



God in nature

by Millie Christiansen

As I read in my Bible, I enjoy seeing so many names of animals and birds. As Ted and I have traveled for over 60 years, we have enjoyed seeing so many animals and birds all over our nation.

Up early this morning, I watched two rabbits come from under our son's wood shed before scurrying off to the pole barn for a breakfast of hay and grain meant for the horses. For several mornings we enjoyed watching one lone, lonely goose get its nerve up to come into the corral and even to the yard fence before Dick's blue heeler pounced out that way and scared it off. How we miss it!

Another morning a wild turkey came to feed on seed dropped below the back porch from the bird feeder. We enjoy watching so many birds there, some migrating and some to stay. We have watched deer on all sides of the house and even saw twins just after the doe had given them birth. On the road to town we have to give right of way to both deer and turkeys. Birds nest in boxes near the house where we can watch their habits. Sometimes we even see porcupines or coyotes. It is fascinating to watch some birds change color. Dick's dog doesn't like one big woodpecker.

My attention is brought to the birds daily as I read of them in my Bible. This morning Ezekiel reminded me of "moaning of the doves." They, too, come to our feeder. A neighbor recently watched an eagle and we remember watching them in many places as we traveled. It is always a pleasure to see the rainbow God made for our pleasure and assurance that there will not be another flood covering all the earth; however, many overlook a time to come when He will cleanse the earth with fire, forgetting that He does have the ability.

I find the descriptions of the four living creatures in Ezekiel make me think of helicopters and await the time when God shows the world how He will bring destruction to a sinful world. Over and over, Ezekiel warned people, "They will know that I am Lord."

Indeed, as I think of all the birds and animals listed in the Bible, I look forward to the time foretold by Isaiah (Isaiah 11:9) when neither child nor viper will hurt one another for there will no longer be harm and "the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord" when Jesus comes again!•



Covetous times

by Walter Soderstrom

This month I would like to address a somewhat unusual, and possibly unpopular subject, that of covetousness.

It would be impossible to precisely define what constitutes covetousness in a society such as ours, due to the diversity of the populace of our nation. We can, however, see signs of extreme excesses, such as the purchase of multi-million dollar houses by people, simply because they have the money to do so, or can obtain credit to do so. The nearly unrestrained issuance of credit has, to a great extent, been responsible for the terrible current financial crisis we are experiencing.

The late Larry Burkett, a well-known Christian financial counselor, said that, until approximately 1970, the purchase of a house or automobile were basically the things credit was used for. Today, even very small purchases at a grocery or department store are made by so many people using a credit or debit card. Some people pay promptly, but others let the charges accumulate, requiring the payment of interest, sometimes large amounts of interest. I have seen interest charges as high as 25 percent on accounts, and have been told that some are even higher. If allowed to compound, the interest amounts are terribly high, but many people do not seem to care, if they can get what they want without waiting. One man was complaining to me once, on a Friday afternoon, that he had so many places to go to make installment payments. When I asked why he made so many credit purchases, he replied that he could not pay cash for anything (in spite of the fact that he earned good wages). I reminded him that he was paying cash, plus an abundance of interest.

It is said that a man who had come here from a foreign country said, "You people in America are very strange; you buy many things you don't need, with money you don't have (credit) to impress other people, most of whom you don't even know." That statement seems to describe very well the attitude we have seen displayed here in the U.S.A.

Now, as people used to say, "The chickens are coming home to roost," which meant that, as the Bible says in Galatians 6:7, what a man (or, could we even say, society) sows, that will he also reap. It is said that the interest alone, on our approximately eleven trillion dollar national debt, is approaching one half of a trillion dollars annually, yet our government keeps borrowing and spending a considerable amount of which is for frivolous things, often referred to as "pork barrel" spending. I hope to write more, including scriptures, about what God says about waste and covetousness. •

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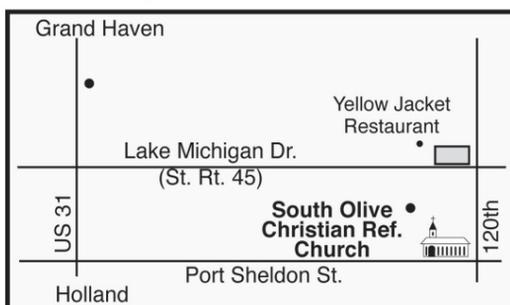
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