

**“A VALENTINE’S DAY SNOWSTORM”  
FEBRUARY 2007**

There’s an important date coming up in the month of February. If you own a company that makes greeting cards or chocolates, then this date is circled in red and eagerly awaited. And woe to the husband or son who forgets this day and does nothing special for his wife or mother. Of course, I’m talking about February 14<sup>th</sup>, Valentine’s Day. It is a red-letter date.

All of us have special memories of Valentine’s Day. One of my most vivid memories is when my family got trapped in a snowstorm on Interstate Highway 69 in Indiana. Helen and I were traveling on Valentine’s Day to Atlanta, Georgia. It was our first family trip with our son Ryan, who was only two months old. We had friends who were going to school in Atlanta and we looked forward to spending some time with them.

When we left from our home in Grand Rapids, Michigan we noticed that the snowfall got heavier as we crossed into the State of Indiana. Traffic slowed down to a crawl on the Interstate. The heavy snowfall finally brought traffic to a standstill. We were somewhere north of Indianapolis and gave up any hope of reaching Atlanta. Our immediate goal was to keep Ryan warm as the hours passed by. Helen wrapped him up in a blanket and I ran the car every so often to keep it warm inside.

After 5 ½ hours, one lane of the interstate was cleared so that vehicles could exit to the town of Anderson. I slowly drove past the high snowdrifts and arrived at the emergency shelter that was set up in the National Guard Armory. Helen, Ryan, and I spent that night sleeping on cots. We were safe and warm, however, and had no complaints. What a memorable Valentine’s Day!

This happened before the advent of cell phones. We could not contact friends to let them know what was happening. All we could do on that highway was wait, try to stay warm, and pray. When I remember that Valentine’s Day, the words of David take on a special, personal meaning,

*“The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed,  
a stronghold in times of trouble.  
And those who know your name put their trust in you,  
for you, O Lord, have not forsaken those who seek you.”  
(Psalm 9:9-10)*

Ryan does not remember that adventure on Interstate 69. Helen and I will never forget it. Happy Valentine’s Day!

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