambition that we desire an office or that we think it will profit us. These are then wolves in sheep clothing, who think only of themselves and not about the honor of the Lord. They swear a false oath when they give their answer to the question as to whether they are called by the Lord. Of them Jeremiah says, “I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied.”

Another wrong way to come into an office in the church is through presents and gifts. We all know of Simon the sorcerer, who tried to buy the power of the Holy Spirit, offering money for it. From his name and action, the word “simony” is derived, which means the selling of a church office. This was once common in the church of Rome, and I recently read that it still takes place today. I have no proof of it, but it is possible. I would hope that there are none among the readers of this article, whether young or old, who would walk in such paths.

On the other hand, we cannot deny that there are those who think that their life is a failure if they do not come into an office of the church. When a little something is felt of the responsibility of this office before the Lord, it would be with fear and trembling that a person accepts the call to the office. In general, it is better to hear of candidates who are afraid, than to hear of those who think they are able to do it.

In the Bible we find this to be so in most instances.

I hope that among our young readers there are those who have a true desire for the service of the Lord, and ask, “What must a person do who has a desire to have such an office?” According to this article, based upon God’s Word, we must wait until the Lord calls to the office. That is certain. However, I may also say to their encouragement that it is not unbiblical to have a desire for an office. Paul wrote to Timothy, “This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.” Think only of Isaiah; when the Lord asked, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” Isaiah answered, “Here am I; send me.”

The prophet knew he was called by the Lord, and this is also mentioned in our article: “That he may have testimony of his calling, and be certain and assured that it is of the Lord.” This is very important for the person in his own life to know that the Lord has called him. I remember that one of God’s servants told me how important this is, especially in days of strife, so that one could plead upon it, “Lord, Thou hast called me.” Many people think the office in the church is always an easy life, but this is not true. They must experience time and again the attacks of the three-headed enemy.

Here we have another point which we find in our churches, namely, that a person who feels he is called to the ministry must be able to give a testimony of it before the Curatorium. The Curatorium has received the authority to hear these persons on behalf of the churches; it takes place with a praying heart that the Lord might remember them in mercy. How necessary it is that throughout the whole year this be remembered in church and home. If it really becomes a matter of prayer, then the Lord could do wonders. He is the Giver of prayer, of true prayer; He cannot refuse His own work.

In the following sentences our fathers stated that all ministers have the same power and authority.

It is evident that they were concerned lest hierarchy develop, which is a ruling body of clergy organized into orders or ranks, each subordinate to the one above it. It is no wonder that this is mentioned, as they had the sad experience of it in the church of Rome. There the clergy stood above the people, but also the clergy itself was divided into groups and classes. Simply stated, the priests owed responsibility to the bishops and the bishops to the pope. This is against God's Word, for the Lord Jesus said, "One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren." All ministers are the same, but age does make a difference. The greatest reward is to receive the approval of the Lord in our heart when we with His help may fulfill our duty according to His will and Word. The view of the Reformers (contrary to Rome and Luther) was that as much as possible, ministers should receive the same salary and the same honor.

This parity is also in force for elders and deacons. All are called by the Lord to His service, and they labor in the same vineyard. One is called earlier than the other, but all will receive the reward of faithful servants, namely, life eternal. However, it is not the office which brings salvation but only the grace of God.

This article ends with the stipulation to honor office bearers because of their work in the vineyard of the Lord. We find this also stated in the form of ordination. In the course of years, much has changed in this respect. In former centuries the church was hurt by too much reverence to the clergy; at times they almost received divine honor, and this brought a darkness in the church. In our days the church is also hurt, but then in an opposite way, namely, lack of appreciation. Idolatry is forbidden, also of minis-

ters, elders, and deacons; in the same way we must condemn the abuse of the church offices as it often takes place in our times.

The development of this can be seen in the families. Where there is little or no respect by the parents for the offices in the church, the children go further, giving problems in catechism class and Sunday school. It is true, the office bearers are human beings with many shortcomings. However, we must remember that our fathers have written that we should honor them for the sake of their office, and this is based upon the Word of God. If this is not done, it is often regretted later; usually the children leave the truth and, humanly speaking, will be lost. The father or mother is basically the guilty one in such sad events. Often in our days we are warned against "junk food," which undermines our health and makes us susceptible to disease; if we give our children poison, we cannot expect them to survive. Likewise, when we undermine the authority of the offices, we undermine the spiritual welfare of our children, which is a very serious trespass.

With the apostle we must say, "Who is sufficient for these things?" Earthly kings usually take the best educated to be their servants. The Lord does not always do so; no, most of the time it is the opposite. He often takes of the less important ones to do great things in the kingdom of heaven. Then we will not honor the person who is used by the Lord but will honor the Lord only, who is the origin of all blessings. We have, also, a Paul and a Moses in the history of the church, who have been of great profit.

May the Lord remember us also in the offices, sending us men in His favor.



Bible Stories for Little Ones

Samson (3)

(Based on Judges 15)

Samson was so angry with his wife for tricking him and for giving his companions the answer to his riddle that he didn't go home to her. He went to his father's house instead, but soon his anger began to go away. So many times, when we are angry, we do things that we are sorry for later, don't we? Samson was sorry, too, so he went back to his wife with a present—a kid, a young goat, but her father wouldn't let him through the door.

In fact, he told Samson some awful news. "She married your friend," he said. "You were so angry when I saw you that I thought you hated her, so I gave her to another man. Why don't you marry her younger sister? She's even prettier than your wife was." Samson did not want to do that. He was very angry at his wife, at her father, and at ALL the Philistines! Away he went, ready to do whatever he could to punish the people who had hurt him.

Now, always remember, revenge is WRONG. It is a SIN to get back at someone who has hurt us. It is a SIN to hate. God does not put such feelings in our heart. However, in our story, God would use the strength and anger of Samson to save the Israelites from the Philistines. Samson saw some foxes, and that gave him an idea. He found strong sticks which would burn well. Then he caught three hundred foxes and tied them together by their tails, two at a time. He put a stick between the tails of every pair of foxes. Samson brought the foxes to the Philistines' fields of corn, set each stick on fire, and there he let the foxes go. They were so afraid of the flames behind them that they ran this way and that, and the burning sticks set the corn on fire. Not only was the corn destroyed but also the Philistines' grapes



and olives.

You can imagine how furious the Philistines were when they found out their fields were all burned.

“Who did all

this damage?” they cried. When they found out that Samson had done it because his wife’s father had given her to someone else, they became angry at the father for causing the problem. They went and burnt him and Samson’s wife with fire.

Stop and think about this for a minute. Do you remember that Samson’s companions had said they would burn her and her father if she did not give them the answer to the riddle? Now, even though she had sinned to save her life, she was burned anyway.

Was Samson happy to see his wife and her father burned? No, he wasn’t happy at all. All alone he went after the Philistines, and with the help of the Lord, he killed many of them.

Of course, the Philistines were not going to let Samson get away with killing their people. They came and set up their tents in Judah, seeking to capture Samson, but Samson had gone off by himself to the top of a certain rock. The people of Judah were frightened to see the Philistines camped around them, and they asked them why they had come. “We just want to catch Samson and do the same to him as he did to us,” the Philistines said.

So, the men of Judah went to Samson. “Why did you do all this?” they asked. “Don’t you know that the Philistines are our rulers?”

Samson said, “I’m only doing to them what they did to me.”

Then the men of Judah told him that they wanted to tie him up and give him to the Philistines.

“Okay, but promise me that you won’t kill me,” Samson said. He did not want to have to use his strength against his own people. God had given him great strength, and it was to be used against the Philistines. The men of Judah promised that they wouldn’t kill him.

The men of Judah tied him up as well as they could. They even used brand new ropes, which were VERY strong because they were not worn down or thin in spots. How the Philistines cheered, cried out, and laughed to see their strong, tough enemy all tied up like a weak prisoner. Now they had him! Now he couldn’t hurt them anymore! Then—what happened?

The Spirit of the Lord came upon Samson, and God put a mighty strength in him. Suddenly, he jerked on the strong, new ropes, and they broke and fell off him like threads. The Philistines must have looked at him with shock and disbelief. However, Samson looked around and found a bone from a donkey’s jaw, and he began killing the Philistines around him. He killed a thousand Philistines with it.

Samson sang a song of victory, but shortly thereafter he again had to learn that if it were not for the Lord’s help, he could not do such great things. God reminded him of this by making him weak with thirst. Samson then realized that it was only with God’s help that he could kill a thousand Philistines with only a bone, and he turned in prayer to God. “O Lord,” he prayed, “please help me! Thou hast helped me to kill these Philistines, but now will I be so weak with thirst that they will capture me after all?”

God heard Samson, and God caused a hollow place in the jaw, and

there came water thereout. After Samson drank of the water, he was again refreshed and went on his way.





Bible Quiz

Builders

Dear Boys and Girls,

Eric held his breath as he gingerly placed the last stone on the wall he had built. He was building a wall around the house he had made of sticks to keep it safe, but it had already fallen down three times. Would it stay up this time? Eric's shoulders sagged when the stones once again tumbled down with a crash. He straightened up and stared down at the ruined pile of stones for a moment before giving it a vicious kick. "I'm not a good builder," he mumbled forlornly. "I might as well give up and play something else."

Perhaps you have all built something in the past. There are many materials with which to build: Lego bricks, popsicle sticks, Lincoln logs, K'nex, or outdoor things such as sticks, stones, mud, and sand. Perhaps you, too, have often had to start over, or a building just did not work out. Other times, you may have built something that was just right, and you have left it standing for a long time. Every time you look at it, you are glad about the final result. Every time you see it, you are happy that you used the materials you did and placed them where you did.

Builders who work on new houses or carpenters who make and install closets and cabinets have to use measuring skills and know just where and how something will fit together. They too, are glad with the final result of their labor.

In the Bible, we read of very skilled builders as well as very foolish builders. King David's house was a beautifully built building. The house of God, the temple, was even more magnificent. Carpenters, masons, stone hewers, goldsmiths, and those that worked with iron and brass all took part in the skillful work required to complete these buildings.

There is one Builder mentioned in God's Word who is greater than all. He does not build with stones and wood. It says of Him that He is the builder of "a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." This describes heaven and those in His kingdom who will live there with Him. It describes His Church. Anything which is not built on a solid foundation will collapse, but this city has foundations. Its foundation is the suffering, dying, substituting work of His Son Jesus Christ. Holding up this city in a way in which it can never crumble or falter are God's power, eternal plan, and purpose.

How did the Builder, God Himself, build this city? He has made a way into it. It is a new and living way that had to be made after mankind had closed the door behind him. They had ruined the promise of eternal life by sinning against this Builder. However, the Lord has made a new way, and that way is to be saved by the Lord Jesus Christ.

We read in the Bible of foolish builders. One built his house on sand. With the first big storm, the house sank and fell. He built his hope on nothing. Meanwhile, the wise builder built his house on a rock. He is like one who needs to be built on the Church's one Foundation, Christ, the Lord.

There were also those foolish builders who refused to use the headstone to build the house. They rejected it. It should have been on the corner, at the bottom. It would have held up the whole house; instead, they cast it away. This is a picture of the rulers in the churches at that time who rejected Jesus. They did not want Him. They hated Him. They would rather build their hopes on the good works which they did. It can also be a picture of us today. If we think that we will come to heaven without the Lord Jesus and God's work in our heart, we are like these foolish builders who cast away the headstone.

* * * * *

Fill in the blanks and find the words in the wordsearches on next page.

1. And to _____, and hewers of stone, and to buy timber and hewed stone to repair the breaches of the house of the LORD, and for all that was laid out for the house to repair it (2 Kings 12).

2. Unto carpenters, and builders, and masons, and to buy _____ and hewn stone to repair the house (2 Kings 22).

3. Now Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and timber of _____, with masons and carpenters, to build him an house (1 Chronicles 14).

4. And David commanded to gather together the strangers that were in the land of Israel; and he set masons to hew wrought stones to build the _____ of God (1 Chronicles 22).

5. And the king and Jehoiada gave it to such as did the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and hired masons and carpenters to repair the house of the LORD, and also such as wrought iron

and _____ to mend the house of the LORD (2 Chronicles 24).

6. They gave money also unto the masons, and to the carpenters; and meat, and drink, and oil, unto them of Zidon, and to them of Tyre, to bring cedar trees from _____ to the sea of Joppa, according to the grant that they had of Cyrus king of Persia (Ezra 3).

The vowels are missing in the word search. Fill in the missing vowels and circle the words.

B C N S T S M
 B R V C Q H W A
 H R L T T S
 S R P D R R O
 S S B M D N
 S C N R B S
 G T S N S
 T T H R V R B
 R Y T R N C N
 S V S S T N S

LEBANON • SWORD • STONES • BRASS
 OVERSIGHT • MASONS • HOUSE
 CARPENTERS • TIMBER • CITY • CEDARS

R T A O S S A I C T R R O E N
 O B Y A E O L W R T P R O O S
 V A E M N E B P B C M I V R C
 C R S L A C E G O N H S E D E
 A T D T T I M B E R O C R A D
 R I P P I A E D U I U O S C A
 P F A S A N X C U P S R I O R
 E I D M Y T I C X R E S G A S
 N C D R O W S E T O N S H G E
 T E E N L E B A N O N A T T R
 E R T F S R C R D M H R U S A
 R S F P N S T O N E S B T S F
 S S N O S A M S C F T U P G O

OVERSIGHT • CITY • TIMBER
 ARTIFICERS • CARPENTERS • CEDARS
 LEBANON • STONES • HOUSE • BRASS
 MASONS • SWORD

7. And Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders did hew them, and the stonemasons: so they prepared timber and _____ to build the house (1 Kings 5).

8. And they gave the money, being told, into the hands of them that did the work, that had the _____ of the house of the LORD: and they laid it out to the carpenters and builders, that wrought upon the house of the LORD, (2 Kings 12).

9. Unto _____, and builders, and masons, and to buy timber and hewn stone to repair the house (2 Kings 22).

10. Even to the _____ and builders gave they it, to buy hewn stone, and timber for couplings, and to floor the houses which the kings of Judah had destroyed (2 Chronicles 34).

11. For the builders, every one had his _____ girded by his side, and so builded. And he that sounded the trumpet was by me (Nehemiah 4).

12. For he looked for a _____ which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God (Hebrews 11).

For the Younger Children

Unscramble the missing word.

13. Isaiah 44 – The carpenter stretcheth out his rule; he marketh it out with a line; he fitteth it with planes, and he marketh it out with the compass, and maketh it after the _____ (gfuier) of a man, according to the beauty of a man; that it may remain in the house.

14. Jeremiah 29 – (After that Jeconiah the king, and the queen, and the eunuchs, the princes of Judah and Jerusalem, and the carpenters, and the _____ (sismht), were departed from Jerusalem;)

15. Ezekiel 27 – Thy borders are in the midst of the _____ (ases), thy builders have perfected thy beauty.

16. Nehemiah 4 – And cover not their iniquity, and let not their sin be blotted out from before thee: for they have provoked thee to _____ (rgean) before the builders.

17. Look up Matthew 13:55...

Who did they say was Jesus' father? _____

Who did they say was His mother? _____

Who did they say were His brethren? _____

Who was REALLY Jesus' father? _____

For the Older Children

18. Look up Psalm 118, Matthew 21, Mark 12, Luke 20, Acts 4, and 1 Peter 2. All six of these passages mention the same words, speaking of Christ as a stone which the builders rejected. This stone became the head of the corner of the building,

meaning that it was the foundation stone upon which all the other ones rested.

Place the number of the verse of each passage in the blanks below. If done correctly, you should come up with the right answer at the end of the problem.

$$_ + _ + _ + _ + _ + _ = 109$$

* * * * *

Answers to November's "Mornings" quiz:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Mercies | Lamentations |
| 3:22&23 | |
| 2. Day | Genesis 1:5 |
| 3. Iniquity | Genesis 19:15 |
| 4. Clave | Genesis 22:3 |
| 5. Peace | Genesis 26:31 |
| 6. Overthrew | Exodus 14:27 |
| 7. Murmurings | Exodus 16:7 |
| 8. Dew | Exodus 16:13 |
| 9. Lacked | 2 Samuel 17:22 |
| 10. Tender | 2 Samuel 23:4 |
| 11. Gad | 2 Samuel 24:11 |
| 12. Seventy | 2 Samuel 24:15 |
| 13. Good | Ecclesiastes 11:6 |
| 14. Morning | 1 Kings 3:21 |
| 15. Evening | 1 Kings 17:6 |
| 16. Place | Job 38:12 |
| 17. Aloud | Psalms 55:17 |
| 18. Defence | Psalms 59:16 |
| 19. Prayer | Psalms 88:13 |
| 20. God's lovingkindness | |
| 21. They that watch for the morning | |
| 22. Arm, Light | |
| 23. Jesus | |
| 24. Cockcrowing | |
| 25. Sepulchre | |
| 26. Temple | |
| 27. Shore | |

Please send your answers to the address shown below:

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

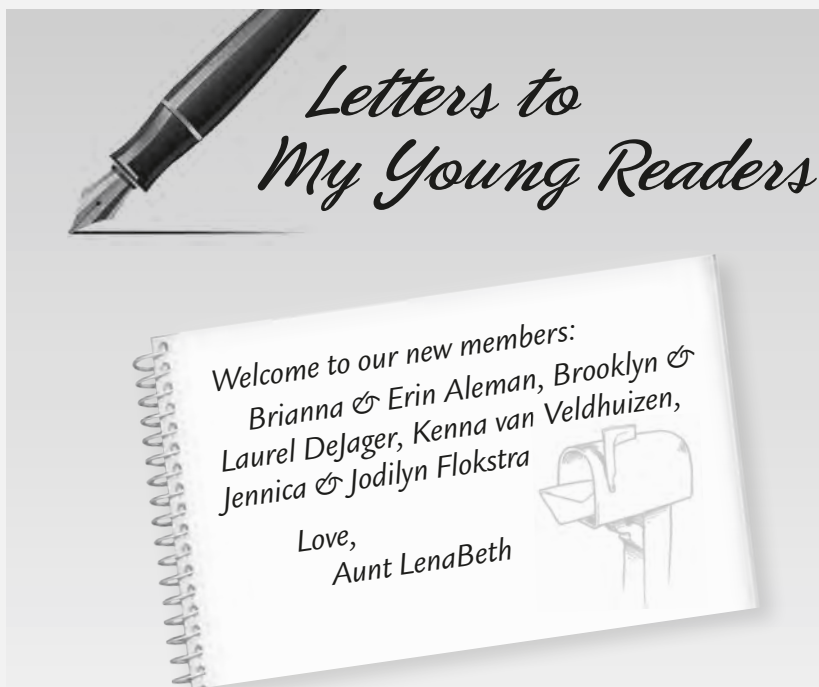
Answers to previous quizzes were received in September from:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Brianna Aleman 1 | Sienna Klop (2) 4 | Sierra Timmer 25 |
| Erin Aleman 1 | Anthony Knibbe 15 | Wyatt Timmer 25 |
| Clay Bakker 19 | Ashley Knibbe 23 | Gerard Van Deuveren (2) 4 |
| Paige Bakker 2 | Jarynne Knibbe 25 | Maurice Van Garderen (2) 33 |
| Britni Blom 35 | Meredy Knibbe 7 | Emmalyn Van Garderen (2) 35 |
| Jenina Blom 28 | Whitney Knibbe 27 | Sadie Van Lagen 3 |
| Lawrence Blom 22 | Joey Koenen 10 | Kaiven Van Middendorp 39 |
| Tiffany Blom 10 | Lydia Koenen 12 | Konner Van Middendorp 37 |
| Carly Brouwer (2) 16 | Jakayla Loedeman (2) 3 | Brett Van Velthuisen (2) 15 |
| Derek Brouwer (2) 35 | Kari Mans (2) 20 | Trent Van Velthuisen (2) 14 |
| Thomas Brouwer (2) 34 | Abraham Mol 5 | Ellie Van't Zelfde 15 |
| Brooklyn DeJager 1 | Lydia Mol 28 | David VanDeMoere 4 |
| Laurel DeJager 1 | Madeline Mol 19 | Joelle Vande Waerdt 2 |
| Jaxon DeKorne 10 | Olivia Mol 23 | Wyatt Vande Waerdt 23 |
| Juliette DeKorne 11 | Teddy Mol 30 | Aubrey Vanden Berg 17 |
| Sarina Den Bok (4) 28 | John Murphy (2) 29 | Heidi Vandenberg 32 |
| Lindsey Driesse 24 | Andrew Murphy (2) 9 | Kenna Van Veldhuizen 1 |
| Allison Ekema 7 | Colin Overbeek (6) 20 | Esther Vanden Broek 19 |
| Kaylynn Ekema 38 | Jayden Overbeek (6) 34 | Caleb Vogelaar (2) 16 |
| Geralyn Engelen 24 | Blake Pannekoek (2) 19 | Matthew Vogelaar (2) 18 |
| Trevor Engelen 25 | Lauren Pannekoek (2) 31 | Jayden Weeda (2) 24 |
| Jennica Flokstra 1 | Andrew Remijn 29 | Nathan Wesdyk 29 |
| Jodilyn Flokstra 1 | Daniel Remijn 9 | Rebekah Wesdyk 33 |
| Ronna Geuze 8 | Lauren Remijn 25 | |
| Kyal Grisnich 19 | Nevaeh Rozeboom 12 | |
| Kynlee Grisnich 4 | Alex Rus 29 | |
| Logan Grisnich 21 | Kaela Rus 17 | |
| Taryn Grisnich 17 | Lakia Rus 20 | |
| Kari Groen 26 | Tessa Spaans 7 | |
| Kurtis Groen 27 | Colin Ten Hove 27 | |
| Weston Hoogendoorn 16 | Hannah-Jo Ten Hove 14 | |
| Evan Kaat (3) 19 | Almonzo Timmer 2 | |
| Logan Kaat 6 | Hunter Timmer 27 | |
| Shane Kaat 7 | Kadin Timmer 27 | |
| Brooklyn Klop (2) 4 | Laurencia Timmer 20 | |

Key to numbers following names:

- Numbers in parentheses represent how many quizzes person answered in the month being reported.
- Numbers without parentheses indicate how many quizzes person has completed toward earning Bibles for Bolivia.
- Solid box indicates person has earned a Bible in the month being reported. Each time six quizzes are completed, another Bible is sent to Bolivia.

10 Bibles were sent to Bolivia this month. The total is now 624—thank you, boys and girls!



News & Announcements

■ Ministerial Calls

Extended:

To Rev. H.D. den Hollander of Fort Macleod, Alberta, by the congregation of Markham, Ontario.

To Rev. H. de Leeuw of Franklin Lakes, New Jersey, by the congregation of Sunnyside, Washington.

Declined:

By Rev. J.J. Witvoet of Rock Valley, Iowa, to the congregation of Lethbridge, Alberta.

■ Obituaries

BOUMA, Madelyn J. – Age 94, October 30, 2022; Walker, Michigan; Husband – Herman A. (deceased); Children – Trudy & Jerry Fluit, Louise Mast, Sharon Horan, Al & Cheryl, Ruth & Tim DeVisser; 32 grandchildren, 72 great-grandchildren; Siblings – Joanne Spaans, Joe & Lois Vissia; In-laws – Harold & Johanna, Ralph & Cornelia, Henrietta Van De Lagemaat, Jennie & John Luteyn, Fran & Larry Teunissen; predeceased by daughter Nina Remijn, and sons-in-law Bob Daniels and Andrew Mast. (Rev. H. Hofman, 2 Timothy 2:19.)

HUP, Bernice (Van Ginkel) – Age 85, October 12, 2022; Corsica, South Dakota; Husband – Gerrit (deceased); Children – Alfred, Harvey, Jane & Larry Langstraat, Edward & Sharon; 12 grandchildren, 28 great-grandchildren, 1 step-great-grandchild; Brother – Harold & Glenda Van Ginkel; Brother-in-law – Frank Wynia; predeceased by son Dennis, grandson Jonathon, and granddaughters Laura and Renae. (Rev. J. Slingerland, Psalm 32:6a.)

KOOLMEES, Neeltje (Nel, nee Van Meeteren) – Age 82, October 22, 2022; Norwich, Ontario; Husband – Abraham; Children – Bram & Agna, Ico & Jentine, Jaap & Lisa, Cora & Peter De Boer, Mirjam & Ken Den Dekker, Johan & Melinda, Esther & Albert Van Ginkel, Lize & Theo De Kruyf, Debora & Anthonie Van Hengel; 46 grandchildren, 12 great-grandchildren; Sister – Hennie & Johan Wissenburg; predeceased by a granddaughter and a great-granddaughter. (Rev. E. Hakvoort, Psalm 69:29.)

LIEFTING, Tanner – Age 24; August 28, 2022; Chilliwack, British Columbia; Wife – Lauren (nee Hofman); Children – Avery Laina, Callen Jax; Parents – Henry & Michelle; Parents-in-law – Gerard & Bea Hofman; Siblings – Riley & Mikayla, Nathan (and Sydney), Taylor & Shane, Brooke; In-laws – Jesse & Angie, Lisa & Aaron, Samuel, Micah,

Andrew, Ezra; also survived by grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. (Rev. H. Hofman, 1 Kings 17:17-24.)

RETSINAS, Peter (Panaghotis) – Age 82, October 31, 2022; Norwich, Ontario; Wife – Jacoba (nee Don); Children – Tina Van Vliet, Jeany, Peter & Karin, Tom, Jack & Tia, Jonathan; survived by a sister, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law. (Rev. E. Hakvoort, Job 14:10.)

SINKE, Paul – Age 90, October 8, 2022; Norwich, Ontario; Wife – Wilhelmina Sinke-Van Patee; Children – Joanne & Anton Scherpenzeel, Laura Shaugnassy, Wilma & Mike Hartwell, Bill & Tracy; many grandchildren and great-grandchildren; Sister – Mina Houtekamer-Sinke; predeceased by son-in-law Johannes Heikoop. (Rev. E. Hakvoort, Ecclesiastes 12:5b.)

VANDER WAAL, Gary – Age 85, October 20, 2022; Doon, Iowa; Wife – Elizabeth Ann (nee Hengst); Daughters – Tena & William Blom, Tonia & William Boluyt, Elizabeth & Harold Fluit, Trudy & Randall Van Giessen, Marie & Lyle Wynia, Kristine & Jeffrey Taylor; 30 grandchildren, 63 great-grandchildren; Siblings – Gertrude Wisse, Marie & Lourens Willekes, Henk, Walter & Sheryl; In-laws – Raymond & Peggy Hengst, Elizabeth Ann, Ann Hengst; predeceased by daughter Susan, 3 brothers and several in-laws. (Rev. J.J. Witvoet, Isaiah 64:6.)

In Memoriam

Mr. David G. Engelsma

On July 25, 2022, it pleased the Lord to remove out of this life Mr. David G. Engelsma at the age of seventy-five. He served as elder in the Beckwith Avenue congregation.

Mr. Daniel Breuker

On September 12, 2022, it pleased the Lord to remove out of this life Mr. Daniel Breuker at the age of ninety-seven years. He served as deacon in the Beckwith Avenue congregation.

May the Lord remember the families and sanctify the calling in the midst of the congregation.

— The Beckwith Avenue FNRC Consistory

■ Post-High School Young Adults Winter Conference

January 6&7, 2023

The Timothy Youth Group of Franklin Lakes, New Jersey, is planning the annual winter conference for January 6&7, 2023. All post-high school young adults are invited. For more information and to sign up, please visit www.timothygroupnrc.org (password: January2023).

60th Wedding Anniversary

On November 13, 2022, our dear parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents,

Willem & Teuni Slingerland

commemorated their 60th wedding anniversary.

“Shew me Thy ways, O LORD; teach me Thy paths” (Psalm 25:4).

Box 421, Picture Butte
Alberta, T0K 1V0

65th Wedding Anniversary

On November 21, 2022, our dear parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents,

Marvin & Jeanette Van Beek

commemorated their 65th wedding anniversary.

“Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be thankful unto Him, and bless his name” (Psalm 100:4).

717 Riverview Drive
Rock Valley, IA 51247

■ The Banner of Truth in Audio Format

Monthly copies of the articles appearing in *The Banner of Truth* are available on MP3s and CDs for those who have reading difficulties such as poor vision. These MP3s are produced by a committee in Norwich, with the support of the Norwich consistory, who make the MP3s available to your consistory. Consistories distribute the MP3s and CDs which are provided at no cost. You may contact Mrs. Tillie Lamain at 616-242-0291 or blamain@netscape.net to arrange for a free subscription or to discontinue receiving *The Banner of Truth* on CD.

Dear reader, the need is great. If you have an education background, please take a moment to consider the many positions available across our congregations.

Administrators Needed

NETHERLANDS REFORMED CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, POMPTON PLAINS, NEW JERSEY. 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.

Relocation expenses and financial incentives will be discussed upon inquiry. For more information or to apply, please contact Tim Mol (education chairman) at 973-204-5677 or email timjmol@yahoo.com, or John Van Der Brink (administrator) at 973-628-7400 email nrcs_office@nrcsnj.org.

TRINITY REFORMED CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, SUNNYSIDE, WASHINGTON, welcomes applications for an administrator/teacher 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 Maaïke Van Wingerden at 509-840-0437 or email trinityrcs@embarqmail.com.

To All Candidates for Education Positions

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 Name:

advertising@nrcea.education

Password: **Schooljobs!**

Teachers Needed

CALVIN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, COAL-HURST, ALBERTA, invites applications from teachers of any grade level to begin in January 2023, D.V. We would be thankful to hear from versatile and dedicated applicants to enable continued provision of Christian education to our youth. All applicants must be members of the NRC or a closely-related denomination, and eligible for Alberta certification. For information about positions available, 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 2022-23 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. For any questions regarding this position and all interested applicants, please contact Randal Teunissen at 920-828-0225 or e-mail rdteunissen@yahoo.com.

MOUNT CHEAM CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, CHILLIWACK, BRITISH COLUMBIA, anticipates an URGENT NEED for the next school year with multiple openings for teachers 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. Inquiries should be addressed to the 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. Toby de Rover, at tobyderover@gmail.com.

NERIAH CHRISTIAN SCHOOL—The NRC branch in Calgary, Alberta, is working to establish a new Christian school, opening September 2023, D.V. We require a teacher/principal to help setup and teach in a small multi-grade elementary school. The candidate's tasks include: supplying input on school

structure, providing our children with a Christian education, maintaining relations with the school board, students, parents, and community, and performing administrative tasks. Applicants must be eligible for Alberta certification and be a member of the Netherlands Reformed congregations or a closely related denomination. To apply, or for more information, contact the school board president, Daniel Visser, at 403-554-1097 or at visser.daniel@outlook.com.

PLYMOUTH CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN, is accepting applications for open teaching positions for the 2023-2024 school year. While we would be interested in hearing from any interested applicants, candidates with certification or experience in high school language arts, elementary, and special education are specifically needed. For more information about the positions or to request an application, please contact the principal, Mr. Nate Bleeker, at 616-454-9481 or email nbleeker@plymouthchristian.us.

PROVIDENCE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN, continues to welcome applications from qualified elementary and secondary teachers for the coming school year. For more information regarding possible openings or to send your cover letter and resumé, please contact the principal, Mr. Tom Kwekel, at tkwekel@pcskzoo.com.

REHOBOTH CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, NORWICH, ONTARIO, continues to welcome applications for positions in our school. For more information about elementary opportunities, contact the elementary principal Mr. Andrew Korevaar at elementaryprincipal@rcsnorwich.com or 519-863-2403 ext. 241. For more information about secondary opportunities, contact the secondary principal Mr. Gerrit TenHove at secondaryprincipal@rcsnorwich.com or 519-863-2403 ext. 303. We continue to invite inquiries about our locally developed teaching training program for those who hold a bachelor's degree. Cover letters and resúmes should be submitted to hr@rcsnorwich.com. Applications will be reviewed and those applicants selected for interviews will be contacted by the school board.

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.**



The Banner of Truth

The Official Periodical of the Netherlands Reformed Congregations
of the United States and Canada

2022 Annual Index (Volume 88)

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The Adoration of the Wise Men

Saw you never in the twilight,
When the sun had left the skies,
Up in heaven the clear stars shining,
Through the gloom like silver eyes?
So of old the wise men watching,
Saw a little stranger star,
And they knew the King was given,
And they follow'd it from far.

Heard you never of the story,
How they cross'd the desert wild,
Journey'd on by plain and mountain,
Till they found the Holy Child?
How they open'd all their treasure,
Kneeling to that infant King,
Gave the gold and fragrant incense,
Gave the myrrh in offering?

Know ye not that lowly Baby
Was the bright and morning Star,
He who came to light the Gentiles,
And the darken'd isles afar?
And we too may seek His cradle,
There our heart's best treasures bring,
Love, and faith, and true devotion,
For our Saviour, God, and King.

—Cecil Frances Alexander