

# Lutheran Spokesman



And at Cana, Wedding Guest,  
In Thy Godhead Manifest;  
Manifest in Pow'r Divine,  
Changing Water into Wine.

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## “The Mother Of All Studies”

Sorry for what all may hope is the last tired reference which aims to mimic S. Hussein’s ridiculous battle boast, but maybe it got your attention? Besides, our reference is not really to recent happenings in Iraq, but to an ancient proverb: “Repetition is the mother of study.”

In this Epiphany season we come face to face again and again with the name itself which means “to make manifest”—“to make clear.” We are hearing from both lectern and pulpit the miracles which Jesus did, proving that this little Baby whose birth we just celebrated is also no less than the true God.

Besides the Scriptures themselves, there may be no more convincing a work showing Jesus to be also God than #134 in *The Lutheran Hymnal*, namely, “Songs Of Thankfulness And Praise.” *The Handbook To The Lutheran Hymnal* quotes the author, Christopher Wordsworth, who published the hymn in 1862 with the heading: *Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany. —Recapitulation of the Subjects presented in the Services of former weeks*

*throughout the season of Epiphany; and Anticipation of the future great and glorious Epiphany, at which Christ will appear again to judge the World.* (p. 106)

Each stanza of the hymn ends, you recall, “God in man made manifest.” In fact, the words seem to occur at least 50 times, until one may be tempted to shout: “Enough already!” It reminds one of sermons heard (or even preached?) in which the speaker repeats just one word or phrase so often that the hearer resolves, after just one more time, to run forward with a wide piece of duct tape. Actually, the hymn which we dearly love anyway repeats the phrase only twelve times in five verses.

The hymn is based on I Peter 1:20, to which we here add verse 21: “He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifested in these last times for you who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.”

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A brief review of how Jesus manifested Himself? Who changed water into wine? John 2. Healed the Nobleman's son? John 4. Filled the nets? Luke 5. Cast out demons? Matthew 8, 9, 12, 17; Mark 1, Luke 4, 11. Healed Peter's mother-in-law? Matthew 8. Healed the Paralytic? Matthew 9. Healed the Impotent man, the withered hand, the Centurion's servant? John 5, Matthew 12, Luke 7. Raised the Youth of Nain? Luke 7. Raised Jairus' daughter, Lazarus, and Himself? Mark 5, John 11, John 10 and Luke 24.

"And there are also many other things that Jesus did, the which, if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written" (Jn. 21:25).

Why all of the above? Of course, manifest, manifest, *manifest!* The Baby



Jesus heals the Man at the Pool.

of the manger is also God my Savior! May the Christian thoughts behind the word keep rattling around in our brains and hearts with new appreciation until "the future great and glorious Epiphany."

—Bertram Naumann



## URIM AND THUMMIM

Only seven places in the New King James Version (NKJV) use the mysterious words "Urim" (oo-REEM) and "Thummim" (too-MEEM) together or separately:

*And you (Moses) shall put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be over Aaron's heart when he goes in before the Lord (Ex. 28:30).*

*Then he (Moses) put the breastplate on him (Aaron) and put the Urim and the Thummim in the breastplate (Lev. 8:8).*

*He (Joshua) shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall inquire before the Lord for him by the judgment of the Urim (Nos. 27:21).*

*And of Levi, he (Moses) said, :“Let Your (God's) Thummim and Your Urim be with Your holy one (the tribe of Levi)” (Deut. 33:8).*

*And when Saul inquired of the Lord, the Lord did not answer him, either by dreams or by Urim or by the prophets (I Sam. 28:6).*

*And the governor said to them (the unregistered priests) that they should not eat of the most holy things till a priest could consult with the Urim and Thummim (Ezra 2:63, Neh. 7:65).*

These Bible passages indicate that the Urim and Thummim were special objects placed in a pocket or fold of the cloth, jeweled breastplate worn by the Jewish high priest and used to deter-

mine God's royal desire for the nation. This special means of receiving the Lord's guidance was definitely in use from the time of Moses (1500 B.C.) through the days of King David (1000 B.C.), and possibly as late as the Jews' return from their Babylonian captivity (around 500 B.C.).

Most Bible scholars say that the word "Urim" means "lights" and therefore "clarity," and that "Thummim" means "perfection" and therefore "correctness." Thus the Urim and Thummim were a means by which the Lord made His will perfectly clear in a specific manner.

### Complete In Jesus

Scripture provides no definite information on how the Urim and Thummim were actually used. Some Bible commentaries suggest that the Urim and Thummim were flat stones, white on one side and black on the other, which the high priest would cast upon the ground. If both stones landed white the answer was "Yes." If both landed black the answer was "No." One stone landing white and the other black indicated "No reply" from the Lord.

Several translations of I Samuel 14:41 furnish information on the possible use of the Urim and Thummim. The NKJV (based on the Hebrew) says "Therefore Saul said to the Lord God of Israel, 'Give a perfect lot.' So Saul and Jonathan were taken, but the people escaped."

The Revised Standard Version and the Beck translations (based on the Greek Septuagint) say, "Therefore Saul said, 'O Lord God of Israel, why hast Thou not answered Thy servant this day? If this guilt is in me or in Jonathan my son, O Lord God of Israel, give Urim; but if this guilt is in Thy people Israel, give Thummim.' And Jonathan and Saul were taken, but the people escaped."

We Christians living in the New Testament time enjoy such a wealth of spiritual insight that we no longer need the Urim and Thummim of a Jewish high priest to determine God's will. Jesus Christ, our great High Priest, has made God's will "perfectly clear" for us.

"In Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" and we "are complete in Him" (Col. 2:3 & 10).

—Robert Mackensen



## The Gospel, the Power of God— Studies in Romans

**FREE—FREE AT LAST!**

"Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes" (Romans 10:4 NIV).

Would you use this Scripture in witnessing to someone about our great sal-

vation in Jesus? If you are sharing the Gospel with a Jewish person, you

could do no better. For this summary statement of our Lord's salvation in Romans follows Paul's passionate plea: "My heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved!" (10:1)

Remember what happened when Jesus was brought to the temple on His eighth day? As the custom of the Law required, He was circumcised. Like His countrymen, He was from that moment "under the Law" (Gal. 4:4).

For Jews there was no greater honor than this, for it was the mark of God's Covenant People, their adoption as sons (9:4). Even today there is great celebration when a non-Christian Jewish lad is "Bar Mitzvahed" (acknowledged a Son of the Law).

In view of this intense national pride in the Law, it doesn't seem likely that Hosannas would burst forth as you gently place the Holy Child in Jewish arms, explaining that Jesus is "the end of the Law." Who would want it ended?

Well, it appears that a man named Simeon did!

### **Simeon Set Free**

What we sing as the "Nunc Dimittis" in the Communion liturgy is very literally:

**"Now are You releasing Your slave, Supreme Master, according to Your utterance, in peace" (Lk. 2:29).** The language of giving a slave his freedom. Thanks to the revelation of the Spirit (Lk. 2:26) this devout and righteous man understood that he had really been enslaved by the Law. Like *all* of his race, Simeon had been anything but a *son*. Like so *few* of his race, he enjoyed the confidence that the Babe in his arms was here to set him free.

Listen to Jesus explaining this to His countrymen, the Jews: **"We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?"** Jesus replied, **"I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed!"** (Jn. 8:33-36 NIV)

How did Jesus do it? **Christ is the end of the Law!** When—as the Substitute—He so perfectly did what the Law required and so completely fulfilled what the Law typified and prophesied, He brought it gloriously to its goal. (See Romans 5:19) So the Law was "ended." So it became possible for the righteousness of Jesus to be "for everyone who believes" (10:4).

### **And So, Set Free**

A slavemaster commands and controls. To be "under the Law" is to be under the complete command and control of the Law, "the law of sin and death" (8:2). Because of the weakness of our human nature (flesh) the Law could not bring the life it intended (8:3; 7:10). It actually brought death and despair to any who put their hope in it. Enslaved!

What hope is in those words: **"Christ, the end of the Law!"** We can actually die to (be completely separated from) what would sentence us to death! **"But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the Law!"** (7:6-7) When the full significance of this dawns on one, it makes the spirit tingle. Come Jewish friend, join Simeon. Take Jesus in your arms and He will liberate you from slavery and make you a *son* in-

deed. He is the Glory of Israel. Believing in Him, you will receive His perfect righteousness as your own before God. In that you will stand confidently as a true son of God. Be free of the deadly delusion that your works of the Law, however sincere, can qualify you before God, for life. Believe in Him, and you will be saved! (10:9) Free, indeed.

### As For Gentiles...

The Gentile world is apart from the Law, not under it as are the descendants of Abraham according to the flesh (2:12-16). So this liberation from slavery under the Law is not so direct. How can this splendid Gospel witness apply? How can we use it witnessing to other Gentiles and to ourselves, if such we are?

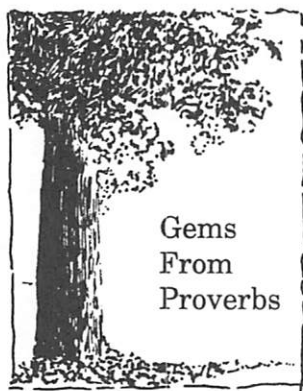
In the covenant Law of Sinai, God revealed the measure of holiness a holy God requires of His people. Along with

many specifics suited only to Israel (such as the Sabbath laws), the Law expressed what is required of all people. To this our own consciences bear witness (see Romans 1 & 2). Anyone, therefore, who attempts to earn God's acceptance and approval by his own good works most surely joins the blinded Jew in slavery. A slavery from which Christ would liberate him by fulfilling the Law.

For the Gospel invites all to turn from their own doing and vaunted virtue. Turn in faith to Jesus, to receive as your very own the righteousness of Him who is the "end of the Law" forever.

After all, the Salvation that Simeon saw in his arms is not only the Glory of God's people Israel, but a "light to lighten the Gentiles as well." In peace, stand free. Free at last!

—Rollin A. Reim



**“Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth” (Prov. 27:1).**

For a child of God to use an appointment book is hardly unusual or evil in itself. Indeed, used rightly, it helps a person avoid sins of neglect or inconsideration. But as we schedule our time and jot down our appointments, let us take care that in the process a certain ungodly attitude doesn't sneak into our hearts.

You see, we recognize that people who boast and brag have “I trouble”—the kind which Jesus treats with the Gospel. He gives us that clear vision which enables us to see God's working at every point in our lives. How can we think and talk as though we were movers and shakers when we know that all that's good that comes our way is our

heavenly Father's doing, and that anything worthwhile which we accomplish is a result of God's giving strength, ability, or resources?

And yet, that kind of attitude which the thankful heart casts out can come creeping back in when we look to the future. It is all too easy to think and plan and schedule as though we were in full control of our own lives...and the future as well. And woe to anything that dares disrupt our plans! The boastful person talks as though he alone does it all, as though he were the only player on the stage and even God had no part. How foolish! But haven't we all at times thoughtlessly adopted such a stance in looking to the future?

We don't know what the future holds, nor do we control it. Such knowledge belongs to God; such power is His alone. He may well have other plans for us than we have. His ways are not our ways; they are better...full of divine love and wisdom.

Plan we should. God wants us to make the best use of the opportunities

He gives us to represent Him while here on earth. But not all of these opportunities does He tell us about ahead of time.

Often, from our point of view, the Lord makes "last minute" changes. Rather than fret and fume because our "sacred schedule" has been altered, let us learn to see these unexpected developments as "appointments" God has made for us in the course of our serving as His agents and ambassadors.

And when we plan and schedule let us do it in the spirit James urges when he tells us: "You ought to say, 'If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that.'"

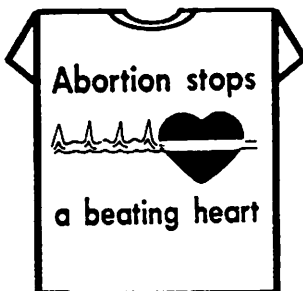
Before the days of copiers or even mimeographs, one pastor read the post-service announcements from his black appointment book. As he did so each week, he made it plain that all scheduled events were still subject to God's final approval. Indeed, the pastor's children came to call their father's appointment agenda the "God-willing book."

—W.V. Schaller

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## **GOD BLESS AMERICA**

*WITH LIFE, LIBERTY AND HAPPINESS  
FROM THE WOMB TO THE TOMB...*



**Proverbs 31:8-9—**

"Open your mouth for the speechless, in the cause of all who are appointed to die. Open your mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy."

**Psalms 31:15—**

"My times are in Your hand. . ."

## Confessional Loyalty\*

I rejoiced with all my heart to learn from (your letter) that also in your remote North the Lord is beginning to stir up souls, so that a place might be prepared there for the pure Gospel as God once caused it to be preached again by His faithful servant Luther. God bless and prosper this godly project! It is certain that one whose only concern is to have a church without asking whether the old, unadulterated Gospel is being preached there is helping the erection of the tower of Babel which is being built so zealously here in America by a hundred sects.

All sects rise and fall like comets, but only the star of our dear orthodox church of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession will continue to shine, even though a cloud now and then hides it from view. For: "God's Word and Luther's doctrine pure shall to eternity endure;" "The Word they still shall let remain, nor any thanks have for it. He's by our side upon the plain with His good gifts and Spirit." No matter how much our Lutheran Catechism is despised, it nevertheless is and remains a fortress which can be captured as little as the world can storm the fortress of the Bible. For while in other catechisms of the sects there are various rationalistic additions, the mine shaft of our precious Catechism contains nothing but the pure gold and the sterling, seven times purified and tested, precious ore of divine truth.

God give you strength to hold high this flag of our church in your area, so that all the straying children of our church may there re-assemble under her banner, and many others may come and join us in confessing the one faith in one love and hope....

Since I now see clearly how important the...area is, I will gladly do my part so that you will get a man who is not after the wool but after the sheep and who is capable of establishing something solid....Only I must tell you in advance that you can receive such a candidate only if you would call him on the basis of God's Word and the confessional writings of our church. We will not permit our preachers to be turned into servants of men. For that reason we will not allow them to be hired for a year or for several years, but with unspecified tenure, as long as the Lord wills, that is, as long as the preacher faithfully discharges his office or until he is called away or until God summons him through death. This is not to say that a congregation could not get rid of our preachers under any circumstances. If a preacher becomes a false teacher, that is, if he departs from the pure Gospel or if he is not faithful to his office or if he leads a scandalous or even offensive life, the congregation can depose him from his office. A further condition: Our preachers will receive into the congregation and admit to Holy Communion only those who believe in the Word of God and desire to be Lutherans and lead a Christian life. We want nothing to do with syncretism and a false union....The people must not think that we want to lord it over them in this way, for we heartily

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\* This writing is by Dr. C. F. W. Walther, the first president of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. It appeared as a reprint in the November 11, 1991 issue of Christian News.



detest all priestly domination and all clerical dictatorship...But we do aim also at gathering regular Lutheran congregations that rest on a firm foundation, not a vagabond rabble that holds together today and scatters tomorrow. According to the constitution of our

Synod a preacher may not give orders to a congregation; he is simply to preach God's Word and demand obedience to it. In other matters, such as church orders and the like, the congregation has freedom. Here the preacher can only offer his good advice.

From January 1962—

**The Christian Bookshelf.** *Concerning Church Fellowship* is now in print and available in quantity from the

Looking Back  
in the  
*Lutheran*  
*Spokesman*

CLC Book House. Readers of the *Spokesman* may secure their copies from pastors of the CLC or order them directly.

For the following reasons we hope for a wide distribution of this booklet:

First, it *edifies*. In forthright language, this statement of principle brings the penetrating light of Scripture to bear on the current question in general controversy, namely the matter of church fellowship. Are you weary of weasel words? Here you will find the language and pattern of the historic Lutheran Confessions, which not only stated the truth affirmatively, but also rejected and condemned corresponding false teaching. This modern statement of ancient truth will help you keep your bearings in a day when it is so easy to be swept away from the true course by prevailing winds of doctrine.

Secondly, *Concerning Church Fellowship* testifies. It is a part of the con-

fessional platform of the Church of the Lutheran Confession. As such, it is a way by which every member of the CLC makes his confession of Christ before the world. Diligently studied and prayerfully considered, this little volume will enable us to make a good testimony whenever we have an opportunity to speak with someone on the subject. That is likely to be often, since the question of unity among Christians is the burning subject of the church world in our time. You will be especially glad for what is called an *Epitome*. This is a two page summary of the chief points in the confession. After each point there is a list of paragraph references leading you to a fuller treatment of that subject in the confession itself.

The printed word of testimony remains one of the most effective means of bringing light to dark places. Material such as this can travel far beyond the reach of your voice. Have a supply of copies on hand. Be prepared to give them away! To make this possible, *Concerning Church Fellowship* has been printed in quantity and is being offered for the cost of production and handling...(R. A. Reim)

(Editor's Note: This 5-1/2" x 8" booklet of 43 pages may be purchased from the CLC Book House, Immanuel Lutheran College, 501 Grover Rd., Eau Claire, WI 54701. The cost is \$1.00 per copy postpaid.)



## Anniversary of the First Printing of Concerning Church Fellowship

### A TIMELY 30-YEAR-OLD STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE

As we look back into issues of the *Spokesman* thirty years ago to find articles for possible reprinting, we are impressed with the timeliness of so much that was written. Could it really be? Hasn't our world advanced to a stage which forces the label "outdated" to anything thirty or more years old?

#### A Burning Subject (?)

This writer feels the comments by way of introduction to the initial printing of our CLC's confessional standard *Concerning Church Fellowship* (CCF)\* are as fitting today as back then. Nay, in our opinion, they are even more fitting. They are just that because matters have "progressed" to the point today that "the question of unity among Christians is" *no longer* "the burning subject of the church world in our time," as the reviewer wrote. Due to the ecumenical movement in the past quarter century many have lost the bearings to which the reviewer alludes.

Most of Protestantism in general, and Lutheranism in particular, have succumbed to the "weasel words" against which our CCF document is a clear trumpet in the area of the scriptural doctrine it addresses.

We say "many"—not "all"—have lost the bearings. *Christian News* (CN) continues to wage its war against unionism in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. To that end it periodically prints, and reprints, articles touching on *confessional* Lutheranism. One such article is Dr. C. F. W. Walther's excerpt on "Confessional Loyalty" we have chosen to reprint here.

And back in February, 1991 CN had a lengthy writing by one-time Concordia Seminary (Ft. Wayne) professor Dr. Robert D. Preus on the subject at hand. Preus deplores the "chaos" within his synod which, he says, is "at sea" in the areas of "doctrine as well as our church life and liturgy and practice." In the process of making his analysis of Missouri's on-going problems, he refers often and significantly to the sixteenth century confessional writings.

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\* The first printing actually carries a 1961 date.

For example, writes Preus: "The writers of the *Formula of Concord*, struggling under the many controversies which ensued after Luther's death and were aggravated by the interim, spoke often about the subject of external church fellowship, the basis for it, and the importance of having no fellowship with papists, Calvinists, or other sectarians and errorists. The basis for fellowship is agreement in the doctrine and all its articles (SD, X, 31).\*\* Without this unity fellowship is broken, idolatry is confirmed, and believers are grieved, offended, and weakened in their faith (SD, X, 16). For the sake of the Gospel and dear Christians, therefore, false doctrine must be avoided with all diligence (SD, IV, 39) for their very soul's welfare and salvation (SD, X, 16)... Furthermore, Christians are 'to reject and condemn' whatever is contrary to the true doctrine (SD, XI, 93), and are to have neither part nor fellowship with errorists and their errors, be they great or small, but to reject and condemn them one and all as against Scripture and the Augsburg Confession and ask godly Christians to 'beware' of them (SD, XII, 8)..."

The writing has good balance. While stressing the importance of orthodox doctrine, Preus warns that "those who wish to be touted confessional Lutherans have mouthed the pure doctrine of the confessions, but sometimes abandoned or rejected a practice of worship which conforms with the pure Lutheran doctrine." He continues: "Doctrine without life (i.e.

practice and worship) is a theory, nothing more. Our confessions are as concerned for orthopraxis and pure worship as they are for pure doctrine..."

*Orthopraxis* is perhaps a new word to us. Related to *orthodoxy* which refers to "right teaching," *orthopraxis* refers to "right practice" or practice which conforms to correct Bible teaching. A congregation or church body can easily claim to be *orthodox*, in its constitution subscribing to the Lutheran confessions. However, if the practice doesn't conform, the claim to right teaching is suspect. Preus uses many words to demonstrate that, for example, *close communion* and (not ordaining) *women pastors* are true tests of *orthopraxis*.

### The Pressures Today

Since the printing thirty years ago of *Concerning Church Fellowship*, on the heels of the founding of the CLC, we have come to a crucial stage in our history. One by one the clear and courageous voices of our synod's founding fathers, laity as well as clergy, are being silenced by death. The torch is being passed. Shall the current church carry on as resolutely as its fathers? Dare it not do so? The preservation of the spoils (benefits) of battle is often as trying as the demands of the original struggle.

There are, we know, at least two dangers. If the one is wearying of the struggle to *maintain* the confessional position taken, the other lies in another direction—the adopting of a kind of super-orthodoxy. Such a posture, often warned against by our founders, can sap the lifeblood from the very Word (Gospel) being upheld by the power of God and His Spirit. And we recall the

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\*\* These abbreviations refer to the unabridged *Formula of Concord*, the particular article and paragraph thereof.

*Is denominationalism irrelevant, as is more and more being suggested in our day? We think not. Rather, we believe that a continuing careful examination and review of our confessional Lutheran heritage will strengthen our good resolve, under God, to retain our heritage — and identity — at all costs. The reason is: “. . . the Gospel...”*

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rather cynical comment made in the magazine of former brethren some thirty years back. It went something like this: “Watch out for the CLC. Since the student often goes one step further than his teachers, their future bodes evil days.” May God preserve us from fulfilling such a dour prophecy.

We have been warned. Nevertheless, we stand by our concerns which can be summarized as follows: “...the pressure of our pluralistic society, of contemporary doctrinal indifferentism, of the welter of religions in our country, and the confusion within American Lutheranism concerning the doctrine and practice of church fellowship make it very difficult for us who wish to remain confessional Lutherans today to retain our identity...” (Preus, article cited).

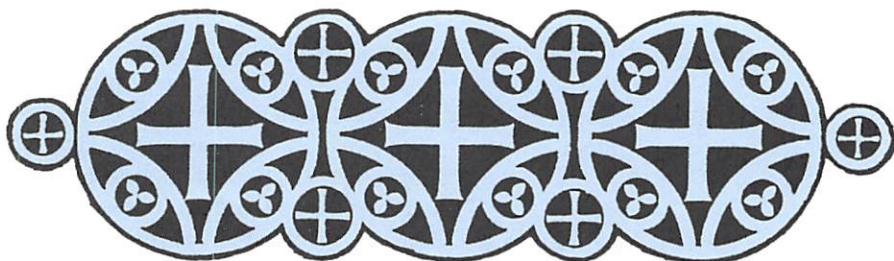
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our day? We think not. Rather, we believe that a continuing careful examination and review of our confessional Lutheran heritage will strengthen our good resolve, under God, to retain our heritage - and identity - at all costs.

The reason is: “for the sake of the gospel and dear Christians...for their very soul’s welfare and salvation...” (Preus quote). Yes, the reason is: *the Gospel demands it*. The same Gospel which prompted the sixteenth century Lutheran confessional writings. The same Gospel which prompted the founding of the CLC. The same Gospel which prompted the writing, and publication of, our statement of principle *Concerning Church Fellowship*.

May God, in His never-failing grace, preserve the CLC as a confessional church, orthodox both in doctrine and practice!

—Paul Fleischer



## THE MIDDLE EAST—VI

“For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be” (Mt. 24:21, Lk. 21:23). Here is the prophecy for—

### The Great Tribulation

Where will it take place? In the Middle East, specifically in what is now the State of Israel, and more precisely in the city of Jerusalem! When is it to take place? Dispensationalists and Premillennialists fantasize that after the alleged rapture of the saints, the great antichrist will arise from the revived Roman Empire. For three and a half years he will appear a benefactor of mankind, a genuine peacemaker, establishing peace in the Middle East and granting the Jews permission to rebuild their temple. Then he will shed his sheep’s clothing and become the “monster man,” initiating a reign of terror foretold by the Lord as “The Great Tribulation.”

What do we have here again? More “leap-frog” interpretation that does violence to the context of the prophecy and lets the imagination run wild. This in turn produces a vast inventory of religious fiction that brings profits to the writers but confusion to the readers.

The Great Tribulation! When will it take place? That question is wrong! It should be—When *did* it take place? The answer is, during the siege of Jerusalem by the Romans, concluded in A.D. 70. The fleeing from housetop to

housetop, to the wall and over, the woe for pregnant and nursing women, the prayer that the flight be not in winter or on the Sabbath—these all place the fulfillment of the prophecy at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, not in our century or later! (Matt. 24:15-21)

The disciples had asked Jesus for a clear, definite sign which would reveal to them when judgment was about to fall upon Jerusalem. Jesus did just that! He said when you see the “abomination of desolation standing in the holy place where it ought not,” then clear out of Jerusalem, as Lot was told to get out of Sodom. Luke clearly identifies the “abomination of desolation” as the Roman armies which appeared before the walls of Jerusalem under the leadership of Cestius Gallus who “retired from the city, without any reason in the world,” as Josephus reports. That break in the military operation gave the Christians the brief time necessary to flee from Jerusalem and find refuge in the mountainous area of Pella.

Get out of Jerusalem! For there shall be great tribulation! And there was! When judgment falls upon a people, as it did on the Nation of Israel, God frequently punishes evildoers with other evildoers.

### The Details

Josephus gives us the details of the fulfillment in his *The Wars Of The Jews*. He reports that while Romans were laying siege from without, three

factions were warring against each other within the city. He tells us that the city of Jerusalem had vast stores of food that were sufficient for years, but that these gang leaders wantonly destroyed the food supply of the city. This brought on famine and the horrors of cannibalism—women roasting and eating their placentas and newborn infants. Those who tried to flee the city were caught by the Romans and impaled on crosses until they ran out of wood. Think of the air pollution from all those decaying corpses! When rumor spread that some tried to surrender, but had swallowed gold which they hoped to recover later from their feces, the troops disemboweled the Jews, seeking the gold in their entrails.

As for the temple—Josephus reports that the Jews destroyed it themselves: "...as for that house, God had for certain long ago doomed it to the fire; and now that fatal day was come, according to the revolution of the ages; it was the tenth day of the month of Ab, upon which it was formerly burned by the king of Babylon; although these flames took their rise from the Jews themselves, and were occasioned by them...." (WARS, Vol. I. p. 448)

Read all about it! The Great Tribulation! But read it in the account of Josephus, not in the fantasizing of false prophets who ignore the context of Jesus' great prophecy and ramble on as long as the gullible public will buy their volumes. When judgment fell on the Nation of Israel for rejecting their promised Messiah and for crucifying Him, they brought upon themselves "The Great Tribulation" — "such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." That is divine hyperbole, even as

Daniel described the judgment inflicted centuries before by Nebuchadnezzar in similar words: "...for under the whole heaven such never has been done as what has been done to Jerusalem" (Dan. 9:12).

So how are things in the Middle East? About the same—third world nations still insanely trying to arm themselves with nuclear capability for mutual destruction; envoys jockeying for position at some hoped-for peace table; political posturing at home and abroad; ancient enmities fueled by the naphtha of nationalism; Islamic and Jewish fundamentalists engaged in a no-quarter death struggle. Judgment upon the whole area, but mercy still!

For the Lord still lengthens the day of grace, delaying His coming for final judgment. "He who sits in the heavens shall laugh....Yet I have set My King on My holy hill of Zion" (Ps. 2:4, 6).

—Paul F. Nolting

—This concludes Pastor Nolting's planned series. With the stirrings in the Middle East precipitated by the Gulf War conflict, we asked him to help lend some biblical perspectives to the on-going rumblings over there. We trust we have all benefited, and we thank him.



## Catching The Eye In Sioux Falls



Study Club Pastors, August 1991.

Two years had passed since the church rose on a Sioux Falls, S.D. hill, yet people still commented with some surprise: "I thought that was a house!" It was of course—a House of God and of one His pastors, that is. But people didn't see the small sign marking it as such. Larger measures needed to be taken.

Letting people know where our church exists motivated what became a two-year project. You see most of the result in the pictures (landscaping gravel and lighting came later).

How did we get there? Every project takes planning. With a sign you need a simple message that can be read by those passing by. We faced 45 mph traffic which required letters large enough to be read quickly from a distance. The service time, phone number, and pastor's name are information the curious need or want.

We not only attract the eye with Luther's coat of arms, but also symbolize our beliefs in a timeless way. All this had to be included in 32 square feet, no more than eight feet high, according to city codes (another thing to plan for).



Members planned, constructed, and painted most of the sign. But the sandblasted, carved redwood of each coat of arms (two sides) came ready for painting from SignCrafters Inc. in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. About \$800, including \$500 from a donation for special CLC mission projects, covered our costs.

Commercially made signs can easily run into thousands of dollars, and don't include the joy of laboring for the Lord. If your house of God needs some more on-site recognition, books on sign design and construction help. We can also pass on what we learned if you drop a line.

—Pastor Lawrence Bade

**DAILY DEVOTIONS —  
BOOKLET #2  
January 1992-December 1992**

The December issue contained a booklet of Bible readings for each day of 1992. The readings—with Thought Questions and Hymn suggestions—are taken from the New Testament epistles. Individual copies may be ordered from Bus. Mgr. Benno Sydow, 2750 Oxford St. N., Roseville, MN 55113. Please enclose \$2.00.

**From The Author Of  
“Leaves Of Hope”**

Due to the pressure of a deadline, a final proof-reading was dispensed with. As a consequence a number of errors crept into the final printing of “Leaves Of Hope.” The most flagrant are the following: p. 16 in the second last paragraph the “not” should be dropped; p. 41 in the third line “David’s prayer of faith” should read “Daniel’s prayer of faith”; p. 139 the fourth line should read “This hurts me more than it hurts you.” The other errors will be recognized by the reader. Please make the necessary corrections, with my apology.

— Prof. C. M. Gullerud

*We remind our readers of the availability of this excellent book for Christian family devotions. The cost is \$6.50 plus \$1.00 postage ordered from the author at 218 Grover Road, Eau Claire, WI 54701.*

**Cover Work**

Starting in December and extending through 1992, the cover art is being done by W. Bernthal. M. Schaser, whose graphic design work appeared in 1991, is then scanning them into computer. We appreciate their fine, combined efforts.



Pastors of the South-Eastern Conference, meeting at Hendersonville, NC: A. Gullerud, M. Wilke, J. Schierenbeck, T. Kesterson, S. Kurtzahn, M. Roehl, M. Gullerud, J. Klatt.