BEACON LIGHTS

FOR PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH

Jehovah is our light and our salvation

November - 1946
Beacon Lights is published Monthly except July and September.

Entered as Second Class Mail at Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Subscription Price $1.25 Per Year.

Beacon Lights is published by the Protestant Reformed Young People's Federation, 354 Diamond Ave., S. E., Grand Rapids.

All matter relative to contents should be sent to Mr. Dick Vander Wal, 1100 Sigsbee St., S. E., Grand Rapids, Michigan.

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The Thanksgiving Tradition

By Homer C. Hoeksema — Grand Rapids, Mich.

Beacon Lights and Thanksgiving Day. Or should we say, "Protestant Reformed Youth and Thanksgiving Day"? Yes, it is November; and your magazine, seeking to conform to times and seasons, must express itself in regard to this American tradition of one Thanksgiving Day each year. What is your and my attitude toward this custom? What should it be? "Old questions," you say? Perhaps; if so, there is a possibility that our memories need refreshing, and that the answers of faith be recalled by us. Besides, there is a vague possibility that to some of us these are new problems, that some of us may be able to learn for the first time, what the attitude of a Protestant Reformed, no, a Reformed young man or young lady should be in respect to this custom of some three centuries. And so we write, not in the hope particularly of producing something fresh and new on this subject,—newness is not necessarily a mark of truth,—but we write in the confidence that we have the Truth, and with the hope that some of us may be induced to see a problem and be led to a proper solution of it.

Webster's tells us that a tradition is something, a custom, belief, practice, or information, handed down from the past, handed down from ancestors to posterity. By definition, therefore, a tradition is neither good nor bad, and it may be either good or bad. A tradition as such, objectively, may be evil. For example, the custom of certain barbarous tribes of eating human flesh is an evil tradition; it is evil as such. Or a tradition or custom may objectively be good; think, for example, of the custom of attending divine worship on the Sabbath; the custom itself is a good one, objectively considered.

But the wrong of a tradition may be found also in its subjective side, that is, in the keeping of the tradition. And that subjective evil, perhaps a greater danger than an objectively evil tradition, may be two-fold. First of all, there is always the danger that an objectively good tradition may be changed
by posterity into an evil one. A Christian holiday, for example, may be changed into a worldly carnival. On the other hand is the danger, and a very real danger it is, of an objectively good tradition being kept in a purely formal manner. Thus, the objectively good tradition of attending divine worship on the Sabbath may become, and perhaps too often does become, a matter of pure custom and superstition, a mere formality.

But while there are lurking dangers involved in the keeping of traditions, we should not become blinded to the fact that an almost as great danger is the flaunting of tradition. That is a danger that is very prevalent in our day. We live in an age characterized by non-conformism. We scorn the past. And it is very dangerous, aside from the fact that it is after all impossible to cut ourselves off from history. And the Christian especially should be extremely conscious of his being inseparably bound to the past. Bound, he is, to the past through the Holy Scriptures. Bound, he is, by his own profession to be a member of the one, holy, catholic Church. He cannot, and he may not attempt to, separate himself from history. And therefore he should always hesitate to break with tradition, lest he be breaking with a good tradition transmitted by the saints.

Bearing these factors in mind let us inquire into the American tradition of Thanksgiving. Let us inquire into the objective Thanksgiving tradition and see whether, as it had its inception and as it has since been celebrated it can stand in the light of God's Word. And let us inquire into our own Thanksgiving, trying to discover, if the tradition be a good one, whether we personally properly celebrate it; or, if the tradition be a bad one, whether our personal and ecclesiastical celebration of Thanksgiving Day can stand the scrutiny of Divine eyes.

In the original celebration of Thanksgiving Day we might have concurred. The custom is said to have begun in Plymouth Colony, the colony of the separatists, in the year 1621. There, after a period of severe hardship, a relief ship had finally dropped anchor, and in thankfulness to God the Christian governor, William Bradford, set aside a special day of Thanksgiving, which was characterized not mainly by feasting and merry-making but by the expression of gratitude to God. We will not question whether that same spirit of gratitude would have prevailed if the hardships and starvation should have continued through another long and bitter New England winter. History does not tell us. for the simple reason that the relief ship dropped anchor in autumn. We do know.
however; that Plymouth Colony was inhabited completely by the Separatists: and we do know that these people were a simple, pious God-fearing group, so that a State celebration of Thanksgiving Day was indeed a possibility. These people were genuinely grateful to God and realized that they had received these things as from His hand. Their Thanksgiving Day we could easily celebrate with them.

But the day soon lost its Christian character. In the course of history by the decrees of Congress and the proclamations of various presidents it became a national holiday. Thanksgivings were proclaimed for victory in war, based, of course, upon the corrupt theory that grace is in things. Not only that, but in the way of its being declared a national holiday, it came to be celebrated by Christian and non-Christian alike. When avowed deists can proclaim days of thanksgiving, it is time for the Christian to protest. Thankfulness is not a national virtue. It is the fruit of the grace of God in the hearts of His children, the children who have been saved by Him, and not by His grace desire to praise Him in all things. We cannot therefore go along with that national spirit which sets aside one day each year for the expression of thankfulness to God. We may not go along with that spirit which declares that once a year we shall go to church and give thanks to “Providence” with the underlying motive of keeping that impersonal Power favorably disposed toward us. We may not be deceived by the hypocritical philosophy that we can give thanks for victory and for prosperity, for health and life, but in lean years can only give thanks for the fact that matters are no worse. We cannot join with him who says, “My soul, thou hast many treasures for many years, and now thou must also bow before ‘Providence’. and then thou canst await more prosperity.” The sacrifices of the wicked are an abomination to Jehovah: and the Christian may not worship at that altar. In the Thanksgiving of today we may not join.

Now let us examine ourselves in regard to our Thanksgiving celebration. In which tradition do we stand? Too often in that of the world, do we not? It is true, is it not, that the Church is frequently carried along in the tide of worldly philosophy. Isn’t it true that we also at least incline to give a sort of carnal thanks for prosperity and peace,—a peace that always manifests itself as based on enmity,—for life and health, for liberty and happiness. Certainly the Christian gives thanks for these things, but he gives thanks for all things, receiving all things as from the hand of God. Really, only the Christian
can give thanks, for he receives all things in the grace of God. Then when the lean years come, as they always do, when life is not so good to us, when we lose dear ones on the battle field, when we lose our house in depression, when unemployment is our lot, we do not become envious of the wicked, who always seem to be favored, but we find our comfort in the fact that we are in the Lord's way, that His way is best, that He always cares for His own.—and then we rejoice and enter into His courts with thanksgiving.

That is an ideal, though,—an ideal to which we attain only in principle. For our celebration this year as always on the last Thursday of this month, will be overwhelmingly carnal. For some the worship service will be a mere formality. For others the church service will be politely omitted in the interest of preparing roast turkey. For most of us it will be a day of gluttony; and for all of us, except for the grace of God, it will be a day of carnal pleasure, lacking in true thanksgiving.

But by faith we have the victory, even over our own carnality. For also in regard to our Thanksgiving celebration, not in the spirit of excuse, but in the spirit of true repentance we must and shall confess that the good that we would that we do not, but the evil that we would not, that we do. And that is the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.
Whither goest thou?
Young men and young women, where are you going?

We are always planning; looking forward. The greater part of our life is spent in making and executing plans to go somewhere and do something. Often the expectation and planning of an event are more important and take more time than the actual fulfillment of it all. We plan our whole life, as to what we shall be and do, many years in advance. For weeks ahead, we look forward with great anticipation to our vacations. That hunting trip or party we are going to, give occasion for many days and hours of joyful expectation.

So WE plan, but as we do, do we often remember God’s plan? Our times are in His hand. The Psalmist said: “Thou compassteth my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.” And because he had that knowledge he prayed: “Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me and know my thoughts: And see if
space and movement. We have a moment of beginning and that means it all must end; there is a moment of ending. Whither goest thou?

In the individual moments, which are parts of the whole *going*—the hours and days, where are you going? Are you going places and doing things which bring you closer to the goal of heaven or—whither goest thou? Are you going to catechism and society and church and glory? That's the one road: those are the milestones. And are you really *going* that way or merely being shuffled and moved along by some one else? Are you planning and preparing and acquitting yourself as a Christian traveller? Or are you going with the world to movies and pleasures and places of evil which lead to destruction? That's the other way: those are the milestones of death—eternal death.

And is your whole life a going in the right direction—or the wrong? Jesus said: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father but by me." Is Jesus on your way? Pray that the Father may draw you to Christ—the only Way! Reveal that He has drawn you by taking your place amongst the Children of God! They are going to the Father's house of many mansions! That way leads over Calvary: there on bended knee to receive the blessed consciousness of forgiveness, and there to hear the voice of Jesus say: "Come unto me and I will give thee rest".

Whither goest thou?

Think on the way; is it leading you to heaven and home — or whither?

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**Especially for This**

MISS LOIS HOEKSEMA — Grand Rapids, Mich.

Again we are in that season of the year when, following the precedent set by the Pilgrim Fathers, God's people lift up their hearts in a special way in thanksgiving to their Maker. We know that we are to be thankful at all times, for all things. We know *everything* is working together for our good, even though in our blind folly we often do not see the wisdom of God's way for us. Yet it is not amiss in such a season to ponder upon the many individual blessings that our God showers upon us. And then we as Protestant Reformed youth realize that our hearts must certainly be full of gratitude for our unspeakably precious heritage.

What could be more dear to us than the knowledge of God as re-
wealed in His Word? We believe that it is our privilege to have the purest interpretation of that truth. That is why we are, and remain Protestant Reformed. This does not mean that we have reason to be proud. Truth is not our accomplishment, but our heritage. Even as the very core of that truth teaches us, it is all of God. He, through the struggles of our parents, has enlightened us in order that His Word may be made manifest to His glory.

Shall we then think lightly of our heritage? Shall we live as though it had no meaning for us? Shall we despise the work of God and trifle with His gifts? Or shall we even for a moment dare to think of casting away our birthright and going where we can expect to find the Word of God preached in less of its purity?

This season of thanksgiving is a good time to remind ourselves that our lives should evidence our gratefulness to God. And if we then are truly thankful for our high calling we will show a deeper interest in the things of His kingdom. We will go where we can learn more about Him — in catechism, in our societies, and, above all, in our church services. We will make it a point to read our church publications. We will put our shoulder underneath the load that is Kingdom work, and experience the blessedness of service.

Let us therefore show our gratitude this Thanksgiving Day and throughout the year, in particular for this — our heritage.

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A New Department

The board has decided to introduce a Social Problems Department in Beacon Lights. A need for such a department, where problems and questions concerning the life of our young people can be discussed, has long been felt.

The Board has been very fortunate in securing a man eminently capable to conduct such a department. He will treat your problems and questions with consideration and care.

If any of you have a problem, a question, or difficulty which you think could be discussed with profit for our young people, send it to:

SOCIAL PROBLEMS
C/o Beacon Lights Editor
1100 Sigsbee St., S. E.
Grand Rapids, Michigan
Current Comments

By HOMER G. KUIPER

Kalamazoo, Michigan

WORLDLY JUSTICE

By the time the reader scans these lines he will, no doubt, have been informed of the execution of the death penalties meted out by the Allied judicial commission at Nuernberg for the high officials of the Nazi regime of war-time Germany. Whether or not real justice is to be found in the sentence imposed by the Allied tribunal has been and, we believe, will be the subject of considerable debate.

Already abundant comment by various men prominent in the affairs of our nation, has shown that there is considerable question as to whether justice is actually to be found in the decisions of the Allied commission that considered the trial of the once mighty and haughty figures of the German Wehrmacht. Prominent among the critics of the Nuernberg decisions is the eminent Senator Robert Taft who has denounced the actions of the Nuernberg tribunal in unequivocal language. Said he, "They violate that fundamental principle of American law that a man can...not be tried under an ex post facto statute. The hanging of eleven men convicted at Nuernberg will be a blot on the American record that we shall long regret." Stated in non-technical language, Senator Taft contends that a man cannot be tried on a charge that was not illegal at the time that the defendant committed the deeds for which he is on trial. He feels that the defendants at Nuernberg were first apprehended and imprisoned and then a new legal concept or statute was devised with a view to making it certain that a conviction would be obtained. Needless to say, such methods are unsavory and expose the court to the accusation that they were governed by outside pressures, possibly public opinion, war hysteria or political considerations.

Stated briefly the charge against the defendants was "waging aggressive warfare". The aim of the prosecution is stated in the words of the U. S. Chief Prosecutor Robert Jackson who declared that the trial's fundamental justification lay in its attempt to outlaw aggressive...
war and to destroy "the old theory that international law bears on states and not on statesmen." Jackson himself gives basis to Senator Taft's charges when, speaking before the University of Buffalo, he said, "At all events, whether they be regarded as an innovation or a codification, those principles are law today. . . ."

The preparation and arguments of the defense were rather meagre but the former Reichsmarshal, Herman Goering, contended that a state is sovereign in its own sphere and the actions of a sovereign power in its own sphere is no business of outside parties. According to the best information we have received, no adequate answer has been made by the Allied tribunal to this defense.

On the other hand, it is not our intention to whitewash the infamous deeds and principles of the Nazi leaders. Yet we believe that it is wrong to condone the acts of vengeance that seem to characterize the actions of Allied leaders. Christian ethics does not make any provision for vengeance. We believe that "vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord."

We believe further that the deeds and actions of such men as Herman Goering cannot be condemned too strongly. Particularly in the light of what the Christian Church in Germany has had to say about the course of the German nation in recent years. We are referring particularly to the courageous acts and testimony of Martin Niemoller. This man of God never hesitated to call the Nazi leaders to task for their wicked ideals and even now, after his return to his church and to the position as elected head of the Confessional Churches, he has called upon the German people to repudiate their anti-Christian leaders and repent of their sins of lust for war, power and domination. These are the words of a man who governs himself by the law of the living God and stand in sharp contrast to the worldly-minded justice of the Allied tribunal.

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**A Christmas Gift**

NOW is the time of year we are seeking suggestions for Christmas Gifts. What better or more appropriate gift for young or old could you give than a subscription to

**Beacon Lights**

Only $1.25 per year. Send in your subscription to:

Miss Winnie De Vries, 354 Diamond St., S.E., G. R.
Thanksgiving Day, that joyful festival, is again at hand. It is well that we pause a moment to recall its true significance and to reflect on some of the principles that lie at the basis of all true gratitude.

First of all, do you know what it means to “give thanks”? Thanksgiving is joy,—real, spiritual, unfeigned, lasting joy. The idea of giving thanks is very closely related to that of grace. In the original both words come from the same root. From this point of view American Christians are not far wrong when they speak of offering thanks at the close of a meal as “saying grace”. God’s grace is His loveliness. His favor. His love for the creature. Our gratitude is the reflection, the fruit, the expression. the response, the echo in us of that grace of God. When that grace of God takes hold of us, permeates us, blesses us, brings us to God, then also our attitude towards God becomes one of love and pleasure. The expression of that love, the reflection of that grace of God in us, that returning of God’s grace to Himself in praise and adoration,—that is thanksgiving. Thanksgiving, in actual experience, implies: that we are aware of the fact that we have received something good: that we have our minds on those blessings and count them one by one: that we are deeply conscious of the fact that we did nothing to merit them but actually forfeit them a thousand times over: that we rejoice in the good received, acknowledge the Giver of it all and praise His name for all His gracious benefits.

We understand that all thanksgiving is and must be unto God alone. Never may the creature be the object of our gratitude, our joy and adoration. God alone is God and the Giver of all good and perfect gifts. His are all things eternally, the heavens and the earth and all they contain, the gold and the silver and the cattle on a thousand hills, our bodies and souls, our homes and children, our gifts and talents, our money and possessions. All that we have of Him. We have nothing of ourselves. Nothing comes to us from anyone else. To no one or nothing are we
indebted, except to God alone. "Giving thanks always and for all things unto God and the Father." Eph. 5:20. "To Thee, O God, do we give thanks, to Thee do we give thanks." Ps. 75:1.

We should also understand, however, that all true gratitude is not only unto God alone, but also for God alone. Always, especially on Thanksgiving Day, we are so apt to become carnal, creature-centered instead of God-centered, and rejoice in mere things. That is not right. Joy in mere things is by no means gratitude. Even the ungodly world has the former. Christian friends, even as we pray in final instance, not for mere things, but for God alone, His Name, His kingdom, His will, His grace—even so we thank for God alone, His nearness, His blessing, His favor and covenant fellowship. "Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, rejoice." Phil. 4:4. "To Thee, O God, do we give thanks, to Thee do we give thanks. for that Thy Name is near." Ps. 75:1.

Because of the preceding, Christian gratitude implies further, that we give thanks always. For always God is hallowing His Name, realizing His kingdom, executing His will, blessing His people, giving Himself to His own in eternal love. One who cannot thank always, be it only in principle, cannot thank at all. How plainly Scripture teaches that this is indeed our Christian calling. "Rejoice in the Lord always." Phil. 4:4. "Giving thanks always, for all things, unto God." Eph. 5:20. Now this, in turn, implies some very definite things. a. That thanksgiving is not a matter of special occasion nor does a Christian thank more on Thanksgiving Day than on other days. The former intends only to express what always lives in the heart of the Christian. b. That thanksgiving is not a question of outward circumstances and prosperity. God’s blessing is always upon His people. Hence:—c. Thanksgiving is not something that fluctuates according to external conditions. In fact, it is not so that we have more reason to be grateful at one time than another, when we are well than when we are ill, at weddings than at funerals, etc. Christian gratitude is joy in and for God, and therefore it is constant.

From all this it follows, that the Christian must give thanks in everything. Writes Paul to the Thessalonians: “In everything give thanks.” 5:18. Yes, that means in things pleasant. The Christian stands in the midst of his abundance, of his work in factory or office or home, of his family of happy and healthy children, of his fertile fields of yellow grain or richly laden orchards and he says: Lord, I thank Thee. However, “in everything” also means: in things
unpleasant for the flesh. Also in the midst of sickness and pain, of hunger and cold, of want and depression, in the midst of the ruins of his once cozy home, of flooded and scorched fields, in the midst of a year's labor lost, he stands and says: "To Thee, O God, do we give thanks,—for that Thy Name is near."

And mind you, not only does a Christian thank in everything, but also for everything. That's Scripture. "Always, for all things, giving thanks to God." It is not so, that we should thank in spite of many things, thank for all the nice things we still have. That may sound pious, but it is carnal nevertheless. He who really thanks is grateful because of everything, for in all things he sees the hand, the love and grace of His God.

Does all this condemn you, my friends? It does me too. That makes no difference. It merely proves that the natural man simply cannot be thankful and that only the regenerated child of God can celebrate Thanksgiving Day properly. We must live by faith. We must be deeply spiritual to be truly grateful. We must permit ourselves to be guided and instructed by the Word of God only. We must be in Jesus Christ and view all things present from that vantage point. Then we can and will give thanks. Not because that makes all things pleasant in themselves, even sickness and death. Of course not! As such those things can never be anything else than occasions for sorrow and tears. However, living in and out of Christ we see plainly that ours is the victory always and in all things. That Christ is our Head and Lord, who came to establish the eternal covenant of God with us. That Christ, our Head, is also Lord of all things. To Him all things were made subject and all comes to pass only by His will and operation. Being our Head He makes all things, the bad as well as the good, work together for our eternal salvation. And presently He will come again to make all things new and to give us the end of our faith, the glory that is possible only in the way through which He leads us from moment to moment.

"O church of our God, sing His praises.
For with you and in you He dwells:
O sing Hallelujahs before Him.
Whose glory all praises excels."
The Industrious Insect

By MR. C. DE BOER — Kalamazoo, Mich.

"Go to the ant, thou sluggard: Consider her ways, and be wise:
Which having no chief, overseer, or ruler,
Provideth her bread in the summer,
And gathereth her food in the harvest."

Prov. 6:6-8.

How true is this proverb of Solomon of old, for, indeed, the species of ants inhabiting the tropics and subtropics instinctively provide their food in summer and gather in harvest. In these regions of the world ants are active throughout the year and, consequently, must provide for the dry season when there is a dearth of food. However, our temperate species are dormant during the winter and because of their hibernation, the bodily activities are very slow and thus only a very small amount of food is necessary, if any at all.

Let us consider some of the methods regularly employed by certain species of ants to provide for seasons of scarcity.

In the Amazon region the Atta ants construct their nests in a very ingenious way. They carry a small amount of soil to the crotch of a tree and there they carefully plant the seed of an orchid-like plant which obtains its food from the moist air and develops into the shape of a flowering sponge, making an ideal formicary (ant-nest). Some have suggested that the wind or a bird might have carried the seed into the crotch of the tree where it germinated and the ants simply made use of it. Experiments have confirmed that the latter suppositions are erroneous for the seeds will grow only in soil prepared by these species of ants. In addition, it was shown that when given one of its favorite berries this ant will suck out the juice and carefully plant the seed in its nest.

In the grassy plains of Texas and Mexico there is a true agricultural ant called "Sower Ant". One can scarcely escape noticing the circular areas containing a very sparse uniform vegetation, consisting of only one species of grass called "ant-rice" or "needle grass." What a contrast this is to the dense vegetation of the surrounding plain! How is this possible? Once again we are amazed at the industrious insect—the ant—which diligently and conscientiously removes all the weeds and plants in these areas except the
“needle-grass.” Thus, a considerable radius surrounding their nest will flourish with this “rice-grass” which alone survives and matures. These seeds are then gathered and stored in their nests. Sometimes rain causes the seed to germinate which endangers the nest itself. How quickly the ants sense this danger, for immediately the seeds are carried out and scattered abroad, which may possibly account for the “rice-fields” which were an enigma to the early explorers.

In southern France and Algeria the “Harvester Ants” provide themselves with elaborate underground granaries, which in some instances, are even divided into separate sections for the various seeds collected. Special guards are ever present at the portals to prevent any undesirable seeds or pebbles from entering. The granary is very carefully cemented to aid in protection against moisture. Some claim that these seeds are treated with some inhibiting substance by the ants to prevent germination, for as soon as they are planted outside, they commence to grow. Special members, called soldiers (who are provided with heavy chewing jaws) moisten and grind the grain into paste which is used for food. At the end of the season these bread-makers are no longer useful, and so their fellow members decapitate them (an exception to the codes of the ant realm). The following spring new cooks are produced.

Not only do ants engage in agricultural work, but some are also pastoral in nature. Certain plant lice—called aphids—produce a saccharine-like secretion which ants consider a great delicacy. In a very maternal way these ants provide the aphids with shelter and protection. For when they discover them on some leaf or bush, they herd them together very gently with their antennae and direct them to their homes just as a shepherd would herd his flock and bring them home. Their care is well rewarded for they receive an abundance of sweet exudation. In spite of their minute size, the average aphid sometimes produces 20 to 40 drops of this sugary fluid per hour. Lasius niger (ant) actually fences in areas in which she keeps her little cows (aphids) and amputates the wings to prevent their escape. Another species called Lasius flavus collects aphid eggs and nurses the young so as to insure itself of an adequate honey-dew supply. In times of danger it exercises just as much care and caution in sparing the young aphid as its own young. The lady bird beetle is very fond of eating aphids and so a certain species of ants makes paper-like cages for its aphids to protect them from the enemy.

In tropical Asia, Africa and Australia are found the “Weaver Ants”
which draw two leaves together. When the ant larvae are ready to spin their cocoon, the adult ant uses the larvae as a shuttle in sew-
ing the two leaves together while the larvae secretes its thread (ordinarily used in the formation of the cocoon).

**Believe, It or Not!!!**

(1). Did you know that ants can tunnel under rivers; that they are miniature engineers and have been observed in building bridges?

(2). Are you aware that certain species of ants have funerals. and when a member dies the entire community marches solemnly to a selected site? After digging a grave and burying the dead, they return 'two-by-two' to their homes.

(3). Have you heard that the workers are marvelous "nursemaids" and care for young in all the stages with great tenderness and solicitude which is not excelled by any other insect or animal?

(4). Have you ever seen ants attracted to the light? Although they enjoy the illuminating rays their homes are a perpetual "black-out" necessitated by the fact that they must function as retreats in time of storm, as protection in times of stress, and as little dens in time of hibernation during the winter months. Thus the chambers are built many inches beneath the surface of the ground. However, during sunshiny days, the workers painstakingly carry the eggs and larvae to the surface where they can be warmed by the sun's rays and profit from them.

(5). Have you read that there is a species of ants which are held as slaves by other ants who are warriors by nature and are always fighting neighboring communities? They escort their prisoners of war" to their homes and keep them in systematic servitude for the rest of their days.

(6). Have you ever been told that as many as 90,000 ants can live in one ant-hill two feet high? That nests have been found in Columbia S. A., which range from sixteen to twenty feet in diameter and were three feet high.

(7). Have you observed that ants have a storage pouch called a "flagon" at the entrance of the stomach and when distended, it frequently occupies 7-8ths of the abdomen. Certain ants when thus filled will suspend themselves from the roof of the formicary. In time of famine they will unselfishly regurgitate their reserve supply of
honey-dew from the flagon and thus maintain the lives in the community. Never again will they see the light of day for they are voluntary prisoners and their sole purpose for existence is to function as mechanical reservoirs.

The social life of this interesting industrious insect can best be summarized in the words of one author: "How happily the members of the community seem to live together, there is harmony everywhere. The little people help each other when in need or in difficulty. When one is hungry another feeds it; when one is sickly another ministers unto it; the smaller workers of frail build or not so robust as others are borne along in the grasp of their more stalwart neighbors. When a burden is too heavy for one to carry, another comes to its aid. When separated a little while from each other the joy of the little people at meeting knows scarcely any bounds."

C. De Boer.

Junior Journal....

By MISS ALICE REITSMA — Redlands, California

How many of you have ever visited or lived in California? Well, a few months ago I would have answered no to that question along with many of you Juniors. But now I am here, in Redlands, California, the air is filled with the smell of bon-fires, in California the sun shines brightly every day, roses

First Protestant Reformed School, Redlands, Calif.

While in Michigan and other northern states the leaves are turning gold and red and brown, and
are blooming, and the oranges are ripening on the trees.

Schools are again in full swing everywhere, and while all you Juniors are, no doubt, attending Christian schools, it is only in California that our Juniors are privileged to attend a Protestant Reformed School. And I am privileged to be teacher.

As soon as the October Issue of Beacon Lights reached us we read it through in school. We studied all the pictures with keen interest and were surprised to find so many familiar faces. We had just opened our books to the center picture, the long one where about three hundred of our number were gathered together, when one of my pupils raised his hand and remarked, "I found Rev. Hoeksema!"

We found the Convention Reflections interesting and stopped for a few moments of discussion after reading Rev. Vermeer's reflection.

The Reverend wrote:

"The banquet program was good, except for the movies. Personally I disapprove of movies at our Conventions."

I explained that the pictures shown at the banquet were pictures of beauty spots in Nature, and then they all wondered what objection and what Scriptural reasons Rev. Vermeer might have for his disapproval. Perhaps, Juniors everywhere, as well as all our readers are equally interested to know.

Rev. Vermeer, will you write an article on the subject for the next issue of Beacon Lights?

And, now, we invite all Juniors to contribute to our Junior Journal. If you have any questions, any suggestions, or any reflections, send them to:

Junior Journal
1248 Ohio St.
Redlands California.

We would especially like to hear from all Junior Societies. Send us pictures of your societies, reports of your activities, essays, papers, or anything you may have that would be of interest to our Juniors elsewhere.

— CONTRIBUTIONS —

Beacon Lights would like to thank the following individuals and groups for their contributions and donations for our publication:

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When we began this series of essays on early church history, we were asked to do so from the viewpoint of the lives of the great men God raised up and used in the growth of His church. Thus far we have done so, calling your attention to Ignatius, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Origen and Tertullian. However, we also felt the need of giving you a general picture of the condition of the church in the periods in which these men lived.

We have now come to the period of polemics, and once again we feel the need of making a few general remarks about the period and the events that lead up to it before we begin to single out and treat the lives of individuals who lived in that age. This period of polemics had in common with the period of apologies, the period which we have just considered, the fact that the church is still fighting against its enemies. That is true of the church in every age. The age of polemics differed from the age in which the apologists lived in that now the true church and the true believers found themselves fighting almost solely against the enemy who was inside and not outside the church. The apologists, we have seen, sought to prove that Christianity has and deserves a place in this world and that the heathen idolatry and humanistic philosophy of man is to be condemned. The church in the age of polemics—the word polemic, by the way, means argument or controversy—strove to defend the truth over against the false doctrines that were being taught in the church. It was a period of arguments and controversies over points of doctrine. In it there was a tremendous step made in the development of doctrine.

The devil being cunning and crafty and having found by experience that persecution — and the church had undergone some extremely violent persecutions before the age of polemics—did not hinder Christianity but rather occasioned its spread sought now to undermine the church from within. There was a rapid rise and development of false doctrines under his guidance. The existing false doctrines, that is, the false doctrines that were pre-
sent when Christ was here upon earth and when His Spirit was poured out upon His church, began to assume new forms that were more suitable and deceiving in that they professed to believe in Christ.

One of the chiefest of these new forms of an old false doctrine was that of Ebionism. It was simply a whitewashed Judaism. Remember what we said in a previous installment that the two chief opponents of Christianity in the early days of the New Testament Church were Judaism which was the doctrine of the unbelieving Jews who wanted to hold on to all the ritual and shadows of the Old Testament and rejected Christ completely even though He was of Jewish descent and Paganism which was the old idolatry, mythology and philosophy of the heathen nations outside of the nation of Israel. Well, in the second century this Judaism put on a new cloak but remained unchanged in its heart. It began to profess faith in Christ, that is, in as far as it felt the necessity of doing so in order to deceive those who professed to be Christians, and at the same time by implication it denied Him completely. The devil is still at his old trick which was first tried in Paradise and was so successful in deceiving man.

The main tenets of this Ebionism were the following four points for which information I am indebted to Prof. G. M. Ophoff and his church history notes: (1) Jesus is the promised Messiah, the Son of David, but a mere man like Moses and David. (2) Circumcision and observation of the whole law of Moses are necessary to salvation. (3) Paul is an apostate and a heretic, and all his epistles must be put under a ban. (4) Christ is soon to return and will introduce the glorious 1000 year reign of the Messiah with Jerusalem as its seat.

Notice that here in the second century the false doctrines of premillennialism, arminianism, and modernism were being taught. There is nothing new about these doctrines. Modernism today denies Christ's divinity and preaches Him as an excellent teacher and a man who set us a wonderful example of love and obedience. But there is nothing modern about Modernism. Ebionism taught this same heresy centuries ago. The point we wish to make here, however, is that here in the second century false doctrines are beginning to creep into the church that calls itself Christian. And Christians who have been fighting the enemy outside the fold now found themselves fighting against those within the fold. The church began to argue, to discuss and to defend the truth. A period of controversy or polemics was about ready to begin.

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To Our Boys In Service

Platte, South Dakota
October 12, 1946.

Dear Fellows:—

It is some time ago that you heard from me through Beacon Lights. In part, this was due to the fact that I was away from home a good deal of the time since the beginning of June. And as you may notice from the address above this letter: at present I am again rather far from Grand Rapids and home. You will bear with me, I am sure, if in this first letter I will tell you a little about myself and my work here in Platte, S. D.

I am writing this letter in my hotel room where I have made my home during the past week. The mission committee of our churches asked me to do some work here in the interest of the cause of the Reformed Truth as God has called us to represent it, in continuation of the work that was begun here the past summer by the Revs. A. Cammenga and M. Gritters, and I acceded to their request. The Rev. Cammenga is with me in this field of labor.

Last Tuesday I spoke in a lodge hall here in Platte on the subject: “Through Grace Only”. Thursday I lectured in the same hall on: “The Good That Sinners Do”. Sunday afternoon, the Lord willing, I hope to preach in Corsica, which is about twenty five miles from here, and in the evening I will preach in Platte again, D. V. Next week Tuesday and Thursday I am scheduled to lecture again, this time in Corsica. However, at this moment, I am not sure that we will be able to finish this program for Monday morning we must vacate our hotel, and we did not yet succeed to find another lodging place. The hunters are coming next week, and they have reserved every available place to lodge.

If we did not firmly believe that the Lord controls and governs all things, and that He will care for His church in the world, our experience here thus far might well discourage us and fill us with dismay. Our meetings this week were very poorly attended, partly due, no doubt, to bad roads, but largely also to ignorance and indifference. We also paid some personal visits. A few people are interested, but many are quite satisfied to remain ignorant.

But the Lord controls all things. We may sow the seed in the field He prepares for us, but the increase He must give.

Well, friends. I thought you would be interested to know a little about this work.

The Lord bless and keep you!

As ever, your friend,

Rev. H. Hoeksema.
Recently I gave a little, informal talk in our Young People's Society and at the request of our Editor-in-chief, who seems to hear about things, I will pass on a few of the thoughts which I expressed at that time to the readers of our Beacon Lights and especially to the members of our Societies.

Of course, you all wonder what that little, informal talk was about and whether it is worthy of being reproduced in Beacon Lights. Well, let me tell you the story. Not so long ago we got a new constitution for our Young People's Society. Naturally, we read this constitution and as Society we adopted it. There were, however, particularly three articles in the Constitution which I thought were worthy of some elucidation. This for the benefit of all the members but especially for the new members who had just joined our Society. It is always proper to know what is expected of us. The articles referred to are about the basis of the society, its purpose and the duty of the members. — From now on you listen in to the little talk.

Article 2 of our constitution reads: "The basis of this Society is the Word of God as officially interpreted by the Confessional standards of our Church." This article tells us immediately what basis we are standing on. Our foundation is the Word of God. We proceed from the Word. we build upon the Word. we want to do all things in our Society in harmony with the Word of God. However, this second article tells us more than that. After all there are a great many societies and organizations which claim that they have the Word of God as their basis. Hence, we state also in this second article as to where we stand confessionally. We are not Arminian, we are not Un-denominational, we do not call ourselves Fundamentalists, although fundamental we are. However, we are Reformed, more specifically Protestant Reformed. This fact we must at all times remember, we are a Protestant Reformed Young People's Society. This binds us in our activities, this decides what things we can do and how we can do them. Naturally, if you do
not want to stand with us on this basis there is no room for you in our Society.

That brings me to article 3, which deals with the "Purpose", and reads: "This Society is organized for the purpose of developing the religious talents of the youth of the congregation, in order that they may obtain a more vivid insight into the Word of God. To accomplish this aim the Society will study "Scripture," the problems of our age, and the Confessions of our Church." It seems to me that there is something vague about the first part of this article. It is e.g., a little difficult for me to understand as to what is meant by the "religious talents of the youth." Perhaps it is not so vague at that. The way I understand this article it goes out from the assumption that as covenant youth all the members of our society have religious talents, perhaps "spiritual gifts" would be a better expression. Now, these religious talents or spiritual gifts must be used, exercised, developed. We must grow, increase, both for our own wellbeing and the edification of our fellow members. And now our Society is the means, one of the means, to help us develop, grow, increase spiritually. And if we do develop religiously, spiritually, we will obtain a more vivid insight into the Word of God. What a splendid purpose we have in mind. Of course, our very purpose determines what we shall do in our Society to accomplish this aim. We will study Scripture, the problems of our age (in the light of Scripture of course) and the Confessions of our Church. Don't you think that as a Society we have high ideals? And it certainly is worthwhile for us as Protestant Reformed youth to be a member of such a Society. On the other hand, the purpose of our Society also, and that naturally, limits us in our activities. We are not in politics, we are no "mission" society, we are no "gossip club". We don't come together to "rake each other over the coals". We are not a society for sports either. The foregoing does not mean that we condemn all sports but it simply implies that this is not the purpose of our Society. If e.g. we want to belong to a baseball team we must not expect that we can change our Society into a baseball club. That would be in conflict with our very purpose. Hence, if you want to be a member of our Society you must agree with our purpose. If you don't that is too bad and we feel sorry for you, but we can not use you. And if you consider our Young People's Society to be an "entertainment club" or a "house of fun", please don't apply for membership. We have no place for you in our midst. We like to have you be a member and it is our goal that every Protestant Re-
formed youth be a member of our Society, but you must agree with our basis and our purpose, and both are clearly defined in our Constitution.

That brings me to article 4 of our by-laws, which reads (abbreviated): “It shall be the duty of each member to attend Society regularly and come to the meeting fully prepared.” I think that also this article is very plain and speaks for itself. With such a high purpose in mind we certainly need to come regularly and we must prepare for the meeting. “Prepare”, you say? Yes, exactly that. And that means that particularly with Scripture study and with the discussion of our Confessions, we study the matter before we come to the meeting. In the old country we called this “voorstudy”, “study before”. Perhaps you say: “I thought that we came to listen and that the only one who needs to be prepared is the one who has the introduction.” If that is what you think, you are entirely wrong on this score. If you want to take part in the discussion you must acquaint yourself with the portion that is to be discussed. If you don’t you will get little out of it. Fill your mind and soul with the contents of Scripture and you’ll be surprised how much easier it is to follow the introduction and to ask intelligent questions or to give the proper answer to questions that may be raised by your fellow members.

Did I hear you say that you never prepare? How is it possible! Is that perhaps the reason why you don’t like Society very well and why you never have anything to say? I take it that from now on you will come to Society prepared. The very purpose of our Society calls for this. You cannot afford to waste time, and the Word of God requires it.

Along these lines was my “little talk”. I said more but there is no space for a longer article. I hope that I have given you a little “food for thought”. Always remember, the basis and the purpose of your Society and always come prepared to the meeting. If you do the latter you will like your Society, be an active member, and you will benefit from the Society and the Society from you. Your Society is what you make it, and you get out of it what you put into it.
A Reformation In Pella

By REV. L. VERMEER — Pella, Iowa

The remarkable things that characterize any good, sound reformation were also noticeable in the reformation in Pella, Iowa. Before there was ever a Protestant Reformed congregation in this community, dissatisfaction was noticeable among a few of the more devout Christians in this vicinity. They were dissatisfied with the preaching and practices of the Christian Reformed and Reformed Churches. This dissatisfaction was not merely the kind found among those who are forever kicking and murmuring against any existing order of things, but it was a dissatisfaction of the soul because they were not receiving the necessary spiritual food and drink thru the preaching of the Word of God.

During this period a couple of men came from Grand Rapids, Michigan and told the good people of Pella and vicinity about the heresies proclaimed and the errors of the three points adopted by the Christian Reformed Churches. Also with great zeal they revealed and exposed the sinful actions taken by these churches against the newly founded Protestant Reformed Denomination and its leaders. These men, who are perhaps known to some of our readers, were Mr. J. W. Stursma and Mr. T. Idema. They were men who stood strong for the truth of our fathers and testified all about Pella that though the old fundamentals of the Reformed truth were being denied, yet the faith of our fathers liveth still. These men before this had many friends in and around Pella. But gradually many of these friends left them and sought their company no more. But as always, there was a small Gideon's band, that listened and gave heed. From this Gideon's band came voices and protests were brought to consistory and classis against the errors of Common Grace and against the expulsion from the Christian Reformed Churches of Revs. Hoeksema and Ophoff. These protests went unheeded, the hatred against these few men became more intense.

In the spring of 1928 Rev. Hoeksema was asked to come to Pella to give a few lectures on the "Three Points" and their implications. These lectures were accompanied by open debate which the Reverend invited for the purpose of bringing the issues as clearly before the people as possible. Ever clearer the people saw that the churches in which they were members were
departing from the old Reformed truth. Then they understood the cause of their spiritual dissatisfaction. So they asked for their membership certificates and again asked Rev. H. Hoeksema to come over with the Mission Committee and organize them into a Protestant Reformed Church.

The organization of this church took place on April 28, 1928 with the Rev. H. Hoeksema and Mr. E. Bylsma taking charge of the organization. A rather interesting item to be noted here is that at that first meeting of the group, a young man came forward and declared that he could not make profession of his faith in the Christian Reformed Church where he had been baptized and instructed. His conscience would not allow this. Consequently he asked if it were possible to confess his faith immediately before this newly formed group. He was examined and properly questioned by Rev. Hoeksema who presided at the first consistory meeting. And the following Sunday evening he was publicly admitted to partake of the means of grace of this newly formed congregation. Altogether there were eight families and one single member at organization.

We will try and give you a few highlights of this newly organized church. During its first few years of existence, two committees were appointed by the consistory to see the Mayor of Pella and the councilmen, if it were possible to receive greater protection for its property. It appears from the minutes, that every week or two windows would be broken in the church building which was purchased and other things were done to make it embarrassing for this new reformation in Pella. Also it is remarkable that most of the members of this church came not from the churches in Pella proper, but rather from the smaller communities that surround this town, such as Leighton and Peoria. At first the congregation was well taken care of by our first students, Kok, De Jong, Hanko, Cammenga, Vermeer and R. Veldman. Then when this class was to graduate from our Theological School, Pella joined with our newly organized church in Oskaloosa to jointly call a minister. Rev. L. Vermeer was then called and installed in office Sept. 1929. This arrangement lasted for three years. after which Rev. Vermeer took charge in Oskaloosa exclusively, and Rev. H. Veldman, who had just completed his studies at our school, became the pastor of Pella. Since his pastorate here, Rev. G. Lubbers has labored here for seven years and at present Rev. L. Vermeer again is laboring in this field since February 19:15. Our congregation is rich in grace and enjoys peace and love, unto the praise of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Chapter XXVIII

THE PRINCIPLE OF LIFE

Each chapter of this last speech of Job forms a distinct development of thought. In the first chapter of his final parable, chapter 26, Job praises God and surpasses his friends in understanding and power of expression. The second portion of his speech was a further elucidation of Job's view of the lot of the ungodly. This was in chapter 27.

The idea of chapter 28 is really found in verse 28. "And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding." This we have called the principle of life.

I. Note Job's interesting meditation in this chapter before he gives his conclusion in verse 28.

1. In the first six verses he considers the secret treasures of the earth, the objects of man's desire and mining ingenuity. Out of the earth come precious things, also bread his sustenance, and fire his destruction. Notice how advanced is Job's knowledge of the metals and processes of mining. It seems the basic knowledge of the earth's elements and their use and value was known by man from the beginning. Compare the knowledge and ability of the sons of Lamech. However, the point is that Job ascribes the determining power over all the secret things of the earth to the sovereign God. (vs. 3). He sets limits to darkness even: He determines the only way of all the things of creation. "He searcheth out all perfection." That which overwhelms man, the flood is withdrawn by God at will. (vs. 4).

2. Job draws our attention to the inscrutable way of God. (vss. 7-11). No creature, not even the fowl or the vulture's eye can detect it. The animals that are acquainted with the hidden places, the caves and dens of the earth, have not found the way of God. God's hand is the almighty power that moves all things: the mountains are overturned by Him. (Think of volcanoes and so-called glacial movements.) Again Job brings out that God controls all things, limiting floods and revealing secrets at His will.

3. From these matters of abiding interest and mystery to man, Job comes to the important question, vs. 12. "But where shall wisdom be found?" Wisdom is the secret of life, for wisdom is the ability to use the best means to the attainment of the perfect goal.

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4. Wisdom is beyond man and all living; not possessed, or known, or attainable by man of self. Nevertheless we must be wise to live, to adjust ourselves to the wisdom and way of God's creation. To be man, the crown of creation, we must possess the secret of the universe and then we shall fulfill our calling to subdue and rule over all things in the earth. It is not to know the elements of the universe. Nor is it to have power, brute power, over things to use them to our will. Man has that and with that man destroys himself and creation. The course of the wisdom of man and the power over nature is seen especially clear today. The machine age has made a fool of man. The atomic age shall make man utterly foolish. for man is without true wisdom. Death and destruction, however, themselves do not possess wisdom. although they have heard the fame of it.

5. The vital conclusion of the matter, over against all science and philosophy is that God alone possesses wisdom, vs. 23. He has wisdom with respect to His way with the whole universe, possessing it from the beginning when He decreed all things.

II. This finally causes Job to express the true principles of life.

1. The principle is: the fear of the Lord. As it is often given in Scripture, "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Through the fear of the Lord we adjust ourselves to all things. we have peace and life.

2. This wisdom is the gift of God as well as the fear of the Lord. To submit to the Lord. to love Him and trust Him is a power that He alone gives us. That gift is the secret of successful living, of happiness, of true religion.

3. Though Job realizes that the fear of the Lord is the way of life and peace and that it is commanded as well as a gift of grace. it nevertheless is very difficult for him to fear the Lord, because of his misery. That is the idea of the next chapter as we shall see.

* * * *

Chapter XXIX

JOB'S TROUBLE

This portion of his parable is to be understood only in connection with the preceding chapter as we already intimated. Job knows the principle of the happy life, the life which is reconciled to all things, which the Lord gives us; that is, to fear Him. Nevertheless, Job's misery seems to stand in the way. That is the point for bringing up in this connection his misery.

1. He looks at and desires his former life.

1. This implies a complaint, although now it is with more humility and submission. Compare his first outburst of cursing against his day of birth, and his other speeches about his misery and you will notice the gradual transition.

2. Notice his characterization of his former life. a. It was with all his children. That heads his list of his blessings. (vs. 5). b. His former life was blessing in the material abundance that the earth
gave him. The earth gave him of its fat-
ness. Even the barren portions were
forced to bring forth and serve him. (vs.
6). c. He enjoyed a respected place, a
place of honor and rule. This exceptional
honor and service was indicative of the
worthiness of Job as God endowed it to
him. (vss. 7-11). d. He walked also in
the paths of justice and mercy according
to the commandments of God. (vss. 12-
17). e. Job was assured of future glory.
Death was a rest in hope and peace. (vs.
18). This was his hope because of his pos-
session of the favor of God. (vss. 19-25).

II. The important point that Job makes
about this former life is: It was his as a
favor of God. This will give us to see
his problem which he is presenting in
chapter 29 after he has confessed that
the real way of life is to fear God. No-
tice he says: 1. God preserved him. vs. 2.
2. God was gracious to him. vs. 3. His
candle shined upon him and by his light
he walked in darkness. 3. Job was the
covenant friend of God. "The secret of
God was upon his tabernacle. That is,
God dwelt in house of Job. vs. 4. 3. This
former life was the favor of God to Job
makes it now seem impossible for him to
fear the Lord. He means to say that if
he knew that he still possessed the favor
of God he could rejoice. But his misery
as he expresses it once more in the fol-
lowing chapter is because it seemed as
though God had forsaken him. Now, this
is not the same philosophy that the devil
had evinced in his contention with God.
The devil had said that Job served God
for gain. Here Job says that he does not
see how it is possible for him to fear
God if God does not make it possible.

III. This point is very vital to the
understanding of much of the argument
and problem of Job. We too can see the
difficulty. When we have and enjoy the
favor of God we also easily express the
truth that the fear of the Lord is the be-
ginning of wisdom. However, to be tried
in such a way that everything seems to
turn against us: almost makes us wonder
if the Lord has forgotten to be gracious,
as a psalm also expresses it.

Although this is seemingly an insuper-
able difficulty we must not forget that the
Word of God has something definite to
say about this matter. Although it is
only by grace that we fear the Lord, and
it seems when we suffer that we do not
enjoy God's grace, the Scriptures show
how that to suffer is also a matter of
grace! Compare the Word of God in
Philippians 1:29.

* * * *

Chapter XXX

DESCRIPTION OF JOB'S MISERY

This expression of Job's misery must
be understood in the light of 28:28 and
the preceding description of his former
enjoyment of the favor of God.

I. Job brings out the following:

1. That he is despised of the most de-
spised of men. They who themselves
were not given a decent place to live only
cursed Job to a place worse than of them-
BEACON LIGHTS

selves. Thus Job was “one in whom old age perished”, that is, one not destined to live. This is typical of the kind of suffering Jesus had to undergo. He was despised and rejected of men. (vss. 1-10).

2. The real reason for the rejection of men is that God rejected Job according to Job’s experience and in a way also according to the reality of the Prologue. God loosed Job’s cord, his connection with life. (vs. 11).

3. In vss. 12-14 there is an apt poetic figure to describe how overwhelming is the opposition of the enemy.

4. This suffering is soul suffering. vss. 15, 16. As well as bodily suffering. vss. 17, 18. If there is both physical and soul suffering the misery is indeed great. If it is just one, the other can have an influence over the other. For example, if we are physically down our spirits may help pull us out and we recover sooner than if we were also down spiritually.

5. Job feels that it is God who has cast him down so completely that he is not able to rise. He also cries unto God and he feels his prayer is not heard. Vss. 19, 20. There is only the certainty of final destruction which makes Job say the awful accusation that God is cruel. vss. 21-13.

II. Job’s reaction to this misery.

1. He feels that his destruction is final, and then he expresses how that there is no salvation in the grave. vs. 24. If we compare this with a former confession of Job in which he was sure of the resurrection of the dead, we ask why the change? or, is this an about-face. Undoubtedly Job has his dark moment whenever he considers his misery. Nevertheless, we cannot say that this expression of despair cancels his other confession of hope. Job means to say, if one has no hope of resurrection before one dies and enters the grave, then he shall surely not have hope in the grave!

2. If we follow him to the end of the chapter we find that he describes his awful despair; that he has no hope, he is only a companion of dragons and owls, animals that rule over destruction. His body is emancipated. He cries for pity and there was none.

3. In this Job means to say if one has no hope before he enters the grave, there is no hope in the grave. There is no second chance or purgatory. Therefore he is in such despair. He desires pity and light before he dies.

* * * *

Chapter XXXI

JOB’S FINAL DEFENCE

This chapter concludes Job’s final speech and is a final defense of his integrity, which gives occasion to the criticism of Elihu and the correction of the Lord.

1. In this defense of his integrity Job very correctly compares himself with the law of God. This we must see if we are to make any criticism of Job or understand the point of the book of Job. If we would say that good works are those out of faith, according to the law of God, and to His glory we would hear Job maintain that such were his good works.
And in this chapter he proceeds to show how that his life compares with the spiritual demands of the law.

II. In his comparison to the law, Job chooses the seventh commandment first. Vss. 1-12.

1. We notice that he is speaking about the seventh commandment, for he says, "I made a covenant with mine eyes; why should I think upon a maid?" And he is considering it from its deeper spiritual meaning, even as Christ interpreted it.

2. If we compare Jesus' list of the commandments as He gave them to the ruler, Luke 18:20, we also notice that Jesus heads the list of commands with this seventh commandment. The sixth, thou shalt not kill, follows the seventh according as Jesus gives the order. So the question arises, why this order? We know that the original order is not arbitrary. God is a God of order. He has a special purpose in placing the sixth commandment before the seventh. We can also say that it was not the Saviour's intention to violate the original order of perfection. Nevertheless for some reason from the point of view Jesus had in mind, it was necessary for him to stress the seventh commandment as he was giving the second table to the ruler. So also for some reason it fitted Job's comparison of himself in the light of the perfect law to compare himself with the seventh commandment first of all. We violate all the ten commandments by violating one first. It may be that Jesus desired to show which commandment was most frequently violated. It may also be that he desired to show the ruler where his religious folly lay by heading his list with the commandment which would show his religious folly.

3. Moreover, if we compare the history of Israel we find that the sin of adultery is always connected with their departure from the living God.

4. Finally, adultery is the sin which makes a fool of a man, and is warned against by Solomon as he instructs in wisdom. Compare Proverbs 7.

III. In the second place Job compares himself with the law of God which demands that we do not steal from our neighbor. He shows how that in all his dealings with his servants and with his neighbors he has kept the law of God not only to the letter but also to the spirit of it. Vss. 13-23. Notice how that Job in this demand for examination really challenges any one to find fault and also if so he then will submit to a just punishment, for he considers sin grievous.

IV. Job's next consideration is the real deep insight into the root of sin, which is covetousness. It seems that he has that in mind in vss. 24-28. He thinks of all the wealth and material things which may have been objects upon which he set his desire, even the sun and moon. If his heart was enticed or he prided himself in his accomplishments, "his mouth kissed his hand", then he realizes that he stands guilty and condemned. The reason is clearly seen, "for I should have denied the God which is above." If we set our heart on any other creature than God, we deny God.

V. In vss. 29-32 Job is thinking of the
evil of killing our neighbor. He says: "If I wished the destruction of him that hated me." This commandment is also interpreted as Jesus interpreted it, that we love our enemies, do good to them.

VI. Vss. 33 and 34 show that Job also knows that if there is sin we must confess it to stand before God. It was the sin of Adam, says Job, to hide his sin in his bosom.

VII. Finally, Job ends his speech by desiring a hearing. He desires that God would hear him and that his adversary would make his complaint in record, in a book. We think of the adversary, the devil, and we know how that Job had not committed a sin which had moved God to have the devil persecute Job. Nevertheless, in his defense of his integrity Job says. He really implies that because he is innocent, therefore God is unjust in allowing him to suffer. That is the meaning of his closing challenge. He ends his words by saying if he has done ought that is contrary to the law, then let the earth reject him.

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Reformed Witness Hour

It was on November 12, 1941, that the Reformed Witness Hour went on the air for the first time. The program was known as the Protestant Reformed Hour and Rev. Hoeksema spoke upon the theme: God is God. Sunday, November 17, the Reformed Witness Hour will be broadcast for the 200th time. Perhaps some of you may wonder why in six years of broadcasting we have reached only the 200th mark. It was our custom for several years to broadcast only during the 26 week winter period, going off the air entirely for the summer months. Since this is now impossible due to crowded radio schedules, the Reformed Witness Hour is aired 51 times a year.

200 times! God has privileged us by allowing the Reformed Witness Hour to go out 200 times in the past six years. We have sent it out with humble hearts, praying that God may use it in the interest of His kingdom. We have sent it out as precious seed, knowing that the increase is God's.

For the period between the first
broadcast up to the last broadcast in 1945 the Reformed Witness Hour was sponsored by the Young Men's Society of the First Protestant Reformed Church. However, on Jan. 1, 1946 the program passed under the control of the Consistory of the First Church, which has retained the old committee to take care of the technical details of the program.

It is interesting to note how a transcribed program such as the Reformed Witness Hour, as in the main, can shift from place to place. We have broadcast in several localities in which we can no longer be heard because of termination of contract by stations unsympathetic to religious broadcasting. At present we are using station W.P.A.T. in Paterson, New Jersey, 8:00-8:30 A.M., W.A.A.F., Chicago, Illinois, 8:30-9:00 A.M., K.V.O.S. Bellingham (Lynden district) Washington 8:00-8:30 A.M., W.H.B.L. Sheboygan, Wisconsin, 8:00-8:30 (9:00-9:30 in Michigan), and W.L.A.V. Grand Rapids, Michigan 4:00-4:30.

Looking back we can say Eben-ezer, for surely God hath helped us. Looking forward, we pray that God will make us faithful also in this respect, so that we may be faithful, and work while it is day, ere the night cometh in which no man can work.

E. J. K.