

# THE STANDARD

*Bearer*

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

VOLUME XXXVII

NOVEMBER 1, 1960 — GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

NUMBER 3

## MEDITATION

### PRESERVATION OF THE SIMPLE

*"The Lord preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and He helped me. Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee. For Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling."*

Psalms 116:6-8

From time immemorial this psalm was sung by the church of God at the celebration of either the Passover or the Lord's Holy Supper. When we read in the Gospel that "they had sung an hymn, they went out unto the Mount of Olives" it has reference to this psalm 116 (together with a few other psalms).

When I was a very little boy, and sat wondering at the celebration of God's Supper, I remember how our minister *always* let the church sing the versification of this psalm. I hear them still: "k Zal bij den kelk des heils Uw naam vermelden . . ."

It's so gripping, this psalm. Note the beginning: "I love the Lord!" This inspired saint had been in narrow straits: "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow."

But God did not forget His saint. He came and delivered his soul!

We will hear of that in my text.

God's saint was preserved when it seemed as though he would perish forever.

\* \* \* \*

The simple soul was preserved in the midst of all his troubles.

First, from what was he delivered and preserved?

From a low estate.

Who is singing here?

The simple.

Well, that name has a bad sound. Simple people? At best you pity them, you smile a little, you finally ignore them. They are the miserable people with a very low I.Q. Easy pickings for the crooks and swindlers.

But that is not the meaning here.

God is simple: did you know that?

Simplicity is one of God's wonderful virtues.

It is that virtue of God whereby all God's perfections are God. It means that God is all His virtues, so that you can never separate any of His wonders and praises. They are one.

It is nicely put in the Holland. Simplicity is "eenvoudigheid."

The simple soul and singer of my text is a man who has just one purpose in life. And that purpose is to praise God!

You read of that same simplicity in psalm 27:4. Listen: "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the House of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple." I think that you have the most wonderful definition of man's simplicity in that text.

But they sometimes become very destitute. Even because of their simplicity. When you are truly simple you are hated. Most of all by your own flesh. But also by the devil and the world.

Listen to him: I was brought low, meaning that he consumed away. "Uitgeteerd" is the word in Dutch.

It means that he was spent in an unequal battle with Satan, the world and especially the flesh.

And what is the result?

Death, tears and falling feet.

Thus, instead of tranquil rest, he found himself in sorrow and distress, in the pangs of hell, and in the sorrows of death.

Do not think too lightly of this. Do not say that such an estate is alien to the Christian. Do not boast of always being in wondrous assurance of your estate before God.

For it simply is not true.

When a man as Paul spent a night in fear and trembling, so that God had to visit him and encourage him, where does that leave you?

When Paul exclaims in deep suffering: O wretched man that I am! where does that leave you?

The estate of this man is usually the result of sin.

You simply cannot sing and leap with joy in God when you break out in sin, in presumptuous sin.

You cannot be assured of your salvation when you open your heart to the devil and sin. When you listen to the siren songs of the world, and when you are tempted and fall for the blandishments of sin in your own heart, you do not sing your hallelujahs.

Then you sing psalm 116.

Shall I tell you what you do in such a sorry estate?

You say to God, your Rock: "O Lord, I beseech Thee, deliver my soul!"

That's what this saint did.

And the result?

"Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful!"

Oh, but God is beautiful and lovely. He is so lovely that He will deliver your soul.

\* \* \* \*

Let us look at that peculiar beauty of the Godhead.

Here you are in deep distress because of your sinning.

What could you expect? Nothing but death, eternal death. I ask you, how often did you not say to your soul in your sorry life: If the Lord would deal with me now according to my deserts, He would cast me away forever from His care and from His love.

But no: He delivers us! That's the constant Gospel for Christians.

That's the Gospel here in this text.

"For Thou hast delivered my soul from death!"

Remember Peter, the Apostle.

Swearing and cursing and ranting: I know neither the Man nor His Apostles!

And there goes Peter! Out of that hall and into the dark night, weeping bitterly!

But note the graciousness of Jesus and of God. While Peter cursed, Jesus prayed.

An angel flew to the Godhead on the great white throne, and said: Jesus is praying for Peter! And the Godhead said: I hear Him!

And Peter might hear and see not many days after. He saw Jesus in private, and fell into His arms. We know not what was spoken. But in public we have watched both Jesus and Peter. With a face full of love and lovingkindness, Jesus says to him, and that three times: Peter, lovest thou Me?

How would you, how would any one of us, how would any consistory treat Peter?

But God says: I forgive you, Peter!

And the angels sang.

And so also here: the saint is delivered from death!

Does this not sound strange? This man *was* delivered from death. He was already a saint. He had the Holy Ghost of salvation. And here we read that his soul is delivered from death!

It's really easy.

We are delivered from death, oh yes. But we time and again fall back into death. And death is conflict, conflict with God. Then things become dark before our eyes, the eyes of our soul. And we cry bitterly like Peter did.

But in the midst of the darkness of our heart and soul, the Lord comes with the wondrous light of His mercy and pity, and says: Lovest thou Me? And we fall into the arms of God.

Is it not wonderful, is it not a mystery too deep for our comprehension that you can daily go to God crying in your death and misery and ask for forgiveness, and never be turned away? Can you understand that?

He that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out! It stands as a beautiful monument to God's everlasting mercy.

"Mine eyes from tears."

Yes, the tears are dried. Sometimes those tears were never seen by your most intimates. They were the tears of the inmost heart.

But God saw them. Three times we read in the Bible that the "tears shall be wiped away." Do not think that you have to wait until you are in heaven until that happens. That happens every day.

God takes the tears away like the loving mother her child's tears, and God places a song on your lips, and you go about singing: He delivered mine eyes from tears!

"My feet from falling."

Yes, we often stumble on the pathway to heaven. This man did. But we never fall with the fall that is eternal.

When Jesus was brought before God in the temple, there was an old man. His name was Simeon. He spoke of a fall and of a rising again. God's people are saved from such a fall into the nether regions of hell. But unto many in Israel Jesus was set unto a fall.

But that does not happen to God's own.

Even while you are sinning, you are safe in the arms of God.

Listen to Moses: "and underneath are the everlasting arms." Deut. 33:27b.

But God wants you to learn the bitter aftertaste of sin, and the necessary work of repentance unto God.

And His deliverance from falling is sure.

\* \* \* \*

What is the result?

Rest!

Listen once more to my saint: Return unto thy rest, O my soul!

Return unto thy Sabbath, O my soul!

The rest of the Christian is the Sabbath. It is the rest that remaineth.

And what constitutes that rest?

I imagine that I could keep you busy with many words in explanation, but it is not necessary. It really is very simple.

Rest is to look at God in the Face of Jesus Christ.

Jesus said in the beatitudes: Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God!

It means to look at the completed work that God has wrought in Jesus.

G.V.

#### IN MEMORIAM

The Martha Ladies' Aid Society of the Hull Protestant Reformed Church wishes to express its sincere sympathy to one of its members, Mrs. Peter Hoekstra, in the death of her sister-in-law,

MRS. SADIE REITSMA

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Rev. J. Kortering, President  
Mrs. T. Jansma, Secretary

#### ATTENTION CONSISTORIES

The following "Forms" are available and may be obtained by writing undersigned. When ordering, kindly specify the number of the particular form ordered is desired.

1. Classical Credential Forms
2. Synodical Subsidy Forms (Revised 1960)
3. Transfer of Membership Forms
4. Transfer of Baptized Member Forms
5. Certificates of Dismissal
6. Call Letters
7. Ministerial Certificate of Dismissal and Testimonial
8. Synodical Credentials

REV. G. VANDEN BERG, *Stated Clerk*  
Synod of the Prot. Ref. Churches  
9402 So. 53rd Court  
Oak Lawn, Illinois

#### THE STANDARD BEARER

*Semi-monthly, except monthly during June, July and August*

Published by the REFORMED FREE PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION  
P. O. Box 881, Madison Square Station, Grand Rapids 7, Mich.

Editor — REV. HERMAN HOEKSEMA

Communications relative to contents should be addressed to  
Rev. H. Hoeksema, 1139 Franklin St., S. E.,  
Grand Rapids 7, Mich.

All matters relative to subscriptions should be addressed to Mr.  
James Dykstra, 1326 W. Butler Ave., S. E.  
Grand Rapids 7, Michigan

Announcements and Obituaries must be mailed to the above  
address and will be published at a fee of \$2.00 for each notice.

RENEWAL: Unless a definite request for discontinuance is received it is assumed that the subscriber wishes the subscription to continue without the formality of a renewal order.

Subscription price: \$5.00 per year

*Second Class postage paid at Grand Rapids, Michigan*

#### CONTENTS

##### MEDITATION —

- Preservation of the Simple.....49  
Rev. G. Vos

##### EDITORIALS —

- A Dollhouse, Dancing and Fun on Pentecost .....52  
A Romish President and Our Christian Schools .....52  
Rev. H. Hoeksema

##### OUR DOCTRINE —

- The Book of Revelation.....54  
Rev. H. Hoeksema

##### A CLOUD OF WITNESSES —

- Moses .....58  
Rev. B. Woudenberg

##### FROM HOLY WRIT —

- Exposition of I John 2:18-21.....60  
Rev. G. Lubbers

##### IN HIS FEAR —

- The Freedom of "Bigotry" (4).....62  
Rev. J. A. Heys

##### FEATURE ARTICLE —

- The Golden Lampstand .....64  
Rev. R. C. Harbach

##### THE VOICE OF OUR FATHERS —

- The Canons of Dordrecht.....66  
Rev. H. C. Hoeksema

##### DECENCY AND ORDER —

- Office Bearers' Subscription .....68  
Rev. G. Vanden Berg

##### ALL AROUND US —

- Comment on James Arminius.....69  
The American Clergy and the Basic Truths .....71  
The Reformed Church in France.....71  
Rev. H. Hanko

- NEWS FROM OUR CHURCHES .....72  
Mr. J. M. Faber

## EDITORIALS

### A Dollhouse, Dancing, and Fun on Pentecost

On this subject wrote W. Heerma in *The Messenger* of August, 1960, a publication of the Free Christian Reformed Church of Canada. Mr. Heerma wrote this article under the title: "Geen Probleem Zelfs Meer." (Not Even a Problem Anymore.)

The reader must understand that the churches in the Netherlands celebrate the day of Pentecost on two days, Sunday and Monday. Well, according to Heerma, the Reformed (Gereformeerde) Church of Eindhoven celebrated that second day of Pentecost, not by having services in the church, as was customary in my day, but by a garden-feast (tuinfeest) in which a drama was enacted, a show of a dollhouse (poppenkast) was one of the numbers on the program, and the younger generation were dancing to their hearts' content.

On this Mr. Heerma offers his criticism and he attributes this to the evil theory of "common grace." Writes he (I translate):

"The background of this current development of things with the Reformed people (and, alas, not only with them) must, in my opinion, be sought in the doctrine of so-called COMMON GRACE. Dr. A. Kuyper was in his days the champion of this unbiblical theory. One can best translate the term 'common grace' by 'general grace' which must well be distinguished from general atonement. By general atonement is meant the doctrine that Christ suffered and died for all men, that He gave His life, not only for the sheep, but just as well for the goats. Arminianism has the floor here ('is daar aan het woord')."

"Kuyper and his followers do not teach this. His work: 'That grace is particular' shows clearly that he must have nothing of the doctrine of general atonement.

"However, he distinguishes between particular grace and 'common grace.' Particular grace concerns only the elect, the regenerated, the true believers. But 'common grace' concerns all men without exception. Without that common grace, according to Kuyper, there would not even be a possibility for particular grace.

"But thanks to common grace there is still very much good in this world that fell away from God. Also the children of this world can still perform much good, can produce many beautiful things. Think, for instance of art, the art of poetry, the art of painting, the art of films, the art of sculpture, etc. All this is to be attributed to the so-called common grace.

"Thus the covenant children come to sit as guests at the table of common grace. They leave their places in the min-

istry of the Word empty with a 'good' conscience and lie on Sunday afternoon with the children of the world on the beach in order to enjoy God's beautiful nature. All this so-called to the glory of God.

"The common grace theory bears bitter fruits in an evermore penetrating worldly mindedness."

Thus far W. Heerma.

\* \* \* \*

I received a letter a few days ago which was not intended for publication in our *Standard Bearer*, as far as I could gather, in which the author criticizes me for two things: 1. that I call those that created a schism in our churches "schismatics" and 2. that I attribute the downward grade of the Christian Reformed Church to the adoption of the unbiblical theory of "common grace" and the Three Points by the Synod of 1924.

It is to be hoped that he reads the opinion of Heerma as expressed in the above quotation.

The Reformed Churches in the Netherlands never officially adopted the theory of "common grace" as developed by Kuyper in his three volumes of "De Gemeene Gratie." Yet, the unofficial development of that theory has, according to Heerma, the effect of leading the people of God right into the world and causing them to be worldly-minded.

How much more, then, must this be the effect of the official adoption of "common grace" in 1924 by the Christian Reformed Church! They, i.e. the Christian Reformed Church, considered the theory of "common grace" so serious that they made of it an official doctrine and that there was no room anymore for Reformed ministers in their midst, but cast them out!

God cannot be mocked!

H.H.

### A Romish President and Our Christian Schools

That the Romish Church condemns the separation of Church and State is not only well-known but is also clearly expressed in their official documents. Thus, for instance, in the papal "Syllabus Errorum" a Syllabus of Errors, a brief condemnation of existing doctrinal errors. This syllabus was issued by Pope Pius IX on Dec. 8, 1864. Of course, the fact that it is issued by a pope makes a document binding upon the entire popish church, for when the pope speaks in his official capacity he speaks infallibly. Whatever he declares is as authoritative and infallible as Scripture itself.

This Syllabus condemns the teaching:

"That kings and princes are not only exempt from the jurisdiction of the Church, are superior to the Church in litigated questions of jurisdiction."

Hence, according to the official expression of the pope

which is the same as saying the Church, the State, in matters of civil law, must first look to the pope for approval before such laws can be issued and become authoritative.

But there is a still more emphatic expression in the same Syllabus in which literally the doctrine of separation of Church and State is condemned as false. This article reads as follows:

"The Church ought to be separated from the State, and the State from the Church."

Understand that this is condemned as an error. And this implies the teaching that Church and State ought not to be separated. It also implies that, according to Romish doctrine the State is under the Church and the Church which is the pope is the supreme power and authority, not only in regard to ecclesiastical but also in civil matters.

How Mr. Kennedy, in the light of the above, can run for president of the U.S. I fail to understand for the U.S. stands for the principle of the separation of Church and State.

If, as he already expressed himself, he also holds fast to the principle of the separation of Church and State, he is not a good Roman Catholic and he ought to separate himself from the Romish Church. If, on the other hand, he still maintains, according to the official position of the Roman Catholic Church, that the State ought not to be separated from the Church and the latter is supreme over the former, he cannot conscientiously hold the office of president of the U. S.

It is either — or.

\* \* \* \*

But in the subject that is mentioned above this article I also include the Christian schools, and the question that naturally arises in the mind of our readers is: why? What does a Roman Catholic for president have to do with the Christian schools?

My answer is, first of all, that the Roman Catholics condemn all instruction of the children and youth that is not under supervision of the Romish Church. They not only condemn the public schools, but also all free Christian schools. If they ever obtained the civil power of the State, they would not only make the latter subject to the Church, but they would also insist that all the children would be educated only in Roman Catholic schools.

For proof I refer once more to the Syllabus of Errors to which I already called attention above.

Syllabus 45 condemns as an error the following:

"The entire direction of public schools, in which the youth of Christian states are educated, except (to a certain extent) in the case of episcopal seminaries, may and must appertain to the civil power, and belong to it so far that no other authority whatsoever shall be recognized as having any right to interfere in the discipline of the schools, the arrangement

of the studies, the taking of degrees, or the choice and approval of the teachers."

Positively expressed this means that only the Romish Church, that is the pope, shall have control over all the education of the children and the youth in the State.

The second reason for including the matter of Christian schools in the subject and material of this article is that in the magazine *Christianity Today* I read an article that was addressed to Senator Kennedy in which the author asked several questions of the senator as to what he would do if he should become president of the U. S.

With most of this article I heartily agree and I hope that Mr. Kennedy will give a clear-cut reply to the questions that are asked him.

However, I cannot agree with all that the author writes under the caption: "Public Versus Parochial Schools." I will quote the following paragraph:

"An alien phenomenon in our American democracy is the widespread withdrawal of Roman Catholic children from the public schools into Catholic parochial schools. Our public school system is an expression and guarantee of our democratic government and a prime factor in maintaining our cultural unity. The public school has been rightly called the 'melting pot' in which the immigration of heterogeneous cultures of many countries is fused into a national unity. This unity does not mean and has never meant cultural conformity. It has meant and has produced cultural freedom. The parochial school of the Catholic Church is oriented to an exactly opposite goal, namely the fixation of the mind in every generation in the mold of its childhood dependence upon an authority in the field of religion. This is the field in which the greater problems of life arise. The technique of this procedure includes teachers dressed in conspicuously unfamiliar garb, and a pedagogy — not precisely of 'brain-washing' but of brain-conditioning against infection by the democratic principle of personal responsibility and freedom."

Here I wish to make the following remarks:

1. If the Roman Catholics withdraw their children from the public schools, in order to instruct them in their own parochial schools, this is their own business, even under our democratic form of government, as long as they do not compel all the children to be instructed in their own parochial schools.

2. We do not believe in parochial schools which are church schools and secular education is not the task of the Church.

3. We do believe, however, that secular education is the task of the parents. It is for that reason that the parents organize societies to establish their own Christian schools. These schools are based on the principle that all secular education should throughout be based on the Word of God.

H.H.

# OUR DOCTRINE

## THE BOOK OF REVELATION

### PART TWO

#### CHAPTER SIXTEEN

#### *Babylon the Bride of Antichrist*

Revelation 17:1-6

All these interpretations struggle evidently to harmonize the presentation of the woman-harlot with that of the prosperous city as indicated in the text. But it seems to me that none of these interpretations succeeds entirely. It certainly will not do simply to explain that Babylon is the city of Rome. For, in the first place, it is not true that the text in verse 9 warrants that conclusion. For, first of all, it may not escape our attention that the text further interprets these seven mountains as being seven kings. And besides, Rome was built, if at all, not on seven mountains, but simply on seven hills. But besides, this interpretation evidently leaves the symbolism of the woman, by which evidently the church is indicated, altogether out of sight. Babylon is a city, surely; but it is also a woman. And the two must in some way be harmonized. For the same reason it cannot indicate simply the counterfeit church, whether it is the papal Rome or the false church in general. For she is not merely the church, but also the city, and is very definitely pictured as a city that is the center of commerce and industry and science and art, admired by all the great of the world. Chapter 18 can never be explained on this basis. And therefore, both of these elements we must continually bear in mind. And whether we shall at all gain a conception of Babylon the great will depend upon our being able to harmonize the idea of the woman and the idea of the city.

First of all, then, let us study her pretentious appearance as the woman. Evidently the text makes a distinction between her outward appearance and her essential character, a distinction which comes down to this, that she appears as a woman, but that her essential character, as expressed in her mysterious name, is that of a city, named Babylon. One of the seven angels that had the seven vials and poured them out on the earth, so John tells us, spoke to him and led him into a wilderness, in order that he might see and understand the mystery of the great harlot and witness her judgment. The wilderness in this case may be taken as the proper abode of this woman. It must not be connected with the wilderness into which the church fled after the exaltation of Christ. The wilderness is a picture of desolation caused by sin, and as such the proper abode for all that exalts itself against the living God and loves unrighteousness. At the same time, this wilderness, I take it, is already prophetic of the judgment

this harlot, beautifully arrayed, may expect. In that wilderness, then, John beholds a woman seated on a scarlet colored beast, with seven heads and ten horns, and full of names of blasphemy. To this beast we shall not pay attention just now, seeing that he is explained in the next portion of this chapter. The woman now draws our attention. She is richly and beautifully arrayed with all that is glittering and luxurious in the world, being decked with precious stones and pearls and arrayed in purple and scarlet, while holding in her hand a golden cup. She certainly makes the impression of being rich and powerful, enveloped in a halo of worldly glory. The beast carries her, and is evidently controlled by her. And on her forehead she bears a name, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. Such is the picture. And we are told that John was amazed and wondered with great wonder at the sight of her.

If you ask who this woman is, it may be observed, in the first place, that the woman in Scripture is continually the symbol of the church of God and of God's covenant people in the external sense of the word. Surely, essentially only the true spiritual people of God are His bride, are the wife of Jehovah, that stand on the basis of faithfulness in covenant relation to their God. But nevertheless, also the church as she appears in the present dispensation is compared to a woman, a married woman, the wife of Jehovah. In the Old Testament we find this picture time and again, that Israel as a nation, the covenant people in the outward sense, are called Jehovah's wife. He has married her, and she stands in relation of a covenant to Him, pledged to be faithful to her husband. In the Song of Solomon we find throughout that the entire symbolism of the book is based on this very idea, that the church is the bride of Christ. And in the New Testament we meet with this same relation time and again. The apostle Paul writes to the church in Ephesus: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it, that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church unto himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, nor any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish."

And after he has spoken of this relation between man and wife in the succeeding verses, he concludes, "This mystery is great, but I speak in regard of Christ and of the church." Ephesians 5:25-32. In the nineteenth chapter of this same book of Revelation we find the great multitude in glory singing at the eve of the marriage supper of the Lamb: "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." Rev. 19:7, 8. And in the twenty-first chapter of the book of Revelation the same idea is expressed: "And there came unto me one of the seven angels



which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife." Rev. 21:9. And very strikingly, also here the bride, the wife of the Lamb, is a city. For the passage continues: "And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God." Also there the church is the bride, but at the same time a city, verses 9 and 10. Or let me remind you of the picture that was given in chapter 12 of this book. Also there the church was presented as a woman, clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet. Also there the woman was a mother, just as she is here. Only, in that connection she appears as the mother of the Great Seed and the mother of believers. And therefore, we first of all reach the conclusion that this woman is the church as she appears on earth. It may cause a little astonishment; but also John was astonished. It is when we bear in mind this fact that we can understand why John was astonished with such great amazement. He had seen this woman as the church before. Her general features were still the same. Only she is now allied with the scarlet colored beast that carries her: and that is the cause undoubtedly of John's astonishment and wonder. The woman is the church in her historical appearance on earth.

But to this we must hasten to add that this harlot is not a portraiture of the true church, but of the false, the counterfeit church, which has apostatized from her true husband and is now committing fornication with the enemy. For in the text she is called the great harlot with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication; and they that dwell on the earth were made drunken with the wine of her fornication. In the golden cup which she holds in her hand and which is the symbol of her deceitful abominations there are nothing but the unclean things of her fornication. In a word, she is a harlot. And what is a harlot? In the general sense of the word, the harlot is a woman that sells that which is her characteristic honor and glory and lives in dissipation, a woman without honor, that lives in most intimate relation and intercourse with men outside of the sacred bond of marriage. But in Scripture, and especially in this connection, a harlot is something more: it is generally the woman that has been married, that has sworn faith and love in all things to her rightful husband once, but has shamefully forsaken him in order to whore after other men, that are strangers. She is the unfaithful, the deceitful woman, that breaks the most sacred pledge. And spiritually, fornication and harlotry in Scripture indicate the breaking of the covenant, the departure from the ways of Jehovah and the service of other gods. As such it appears time and again in the Old Testament. In Ezekiel 16:8-22 we read of Israel as the wife of Jehovah, prepared and blessed by Him, but whoring after other gods: "Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I sware unto thee, and

entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine. Then washed I thee with water; yea, I thoroughly washed away thy blood from thee, and I anointed thee with oil. I clothed thee also with brodered work, and shod thee with badgers' skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with silk. I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain on thy neck. And I put a jewel on thy forehead, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thine head. Thus wast thou decked with gold and silver; and thy raiment was of fine linen, and silk, and brodered work; thou didst eat fine flour, and honey, and oil: and thou wast exceeding beautiful, and thou didst prosper into a kingdom. And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it was perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God. But thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playedst the harlot because of thy renown, and pouredst out thy fornications on every one that passed by; his it was. And of thy garments thou didst take, and deckedst thy high places with divers colours, and playedst the harlot thereupon: the like things shall not come, neither shall it be so. Thou hast also taken thy fair jewels of my gold and of my silver, which I had given thee, and madest to thyself images of men, and didst commit whoredom with them, And tookest thy brodered garments, and coveredst them: and thou hast set mine oil and mine incense before them. My meat also which I gave thee, fine flour, and oil, and honey, wherewith I fed thee, thou hast even set it before them for a sweet savour: and thus it was saith the Lord God. Moreover thou hast taken thy sons and thy daughters, whom thou hast borne unto me, and these hast thou sacrificed unto them to be devoured. Is this of thy whoredoms a small matter, That thou hast slain my children, and delivered them to cause them to pass through the fire of them? And in all thine abominations and thy whoredoms thou hast not remembered the days of thy youth, when thou wast naked and bare, and wast polluted in thy blood." A complete picture you have in this passage of the spiritual harlot, the covenant people of God in the outward sense, blessed with all the blessings of the covenant, but employing them in the service of strange gods and departing from the ways of Jehovah, their rightful husband. The same truth lies at the basis of the prophecy of Hosea, where the prophet receives the command that he must take unto himself a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms, in order to symbolize the harlotry of Israel, the covenant people of Jehovah. And therefore, in the spiritual sense a harlot is one that has belonged to Jehovah in the external sense of the word, was in covenant relation with Him, was blessed by Him, but deceitfully has broken her pledge and now sacrifices her honor unto other gods.

In the words of our text, therefore, we have a picture of the harlot church, the false church, the counterfeit church. For even as the devil aims at establishing a counterfeit king-

dom, so he also establishes a counterfeit church. Naturally! We have told you before that he uses all the institutions which God has placed on earth in this dispensation for the maintenance and establishment of his kingdom, that he employs them all for his own purpose and for the propagation of his own principle. The same is true of the church. Also the church as an institution in this dispensation, designed to be the army of the kingdom—also that church the devil shrewdly employs in his service. And the result is that a counterfeit church, the harlot church, is established. The true church is the spiritual bride of Christ, ingrafted into Him by a true faith, and through Him stands in covenant relation with the Lord Jehovah. But that counterfeit church is the church that still bears the name of church, still appears as the church in the world, still claims or pretends to be the church, outwardly also looks like the church, has its ministers and sacraments, the preaching of the Word and teaching, and all kinds of institutions and societies besides, but employs all the blessings she has outwardly received in the service of Antichrist, and not in the service of Jehovah. Her ministers preach for Antichrist. The office-bearers work for Antichrist. Publicly she displays all the signs of Antichrist, and all her members she educates to work for the dragon and his kingdom. She enjoys the favor and the good will of the world, of the great and the mighty and the strong and the rich in the world. And they bless and deck her with all kinds of precious jewels and gold. She becomes great and powerful. And the more she labors in the interest of the antichristian kingdom, the more she will enjoy the favor of the dragon: for she is nothing but his harlot, and allows herself to be the instrument of Antichrist. That this is true is plain from the description that is given of her in the text. For she is called the harlot, and is described as one that commits fornication with the great of the earth and with all that dwell in the world. That this is true is plain also from the fact that she is sitting on the scarlet beast with his seven heads and ten horns, evidently implying that she is borne by the power of Antichrist, and, at the same time, controls that power with her fascinating fornications. That this is true, finally, is also plain from the fact that of her the terrible sentence is expressed that she is fairly drunken with the blood of the saints. Surely, this woman is the church as she appears on earth; but it is the false church, rapidly developing in our own time. It is the church that has abandoned the truth of the Word of God, that laughs about the truth of the atonement of Christ and tramples under foot the blood of the new covenant. Every pledge with her Lord and covenant God she has broken. And even those that do remain faithful she kills in her hatred.

But this is not all. For this woman, representing the counterfeit or false church, is also represented to us as a city. We read that this woman bears a name on her forehead, "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF THE HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS

OF THE EARTH." In regard to this name, let us observe, in the first place, that the name in Scripture is always expressive of one's real being. And therefore, we learn that the real being of this woman is that of a city, and specifically of Babylon. In the second place, note that in this case the name is called "Mystery." A mystery is that which is concealed, which is hidden from view, which does not reveal itself on the surface. So it is here: not so much because the woman bears the name of a city—for that might be very well expected of her, as we shall see—but because the name of that city is Babylon. We would not expect the name of this Babylon, no more than we would expect her to be seated on this scarlet colored beast. She appears as the church. If we were bidden to guess the name of this woman as she appears, we would say her name is Church, Christianity, the Covenant People. Or, if we would guess her name as to her essential and future character, we would say, "This is Jerusalem, the Holy City, the bride of Christ." But this is not the case. This woman appears as the church; but she is the false church. She bears the appearance of Jerusalem, the Holy City, the bride of Christ; but in essence she is nothing but Babylon. That is her real nature. As to the significance of the name as such, we can be brief. Babylon stands in Scripture for all that opposes the kingdom of God. It stands for the initiation of the kingdom of Antichrist in remotest past times under the mighty Nimrod. And if God had not prevented by the confusion of speech, she would have succeeded then already in establishing the outward kingdom of Antichrist. She is the capital of the kingdom of oppression for the people of God, that always stood inimical over against the kingdom of God even in the Old Testament. In a word, Babylon is a name that suggests a center of the kingdom of the dragon. And therefore, this woman, which is a harlot church and the mother and propagator of all spiritual harlotry—this woman is essentially the center of the antichristian world power, and shall in the future reveal herself as such.

Strange this may seem at first sight. Yet, at a second consideration this is but perfectly natural. The figure of the woman changes ultimately into that of a great city which controls the affairs of the world and is a center of all the movements and science and art and literature and commerce and industry in all the earth. In a word, the figure of this woman, of this harlot-church, changes into that of the city that shall be the center and the chief power in the antichristian kingdom. But as I say, this need not surprise us in the least. The same is true of the true church. She ultimately appears as the New Jerusalem, that comes down out of heaven from God. The church that is in this dispensation, the woman, the bride of Christ, is at the same time destined to be the power in control ultimately of the new heaven and of the new earth, destined to reign with Christ forever in the glorious city, the New Jerusalem. The real, the mystical character of the church is that of a city, the glorious city



that shall be the center of the new creation, of the kingdom of Christ in glory. The same now is true of the false church. She appears as the woman; in reality she is also a city. This false church, with all her harlotry and power, shall ultimately reveal herself as *the power* in the kingdom of Antichrist. Essentially she is one with Antichrist. Gradually she shall reveal her character more clearly. Gradually her bridal alliance with the opponent of Christ shall be brought to light. And when once the beast shall reign supreme for a time and actually have succeeded in establishing his glorious kingdom, it will be that false Christianity, the harlot-church, that shall be the center of its dominion.

If you ask how this shall be historically realized, the answer in our time, it seems to me, cannot be so very difficult. According to the apostle Paul, before the man of sin can reveal himself, a great apostasy must take place, apostasy from the true church. That is, the false church will openly reveal herself as such, will openly separate herself from all that calls itself after the true and living Christ, not so much in name, but in very fact. The church shall deny the Christ, shall trample under foot the blood of Christ, shall invent a religion, a Christianity, of its own, and thus shall become a mighty, apostate church, calling itself Christianity, and in reality being related to the kingdom of Antichrist. That mighty, apostate church shall naturally embrace all that calls itself Christendom but is not. It shall embrace and control all the so-called Christian world and ultimately be perfectly identified with the kingdom of Antichrist. It is not at all inconceivable, it is indeed in perfect harmony with the picture given in the text, that this apostate Christendom shall erect a center in some great world-city, a literal city, with all the modern conveniences and products of science and art conceivable. A city it shall be that is a center in every respect, a city of science and philosophy and religion, a city that is the center of the antichristian kingdom, thoroughly imbued with the harlotry of the apostate church. Literally the woman shall thus merge into a kingdom, with the city whose name is mystically Babylon in the center. And Christianity shall have become antichristianity to the core.

That movement is in the air today. It presses itself forward at every corner and from various angles. The church must do away with all creeds and doctrine, so we hear today. And I have no doubt but she will, nay, even to a large extent has done so already. And having done away with all doctrine, she must labor for her own reconstruction and for the reconstruction of the entire world. She must unite. Denominationalism must have an end. All churches of all kinds of creeds and doctrines and different shades of belief must become literally one. Catholic and Protestant, Jew and Gentile — all must unite in the one great purpose, the reconstruction of the world. This world must become a suitable place to live in for all men. The blessings of this world must become the blessings of all. And therefore the word that is so warningly spoken to the true church I will sound in your

ears, namely: "Come out of her, my people, and have no fellowship with her sins." The great amalgamation movement that is in the air today is not of Christ and not of the true church, but is of the dragon and of Antichrist. And to go along with it will mean a loss of the truth, a loss of all that is sacred and dear, a loss of the Christ Himself. Stand, therefore, and watch, that ye may have no fellowship with the sins of Babylon.

### *The Mystery of the Beast*

#### Revelation 17:7-14

7. And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.

8. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

9. And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.

10. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.

11. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.

12. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.

13. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.

14. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.

Let us, first of all, have a little review. Babylon's picture we have tried to draw in the preceding. In all the various attempts and interpretations that have been made to make the symbol of Babylon intelligible to the minds of God's people we found the noticeable struggle to harmonize and unify in one picture the symbol of Babylon as a woman and as a city. And we also discovered that exactly in this respect they failed to a large extent. Yet we concluded that it is essential to bring about this harmony. For evidently the text pictures Babylon to us under both these aspects. The symbol of the woman evidently indicates her historic appearance, while that of the city designates her essential and mystical character. For her name, which is Babylon, the name of a city, is Mystery. Her essential character is concealed behind the historical appearance of the woman.

H.H.

## A CLOUD OF WITNESSES

### Moses

*And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi.*

*And the woman conceived, and bare a son: and when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months.*

*And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch, and put the child therein; and she laid it in the flags by the river's brink.*

Exodus 2:1-3

Toil and tears had become the lot of the Israelites in Egypt. For many years it had been different and they had reaped the bounties of the land, and under the blessings of their God had prospered. But now a new Pharaoh had arisen who was determined to break the power of Israel's God. First there was the extra toil in brick and mortar and menial labor of the fields. More and more the taskmasters of Egypt bore down upon them, intent on breaking their strength; but Jehovah held them up and the nation grew the more. Next there was the command that all of the male children should be stifled at birth; but against it the faith of the midwives prevailed. Finally the command went out to all the land that the baby sons of the Hebrews should be cast into the river. Pharaoh and the God of Israel were engaged in open combat.

"And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi." It is a homely tale. In another setting it might appear peaceful and serene; but the place was darkened Egypt and the time that of Pharaoh's implacable hatred. What did such a marriage have to offer? — days of exhausting labor, and nights of trembling and bitter tears. Still for simple Amram and Jochebed there was hope and promise. It was not that they thought the luxuries of Egypt somehow to counteract the sorrows, as was true with only too many of their nation. It was not that they believed that there would be found some goodness in Pharaoh which would cancel out his wickedness. Amram and Jochebed had the hope and promise of faith. They believed in God and in the promises which He had given unto their father Abraham, to be a God unto him and unto his seed after him through all generations. They waited for the deliverance which was sure to come.

The birth of a first child to Amram and Jochebed was an occasion of great joy. Although the oppression of Pharaoh was already severe, it had not yet reached into the intimate circle of the home. In their homes the Israelites still had opportunity to find joy and peace. The child was a girl and they named her Miriam, "the beloved one." But time went on and the wickedness of Pharaoh began to cut closer and closer. It became evident that he was intent on destroying the nation and had designs to cut off all of the male seed. Jochebed conceived again and bore a son, but now the joy

of birth was gone. There was no assurance that the child's life could be spared, and they named him Aaron, meaning "uncertainty." Yet, perhaps through the faithfulness of the midwives, the child was kept alive.

Spurred on by his lack of success, Pharaoh in his ragings was approaching the point of madness. Finally he issued the command that thereafter all of the male children who were born of the Hebrews should be thrown in the river Nile. This command was not limited to the midwives or parents; it went out unconditionally through all the land. It was the duty of everyone to see that it was enforced. When Jochebed conceived again there was little room for joy, only the silent prayers that the child in birth might be a girl. But the will of God was not so. In due time a son was born. The situation was very dire, for the agents of Pharaoh were throughout the land. If this son would be found with them alive, the consequences would be severe. But these faithful parents would not bow in fear before the tyranny of wicked Pharaoh. They saw, we are told, that their son was a goodly child. Now it may be, as many say, that this son was beautiful to look upon. But what Amram and Jochebed saw was much more than that. It was what Stephen pointed out many years later: the child was pleasing to the Lord. These believing parents recognized that their son was a covenant child of God. They could not give him over to death. No matter what the consequences might be, their faith demanded of them that they do all in their power to keep him alive.

We might be inclined to ask why God ordained that Moses should be born just then. Born a few years earlier, Moses would have preceded this most cruel and wicked command of Pharaoh. Moreover it appears that a few years later the law fell into disuse and became a dead law upon the books. Moses was born during the time when it was being painfully enforced. Actually, of course, it is foolish for us to question the wisdom of God. His way is always best and must be received as such by faith. It makes no essential difference whether we can understand it or not. Nonetheless, in this case the wisdom of God is evident. Pharaoh had determined to destroy the church of God, and God would expose his folly. Out of the very period of Pharaoh's most fanatical effort, God would raise the man through whom Pharaoh's might would be utterly destroyed. In fact, Pharaoh in the midst of his most vile efforts would be used to prepare that one through whom these efforts would be brought to nought. God would make it clearly evident that none can withstand His will; as God He is very great.

For a time it appeared to Amram and Jochebed as if they would be able to keep their child safely in their own home. Careful measures were taken to prevent everyone from even knowing that the child had been born. He was kept as quietly as possible behind closed doors, and the older children were warned not to tell anyone of his presence. For about three months these efforts were successful. However, the task was becoming ever more difficult. The child's voice was becoming stronger, his growing body more active. It became apparent

to the parents that they would not be able to keep the child hidden much longer from those who passed by in the streets. Something different had to be done. If it was not, the child would soon be discovered and destroyed.

Burdened by her responsibility, faithful Jochebed went down to the river bank one day and gathered a large bundle of bulrushes. These she took home and she set to work. With painstaking care she wove the reeds into a closely knit basket. Thereupon she coated the inside of the basket with a smooth coat of pitch and slime until she was sure that it would be completely waterproof. Into this basket or ark Jochebed placed her son. Her plan was this. They would find a desolate stretch of river bank by which people very seldomly passed. Each morning, early before anyone else was astir, they would take the little ark with the child and allow it to float on the water within one of the thick clumps of reeds that grew all along the Nile's banks. Being made from bulrushes itself, the ark would be very difficult to see. Should the child cry, it would be much less likely to be heard there by the desolate river bank than at home close to the busy streets. Finally each day Miriam would be sent apparently to play by the river, but actually to keep a close eye on the little basket as much as possible, keeping it from being harmed. Each night the child could be returned again to the home after dark. Perhaps the location of the basket was changed from day to day to ward off all suspicion.

This action of Jochebed's, we are told in Hebrews 11, arose out of faith. It was not as though the child would now be free from all threats of danger. One could imagine countless things that might easily happen. What if the current should catch the basket and carry it away? or a storm should break and fill the basket until it sink? or if, perhaps, the crocodiles of the river should discover the precious contents? These dangers were very real, but by Jochebed they were far to be preferred to the dangers represented in the Egyptians that passed every day by her door. She felt as David did after he numbered the people, that it was better to fall into the hands of the Lord. Realizing that she could protect her child no longer, she placed him in the care of the Lord.

How long this plan was successfully followed, we do not know. However, one day as Miriam was sitting on the river's brink, she looked up to see a company of women approaching. Her heart skipped with fear, for these women were evidently Egyptians. Moreover, from the royal dress of the one it was apparent that she was from the court of Pharaoh, evidently the king's daughter. She was coming to the river to bathe. Quickly Miriam withdrew herself so as not to draw attention to the place where the ark was afloat in the reeds. If the child would fall into the hands of these hated Egyptians, surely it would be the end. But alas, the quick eyes of Pharaoh's daughter were not to be deceived, not even by the clever camouflage of the bulrushes. She sent one of her maidens to fetch the basket and looked within.

Trembling with fear Miriam watched, expecting any moment to see her young brother thrown heartlessly into the

river. She wondered within herself what she should do. The child was crying and Miriam was quick to note that on the face of the Egyptian woman there were not sneers but smiles, not anger but sympathy. She heard the words of Pharaoh's daughter, "This is one of the Hebrews' children," and there was kindness in her voice. Miriam caught the implication, the child was to be kept alive. Quick of wit, Miriam approached the woman and said, "Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?" Suddenly the possibility appeared of the child's being restored to their home, safe from all threat of death.

Pharaoh's daughter looked at the young girl standing eagerly before her and immediately the whole situation became clear. The girl was evidently the child's sister engaged in a plot to preserve the babe from death. Did not the girl's eagerness manifest a personal interest in the child's care? Did not her very features resemble those of the child? The girl wanted to return her brother to their mother. But then it made no difference. The child was fair to look upon and she had determined to take it into the palace for her own. As yet the child was too young. It needed a nurse. Who would care better for him than his natural mother? She told the young girl, "Go," and soon the girl returned with her mother. Pharaoh's daughter gave to Jochebed her instructions, "Take the child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages."

There was little cause for concern that evening in the palace of Pharaoh. True, one Hebrew child had been spared from death, and that with the approval of Pharaoh, for he could hardly deny the plea of a favored daughter. But what did it really matter? That child was but one among many, and plans were already in the making to have the child educated in Pharaoh's own schools. The situation was well under control. What Pharaoh did not realize was that behind that one seemingly insignificant exception was the will of Israel's God. Moses, the child drawn from the river, would rise up to put to nought all of the boasting of that evil kingdom. The very efforts of Pharaoh were hastening his own destruction. As the Psalmist wrote many years later, "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his anointed . . . He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision" (Ps. 2:1, 2, 4).

B.W.

#### IN MEMORIAM

The Ladies' Society of the South Holland Protestant Reformed Church wishes herewith to express its sincere sympathy to one of its members, Mrs. Raymond Bruinsma, in the death of her father,

MR. ALBERT BEUGEL

May our heavenly Father, Who does all things well, give comfort and peace by His Word and Spirit.

Rev. John A. Heys, President  
Mrs. Frank G. Van Baren, Secretary

## FROM HOLY WRIT

### Exposition of I John 2:18-21

a.

In this section of first John the writer touches upon a most basic danger to the church of Christ. He refers to the error and manifestation of those who are most rightly called "antichrists." The danger for the readers is not really so much from without the church as from within the church, from those who were "out of us" in number but were not "of us" in the faith. No persecution from without threatens. Rather there is a lukewarm spirit of those who deny the essentials of the very Christian religion; and, if it were possible, they would deceive the entire congregation of Christ. The enemy is within the gates. And that makes him so much the more dangerous in his influence.

That the enemy shall not succeed is due to the fact that He that is in the believers is greater than all the forces of evil. They are God's little children. They have the unction of the Holy One. They all know the truth in Jesus, the fundamental teaching concerning the Son of God having come into the flesh. However, John will remind them concerning what they all know. And those who deny this truth are the "deceivers" and the "liars." And as such the teaching of these liars is also readily known and perceived by John's readers.

These deceivers are the Gnostic teachers of John's day who denied that Jesus is the Son of God; that He is the true God and eternal life.

We shall have more to say about these teachers in this short series of articles which we contemplate writing on this section of the first epistle of John. Our purpose is to consider rather carefully what God would teach here in these verses 18-21 of this Second Chapter of first John. Literally this passage reads as follows: *"Little children it is the last time (hour); and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many anti-Christ's; whereby we know that it is the last time (hour). They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. But ye have an unction (anointing) from the Holy One, and ye know all things. I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth."*

In the light of our interpretation of the verses 12-14, where we reflected on the term "little children," we need not go into any great detail here. Suffice it to say that, with the term "little children," John has reference to the entire

congregation, young and old. He does not simply single out the little children in the natural sense of the term. The people of God are children of God by virtue of being born of God, and that, too, because they are the objects of the great love of God. Wherefore the little children have the forgiveness of sins, and also know the Father, the triune God, in His saving power and love.

It is of importance for the little children to understand that it is the "last hour." The King James rendering here is the "last time." We prefer to maintain the term last *hour*. We trust our reason for this will be stated at the proper connection.

It will hardly do in determining the meaning of the last *hour* to simply ask after the meaning of the term hour in our daily language, as an hour measured off on our clock and consisting of sixty minutes. Reasoning thus it would be very simple to draw the erroneous inference that the last hour refers to the brief span of time just prior to the return of Christ upon the clouds in His Parousia. That would be all too simplistic.

It will be incumbent upon us to make a survey of the Scriptures, both in the Old and in the New Testaments, to seek to come to some conception from the Word of God in general and from this passage in particular, as to the meaning of the term "last hour"! Our method is, therefore, not to take a fragment of a text and then read our idea of the last hour into it, but rather that of the tried and approved method of interpreting Scripture in the light of Scripture.

Let us then, first of all, let a few passages from the Old Testament Scriptures pass in review.

In the prophecy of Isaiah 2:2 we read the meaningful words, referring to the Messianic times in the "latter days": "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem." In this passage we may note: (1) That the "mountain of the Lord" is typical of the heavenly Jerusalem, the City of the great King. It is the place where God's glory dwells with his people. (2) That this shall be realized not in the time of the prophet, but rather in the "last time," that is, in the days when the Son of God shall have come into the world, born from a woman and made under the law. It is the dispensation of the fulness of times. The *last time* is here viewed from the historical standpoint of the prophet Isaiah in the Old Testament dispensation. It is last from this viewpoint, lying in the distant future from the point of departure of the Seer. It is well to bear this in mind constantly in this survey of Old Testament passages.

Next, we notice the very striking passage which we find in Genesis 49:1, where we read: "And Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the *latter days*. Gather yourselves together, and hear ye sons of Jacob; and hearken unto Israel your father." We would have you notice concerning this passage the following salient points: (1) That the aged patriarch here is calling his sons to his death-bed in Egypt, and that he will now not simply utter a departing wish, but that he will be God's prophet here, foretelling the things which shall befall Israel, the twelve tribes in the "latter days." (2) That what is here foretold concerning Israel in part refers to what will befall Israel in the land of Canaan when they return, and each shall dwell in his inheritance. From Jacob's prophetic vantage-point this earthly, typical future does not lie outside of the prophetic perspective. (3) However, Jacob does look beyond the typical, Old Testament existence of the twelve tribes to the time of the Messiah, the Christ who is to come, as is evident from the classic passage in verse 8, where Jacob speaks of Judah, the first-born son by promise, the preeminent tribe. Writes Moses, giving Jacob's words, "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise . . . the sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet till Shiloh come, and unto him shall the gathering (obedience) of the people be . . ." From this it is abundantly clear that the "latter times" refers to the New Dispensation, the greatness of Israel, the Israel of God, in Christ.

We should not forget that these two Scripture passages which we have thus far investigated establish the thesis that the "last times" refer to the time when Christ shall have come in the flesh. And this, we hope to show, has a great significance for understanding the term "last hour" here in I John.

But let us continue.

In Numbers 24:14 we read the prophetic utterance from the lips of Balaam concerning Israel, as he sees the people according to their tribes round about the tent of meeting, the tabernacle. Says Balaam: "And now, behold, I go unto my people: come therefore, and I will advertise thee what this people shall do to thy people in the latter days." And what Balaam says he sees in the "vision of the Almighty," and that, too, "having his eyes open." And what does he see? Listen: "I see him but not now: I shall behold him but not nigh: there shall come a star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth." Here too we note: (1) That this vision of Balaam is the same as that seen by Jacob when he is about to die. Balaam sees the Star to come out of Jacob, the sceptre that shall not depart from Judah. He sees the era when the Christ shall have come and lay all his enemies low, when he shall put all things under his feet. This will take place in the "latter days." (2) Balaam sees

Israel as he hears this "sound of the King is in the midst" of her, as the chief Captain and finisher of the church's faith. It is in Him that Israel shall do valiantly.

Then, finally, we must still look at the passage from Deut. 4:30, which is spoken by Moses to Israel in the fortieth year of their wanderings in the wilderness. Here Moses holds the law before Israel for the second time. Hence, the name of the book of Moses called Deuteronomy (second law). And Israel is told what will befall them if they do not keep all that is written in the book to perform it. Israel is hemmed in by the law! And cursed is every one that does not remain in all that is written in the book of the law to perform it! No nation has so seen the works of God. They shall not add to the word which the Lord commanded them, neither shall they diminish aught therefrom, so that they may keep the commandments of the Lord their God. And, if they do not keep the commandments, then they shall be scattered among the nations, carried into captivity in Assyria and in Babylon. But there is still hope. The Sceptre shall not depart from Judah. The promise of God is not put to naught; the Lord does not forsake the people whom He foreknew. And therefore Moses says in Deut. 4:30: "When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the *latter days*, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shall be obedient unto his voice; (for the Lord God is a merciful God:) he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he sware unto them." Truly this is a beautiful passage, expressive of hope and consolation and of the Lord's covenant faithfulness. It is the faithfulness to the people which he had foreknown. And we further notice: (1) That the term "latter times" must refer not simply to Israel's return from Babylon, but rather to the coming of Christ. It was in this coming that the "Lord visited his people in mercy," and herein he proved His great love to us, namely, in the sending of His Son, to redeem Israel from all her iniquity. In him both Jew and Gentile have the great Advocate with the Father. For he is the propitiation for the sins of the "whole world," that is, for Jew and Gentile. He will redeem from the curse of the Law, by becoming a curse for us. (2) Here too the "latter days" are viewed from the vantage-point of the Old Testament Seer. Israel is saved in hope of Him Who is to come.

And, not to weary you, reader, with too many quotations, I would just call attention yet to the prophecy of Daniel, which is full of the hope of the Messiah. Does Daniel's prophecy not end with the promise of hope of the "latter days"? We read in Daniel 12:13: "But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days."

Here we see the Old Testament perspective of the "latter times," of "the latter days" and it will shed a great deal of light on John's usage of the term concerning the "last hour."

G.L.

## IN HIS FEAR

### The Freedom of "Bigotry"

(4)

The woman was the first to sin here upon this earth.

Sin had its beginning in heaven among the angels. But the angels are neither male nor female.

God created male and female among the world of mankind. And He made them male and female in a definite order and in a very unique way. Of this we will have more to say presently.

Now we wish to follow that line of thought that it was indeed the woman who first practiced sin here upon this earth.

We will not enter the argument as to whether the woman is or at that time was spiritually stronger than the man. This would lead us too far away from our subject. The point we wish to make at this time is that Eve sinned before Adam sinned, and we would call your attention to the nature of that sin.

It was, of course, sin against the Living God. It was His commandment that she disobeyed and against Him that she rebelled. This is an undeniable fact. And few there are who would even care to dispute that fact. He had forbidden man to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and of evil. It was not as Eve, already in the meshes of the net of sin, declared it, that God had forbidden them even to touch that fruit. But very definitely He had let man know that he must not eat of that fruit. To tempt himself by fondling this fruit would certainly have been sin. But the mere act of touching it was not forbidden.

Likewise, would we point out, Eve's first sin was not that of eating of the forbidden fruit. To take that position is to deny what Paul wrote in I Timothy 2:11-14, "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." Sin always begins in the heart. And sin is also a matter of the heart. It is not always an external deed. It does not always bring injury or shame to a fellow man. All sins are not performed outside of the heart. But all sin is sin in the heart and because of what the heart declares. And so it is also that before Eve performed the physical act of eating, the spiritual act of sin against both God and her husband, Adam, had already been perpetrated. The crafty and devilishly cunning snare which Satan laid had exactly that sin in her heart in mind. Her heart must be conquered

before her hand and mouth will commit the external deed of eating of the forbidden fruit.

Eve did not know the devil. Eve did not even know of the existence of the devil. How could she? He is a spiritual being whom she could not see. His sin occurred in heaven and of this history she knew absolutely nothing. With her pure mind — for no sin had even been set before her eyes yet, and her heart was created pure — she did not even know that sin had entered the world anywhere. But she did know the serpent. She also knew of Adam's kingship over that serpent. Indeed she was his help who was made meet or fit for serving him. Let us not twist that into help mate. Physically, psychically and spiritually she was made to be an help who was meet for him and not an help-meet for him.

There are several matters to which we must give close attention. First of all is the fact that man was created first. This did not happen with any of the other creatures created on the fifth and sixth days. Fish and fowl, animals of every kind were created male and female, both at the same time. God did not take a rib out of the male lion to make a lioness. Deliberately and significantly He created man first and all alone. (Surely we are not going to follow the way of unbelief that speaks of evolution. Adam was the first man and Eve was the first woman. No need for a compromise with godless evolution by speaking of periods of thousands upon thousands of years either. If we are to listen to godless scientists and believe their Carbon-14 theory, we have to refuse to listen to God, Who presents Adam to us as the first man. The Carbon-14 theory insists that man was on this earth many thousands of years longer than the four thousand years of history recorded in the Old Testament Scriptures. We must then insist on a man upon this earth before Adam.) No, we believe that God created man first and that he stood there upon this earth alone for a time. And the woman was created therefore for the man and not the man for the woman. There, too, it is very plain that the married woman may not determine the type of government her husband shall have over him, and woman suffrage is clearly contrary to the teachings of the Word of God. For that same reason the unmarried may not vote along with the men to determine what these men, who are not their husbands, shall have as their form of government. The woman was created after the man and for man's sake, and therefore she must leave the whole matter of authority in the State, in the Church and in the home to the man whom she must serve in order to serve God. Lest we contradict this as so much philosophy of man, turn to I Corinthians 11:7-9, "For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of man. For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man."

And let us take note further that all this is spoken concerning Eve in regard to her social standing. True, Paul declares in I Corinthians 14:34, "Let the women keep silence



in the churches: for it is not permitted them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law." But he says this exactly because her social standing in the State is such by the very ordinance of God implied in her creation *after* and *for* the man. All this was done and said concerning Eve before the Son of God even began to gather His Church. She was made to be an help meet for Adam in the social sphere, in the home and in the state as well as in the Church. She was made of man as king over the earthly creation — and he had just named all the animals — as well as of man as the earthly head and representative of the Church, the elder of God's Church in Paradise. The woman simply does not have the right to rule man and to decide who shall rule man. She must always be in subjection in order to be pleasing in God's sight. And if she asserts herself above the man and tries to determine his life, socially, politically or ecclesiastically, she continues in the sin of Eve which she perpetrated *before* she ate of the forbidden fruit. We want to come back to that now. For we wish to show, that come what may, be ruled by a president whose church will deny all other beliefs their freedom of religion or not, the saintly woman will not try to cast her vote to try to stem the tide. She will abide in God's will and rest quietly in the confidence that all these things are in His hands to do what is good for His Church. To walk in His fear, she will refuse to usurp authority over the man in the voting booth or try to exercise authority on his level. She will fear God rather than a Roman Catholic president. She will fear His punishment rather than man's persecution.

It will be plain now that the moment that Eve took it upon herself to assume Adam's position and to answer the serpent — over whom Adam had the kingship — she had inwardly departed from the right way and usurped authority over the man. Indeed she might speak to that serpent, but she might not answer as she did. It was a matter of the command which God had given to her husband as the king of all the earthly creation, including these two special trees. It was a matter of which she had received knowledge only from her husband. God did not speak directly to her but to Adam even before she was created. Her husband had taught her the command of God. Her first action therefore, when another view than that which she received from God through her husband was presented, should have been to consult him and to refer the serpent to him. But no, she set aside her husband's kingship, and even after the devil through the serpent presented the very opposite of what God said and inferred that He was a liar, she refused to call her husband to rebuke this slanderer. Her failure to refer the matter to the earthly king of God's creation placed her in the position where she was open to the next barb in the devil's attack. And he knew it. Paul makes a strong point of it that she was utterly deceived. For this there was no need at all. Had she continued to recognize Adam as her head and referred all the matters of what God had given her command to do through the mouth of her hus-

band, she would not have put herself in the position where Satan could have tempted her with the fruit of that tree.

Eve very definitely usurped Adam's position in society and not simply in the Church. And let it be said that Adam sinned also in that he let himself be led by the woman. This is a principle matter and preceded the actual physical eating of the fruit that was forbidden. And every time a woman sets herself above man to usurp his position of authority she eats of forbidden fruit. Need we repeat now that we were not writing a piece of political propaganda and are simply interested in that which is in His fear? This stand will cost many thousands of votes that could serve to try to defeat that position of great danger to the Church, to have a Roman Catholic president. But that makes no difference. Principle is principle, and we cannot serve God by breaking His laws.

That argument that the end justifies the means is nothing less than the lie. He who finds it necessary to resort to dishonest and forbidden means cannot have a good end in mind. Rahab lied concerning the spies. She is not commended for that in Holy Writ. She is commended for having hidden the spies but not for having lied concerning their whereabouts. Her motive and end was good, but she is not justified in telling a lie to reach her goal. If our goal in life, and the end we have in view with our works is the glory of God, we will not resort to means which He forbids. If we do, it is simply because we have a carnal goal in mind, even though we may deceive ourselves into thinking that our cause is a just one and our goal an honorable one. We glorify God when we submit to His will. It is utter nonsense to say, "Lord, I am going to sin in order to glorify Thy name. I am going to go contrary to Thy will in order to do Thy will." Jesus teaches us that we must pray for the hallowing of God's name, that this is possible only in the way of His kingdom coming in our hearts so that WE do His will on earth as perfectly as the holy angels do it in heaven.

And so in conclusion, let men taunt us and ridicule us for our "narrow-minded" views. Let them accuse us of bigotry and of being old fashioned. But let us be sure we walk in the way of God's commandments. Let us walk in His fear, for then we will have no fear of what man may do to us.

J.A.H.

#### IN MEMORIAM

The Martha Ladies' Aid Society of the Hull Protestant Reformed Church wishes to express its sincere sympathy to one of its members and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. John Boer, in the loss of their son,

#### MARTIN BOER

The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. Job 1:21

Rev. Jason L. Kortering, President  
Mrs. T. Jansma, Secretary

## THE GOLDEN LAMPSTAND

Scripture's first view of this symbolic sanctuary fixture is from within the heart of God's house outward. If God is to be known at all, He must of necessity reveal Himself, and doing so begin from Himself, moving outward to man. This is evident from God's instructive commands to Moses to build the tabernacle and its furnishings as issued in Ex. 25:31-40. There we are brought immediately into the holy of holies where was the ark of the covenant. Next mentioned is the table of showbread, which was in the holy place, also there the golden lampstand, then the coverings, and finally the brazen altar which was outside in the courtyard. This is the approach of the Book of Exodus, whereas the Book of Leviticus is just the reverse, beginning outside the tabernacle at the brazen altar (chaps. 1-7), proceeding to the laver (8), then to the mercy-seat (16) in the holiest place, thus emphasizing the proper way of drawing near to God.

The Old Testament word used to denominate the golden lampstand is *menorah*, which, since Wiclif, was improperly translated "candlestick" until the old American Standard Version of the Bible where it is correctly rendered *lampstand*. Candles, a solid-fuel burning lightholder with self-contained wick, came to be used upon altars of worship in the period of the dark ages. They strictly belong to that period. It is more than doubtful that the Old Testament Jews would use candles of tallow, for to them fat had to be burned on the brazen altar, *not* in the holy place. Where is there evidence that Israel used candles at all? They preferred lamps outfitted with liquid-fuel and separately inserted wicks. The flammable mixture was not tallow, but pure beaten olive oil. Nothing else was used in the worship of God's house. This translation is confirmed by I Sam. 3:3 where it is called the lamp of God. It is also called the pure lampstand (Lev. 24:4).

The lampstand was made of one piece of beaten ("turned work," Heb., turned to bring into a round or cylindrical form) gold (Ex. 25:31, 36), its proper dimensions unknown, but of a talent weight (v. 39), which is approximately 130 pounds, making it worth from \$30,000 to \$50,000, and perhaps, as some think, as much as \$95,000 today. It consisted of seven branches, all ornamented with knobs (knobs, or perhaps, buds), flowers, and fruit like almonds. Six of these branches stemmed from one main stand, three from each side of the main shaft in the form of graduated quarter circles. On the ends of the seven branches, on the same level, were the seven bowls (lamps). The light of these lamps burned only during the night as an examination of Ex. 27:20, 21; 30:7, 8; Lev. 24:2-4 and I Sam. 3:3 will show. In the morning, the doors of the holy place were opened (I Sam. 3:15), it being the duty of the levites to open them every morning (I Chron. 9:27). In this way day light was permitted to pervade the holy place.

The seven-fold light symbolized the great excellency of God and the covenant fellowship which He has with His

people in the power of the seven-fold Spirit of wisdom (Isa. 11:2), and typified the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light (I Pet. 2:9). The lampstand, therefore, is a shadow of the Lord Jesus Christ, a light which is but shade compared to Him who is the Light of the world (Jn. 8:12), and the light and glory of heaven (Rev. 21:22f; 22:5). God is light (I Jn. 1:5), but His people are lightbearers as typified by the branches and lamps. (This implies that God's people are more than *capable* of bearing the image of God, but are actual image-bearers.) Thus not only Christ, but His body, the church, is represented by the golden lampstand. The church is empowered with the Holy Spirit, as the olive oil signifies, and reflects the light of the testimony of the Gospel through the believers who are the light of the world. That is, the only light in this dark world is Christ and His church. The sphere outside of the true church is that of stygian darkness. Darkness in Scripture is a symbol of error (I Jn. 1:6; 4:6). Darkness is the opposite of God and the truth. God is light. Darkness represents ignorance of and hatred toward God. Darkness is the lie, and enemy of all truth. It is our darkness to love darkness rather than the light. The light, to the wicked, to the spiritually blind, is as darkness. The light is never visible to them. But in this world of darkness, we, believers, see! To us the darkness is invisible light, invisible to the world, but light to us, as the infra-red light which in the midst of the night can turn darkness into light (if one has but the proper eye equipment to behold this invisible light). But in the darkness, as such, there is no fellowship. Darkness affords no fellowship. That is why hell is the most lonesome place in all the universe. For hell is the blackness of darkness for ever.

Light, on the contrary, is a symbol of fellowship. Light is the sphere, environment and element of fellowship. Darkness is death. Hence, light is called the light of life, the light of the living, the light of men and the light of the Gospel. To the true Israelite, the light was that which emanated from the golden lampstand in the holy place, and the glory which shone from the shekinah in the holy of holies. He could never go there, except as represented by the high priest, but his whole life, waking and sleeping, work and rest, family and public life, thoughts and actions, were all dominated by the consciousness that the Light and Presence of God dwelt in the midst of Israel. He too was called out of darkness into God's marvelous light, but for him this meant to dwell in the secret place (temple) of the Most High. For God is revealed in the Old Testament thus: "Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment" (Ps. 104:2). But in the completed revelation of the New Testament we read that "God dwelleth in the light," and that "God is light." He is not only clothed with light, not only dwells in light, but He is light!

This is shadowed forth by the beautiful symbolism of the tabernacle. There the lampstand was situated on the left hand (So.) side of the holy place (Ex. 40:24), facing the

table of showbread, or the table of the bread of (God's) face, and casting its light upon it. In this light the high priest offered incense (a type of the prayers of all saints) on the golden altar which was westward in the holy place and before the veil into the most holy place. He would also trim the lamps, freshen their supply of oil, and renew the bread on the table. This signified that all worship and service unto God is holy, and must be done in the light of His presence. As the lamp shone upon the showbread, it revealed Christ as the Bread of Life to those hungry for righteousness. The light revealed Christ as the Bread from Heaven. It also shone on the golden altar, revealing Christ as Intercessor and Mediator through whom our prayers have access into the presence of God. It shone upon itself, revealing the beauty of the Lord which He puts upon us, thus causing our light to shine before men that they may see our good works and glorify our heavenly Father. Thus, in His light we see light, and in His light we walk in the light.

In the Book of Zechariah, chapter four, we come to the highest level of Old Testament progressive revelation concerning the lampstand and its significance. Here the lampstand appears in vision, but as a much advanced type over that within the tabernacle of Moses. This is to be expected, inasmuch as the Book of Exodus is at the beginning, and the Book of Zechariah is at the end of the Old Testament progressive revelation. In the time after Moses, of Solomon's temple, the seven-branched lampstand of the original tabernacle gave way to ten lampstands of similar form, "five on the right side, and five on the left." (Solomon also made ten lavers, and ten tables of showbread, similarly positioned.) This temple arrangement signified the complete sufficiency and superiority of the spiritual food and spiritual illumination of the Gospel dispensation (at this point, one thousand years distant) over that of the old dispensation. There is no light greater or brighter than Gospel light, unless it be the light in the New Jerusalem, which is the Lamb. Also signified by the ten lampstands is the fact that in the Old Testament there was but one, national church; but that the New Testament would bring the one church consisting of multiplied churches of all nations.

But now Zechariah's golden lampstand: it had a reservoir above the center of the lamps, and from it stemmed pipes to the several lamps. The reservoir also had two channels reaching on either side to the two olive trees standing, one on the right, and one on the left of the lampstand. In this way the two fruit-bearing branches of the olive trees extended their fruit over these channels, and exuded their oil into them, and through them into the reservoir. Then from the reservoir the oil passed through the individual pipes to the several lamps. Thus the reservoir and the lamps were continually supplied with oil without the ministrations of priests. Here represented is the ideal church finally realized in the perfection of the New Creation. For in the new covenant church of the New Heaven and New Earth there are no levitical priests, and "the Lamp thereof" eternally irradiates with its

innate, essential glory. The ideal character of the church is further brought out in Zechariah's scripture by the fact that here we do not have an actual, historical lampstand, as the one of Moses and those of Solomon. It was seen only in vision, and was never placed objectively in a "worldly sanctuary" (Heb. 9:1). It represents the church after the Lord has "made all things new."

"What are these two olive trees . . .? What be these two olive branches . . .?" And the answer: "These are the two anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth" (Zech. 4:11, 12, 14). In Zechariah's day these probably were Zerubbabel the prince and Joshua the high priest. So that the lampstand and the two olive trees (which probably stemmed out of the same base with the lampstand) represent the church and its officebearers—the holy congregation with ruling elders and preaching elders. Through Spirit-filled officebearers God pours out grace upon His church and blesses His people. The anointed minister of the Word of God withholds nothing that is profitable to the hearers: he proclaims the whole counsel of God. For he is not a purveyor of philosophy, nor a contender for his own ideas. He is not an originator of "new thought," nor a mere "repeat-lever" for the contributions of others. He is a channel of grace through which the Spirit of Christ and the Word of God are administered to the comfort and enlightenment of His people.

The lampstand in all Scripture therefore teaches us that Christ's church from now throughout eternity shall never lack true ministers. Whereas in the former dispensation "they were not suffered to continue by reason of death" (Heb. 7:23), now they "*stand* by the Lord of the whole earth." In the New Creation the lampstand, eternally shining and golden (the church in glory), is never removed from its place. The temple in that New Creation is the whole city of the New Jerusalem, and that city is the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb in eternal union with the "nations (entirely new nations, 5:9; 7:9) of them which are saved." In that city-wide temple the lamp is the Lamb, the Son of God incarnate in blessed fellowship with "the kings of the earth." So that, the lampstand of Moses represented a kingdom of priests, while the lampstand of Zechariah and of the New Heaven represents a priesthood of kings under the King of kings. For in heaven we His servants (slaves) shall *walk* in the immediate light of the Lamb, and in His everlasting effulgence *serve* Him, reigning as kings "for ever and ever." And that will be for all believers in the kingdom of heaven salvation full, perfect, sufficient, complete! Amen.

R.C.H.

---

O make Thy face to shine on me,  
And teach me all Thy laws to keep;  
Because Thy statutes are despised,  
With overwhelming grief I weep.

## The Voice of Our Fathers

### The Canons of Dordrecht

#### PART TWO

#### EXPOSITION OF THE CANONS

#### FIFTH HEAD OF DOCTRINE

#### OF THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

#### CONCLUSION

And this is the perspicuous, simple, and ingenuous declaration of the orthodox doctrine respecting the five articles which have been controverted in the Belgic churches; and the rejection of the errors, with which they have for some time been troubled. This doctrine the Synod judges to be drawn from the Word of God, and to be agreeable to the confessions of the Reformed churches. Whence it clearly appears, that some whom such conduct by no means became, have violated all truth, equity, and charity, in wishing to persuade the public.

"That the doctrine of the Reformed churches concerning predestination, and the points annexed to it, by its own genius and necessary tendency, leads off the minds of men from all piety and religion; that it is an opiate administered by the flesh and the devil, and the stronghold of Satan, where he lies in wait for all; and from which he wounds multitudes, and mortally strikes through many with the darts both of despair and security; that it makes God the author of sin, unjust, tyrannical, hypocritical; that it is nothing more than interpolated Stoicism, Manicheism, Libertinism, Turcism; that it renders men carnally secure, since they are persuaded by it that nothing can hinder the salvation of the elect, let them live as they please; and therefore, that they may safely perpetrate every species of the most atrocious crimes; and that, if the reprobate should even perform truly all the works of the saints, their obedience would not in the least contribute to their salvation; that the same doctrine teaches, that God, by a mere arbitrary act of his will, without the least respect or view to any sin, has predestinated the greatest part of the world to eternal damnation; and, has created them for this very purpose; that in the same manner in which the election is the fountain and the cause of faith and good works, reprobation is the cause of unbelief and impiety; that many children of the faithful are torn, guiltless, from their mothers' breasts, and tyrannically plunged into hell; so that, neither baptism, nor the prayers of the Church at their baptism, can at all profit by them;" and many other things of the same kind, which the Reformed Churches not only do not acknowledge, but even detest with their whole soul.

Wherefore, this Synod of Dort, in the name of the Lord, conjures as many as piously call upon the name of our Savior Jesus Christ, to judge of the faith of the Reformed Churches, not from the calumnies, which, on every side, are heaped upon it; nor from the private expressions of a few among ancient and modern teachers, often dishonestly quoted, or corrupted, and wrested to a meaning quite foreign to their intention; but from the public confessions of the Churches themselves, and from the declaration of the orthodox doctrine,

confirmed by the unanimous consent of all and each of the members of the whole Synod. Moreover, the Synod warns calumniators themselves, to consider the terrible judgment of God which awaits them, for bearing false witness against the confessions of so many Churches, for distressing the consciences of the weak; and for laboring to render suspected the society of the truly faithful.

Finally, this Synod exhorts all their brethren in the gospel of Christ, to conduct themselves piously and religiously in handling this doctrine, both in the universities and churches; to direct it, as well in discourse, as in writing, to the glory of the Divine Name, to holiness of life, and to the consolation of afflicted souls; to regulate, by the Scripture, according to the analogy of faith, not only their sentiments, but also their language; and, to abstain from all those phrases which exceed the limits necessary to be observed in ascertaining the genuine sense of the holy Scriptures; and may furnish insolent sophists with a just pretext for violently assailing, or even vilifying, the doctrine of the Reformed Churches.

May Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who, seated at the Father's right hand, gives gifts to men, sanctify us in the truth, bring to the truth those who err, shut the mouths of the calumniators of sound doctrine, and endure the faithful ministers of his Word with the spirit of wisdom and discretion, that all their discourses may tend to the glory of God, and the edification of those who hear them. AMEN.

That this is our faith and decision we certify by subscribing our names.

Here follow the names, not only of President, Assistant President, and Secretaries of the Synod, and of the Professors of Theology in the Dutch Churches, but of all the Members who were deputed to the Synod, as the Representatives of their respective Churches, that is, of the Delegates from Great Britain, the Electoral Palatinate, Hesse, Switzerland, Wetteraw — The Republic and Church of Geneva — The Republic and Church of Bremen — The Republic and Church of Emden — The Duchy of Gelderland and of Zutphen — South Holland — North Holland — Zeeland — The Province of Utrecht — Friesland — Transylvania — The State of Groningen and Omeland — Drent — The French Churches.

This "Conclusion" is, for the purpose of our discussion, quite adequately rendered in the above version of our "Psalter." And therefore, although several improvements could be made in translation and punctuation, we will not risk either boring or confusing the reader by trying to point out in such a lengthy document the various points at which improvements could be made. If necessary, we can note such changes as we proceed with our discussion.

Strictly speaking, I suppose, this "Conclusion" does not belong to our *Canons* as a creed and as one of our Three Forms of Unity. It is for this reason too, undoubtedly, that many Dutch and English versions of the *Canons* omit it. Nevertheless, I think its omission is a mistake, and that for the following reasons. In the first place, in the mind of the Synod of Dordrecht this "Conclusion" was associated very closely with the *Canons* themselves, both as to occasion, necessity, and content. After the *Canons* were formulated and individually approved, the proposal to add a rejection of some of the most outstanding calumnies against the true doc-

trine of predestination was brought to the Synod and approved in its 131st session. The Synod was furnished with such a proposed conclusion, spent four sessions in revising and debating it for reasons which we need not consider at present, and finally adopted the "Conclusion" in its above form at the 134th session. Then, in the 135th and 136th sessions all five heads of doctrine, plus the "Conclusion," were once more read and finally adopted and separately subscribed to by all the delegations, foreign and domestic. This "Conclusion," therefore, was treated really as an integral part of the *Canons*. In the second place, this "Conclusion" is of historical value and sheds much light on the occasion and necessity of the *Canons*, as well as on their content. The calumnies cited therein help us to understand several of the formulations, both positive and negative, found in the *Canons* themselves. In the third place, this "Conclusion" was undoubtedly necessary and valuable for Reformed believers of that time and formed a fitting affirmation and exhortation to all who were involved in the Arminian struggle. But there is after all nothing new under the sun. And it is striking how up-to-date this affirmation of the truth, exposé of calumnies, warning to calumniators, and exhortation to the faithful actually is. We may see from it not only how vile and false were the calumnies against the Reformed doctrine in the days of our fathers, but also observe that the opponents of the truth of predestination today have learned their lessons from the Remonstrants. They come with the same calumnies and false conclusions. And therefore, all the more is it necessary, especially in these days of doctrinal ignorance and indifference and of a woefully inadequate acquaintance with the confessions, that those who confess the truth and the name of our Lord Jesus Christ be acquainted with their opposition, and be admonished to know the truth, to esteem their heritage, and to maintain it piously.

Hence, rather than abruptly close this series at the end of the Fifth Head of Doctrine, we prefer to associate ourselves with the fathers of Dordrecht in this "Conclusion," and, at the same time, properly conclude also our exposition of the *Canons*.

This "Conclusion" may be readily divided into several main sections.

In the first place, it contains a brief and positive affirmation of the *Canons* as a declaration of the orthodox doctrine with respect to the Five Articles of the Remonstrants, at the same time pointing to the occasion and need of the formulation of the *Canons* as lying in the rise of the Arminian heresy. We may notice that our fathers characterize the doctrine of our *Canons* as "perspicuous," or clear, as "simple," and as "ingenuous," or upright, candid, undisguised. This is an obvious reference to the fact that the Arminian teachings were lacking in clarity, were involved, and were purposely disguised and devious, while the Arminians charged the Reformed doctrine exactly with these shortcomings. We have reminded the reader of this fact

several times during the course of our discussions, and we need not go into detail on this score again. Let us remember, however, that the charge so often brought today too that the Reformed doctrine of predestination is heavy and involved and so complex that only a theologian can grasp it is as false as it is frequent. This truth is clear, simple, and undisguised, so that a child can grasp it. And our *Canons* are the evidence of it. The reason for this is also simple. This doctrine, as the "Conclusion" has it, is drawn from the perspicuous and simple Word of God itself. And the fact of the harmony between our *Canons* and our other Reformed confessions is also a testimony to the truth. One of the beauties of our Reformed doctrine is the fact that all the various aspects of the truth constitute together a harmonious system of the truth. And through them all beats the pulse of the heart of the church, God's eternal predestination.

In the second place, our fathers strike out against those who oppose and slander the truth, at the same time enumerating some of their most slanderous attacks upon the truth. We may note here, incidentally, that it would be better to punctuate this sentence with a colon after the word "public," and then proceed to quote the slanders which are mentioned here. As far as the content of this section is concerned we may remark, first of all, that our fathers were obviously not given to that false tolerance and sentimental but false charity that is so prevalent today with respect to heresy and heretics. They understood indeed that the matter of the confession and maintenance of the truth and that of the promulgation of heresy are spiritual, ethical matters. To them, therefore, the controversy between Reformed and Arminian was not a mere academic debate. Nor could they assume the stand that all were entitled to their opinions. But standing as before the face of God they had no other course than to condemn the Arminian propaganda as a violation of all truth, equity, and charity. Serious charges? Indeed; but those who love the truth will admit that they are every whit true. And those who read these Arminian slanders in the light of our *Canons* will be compelled to admit that these calumnies indeed appear contrary to truth, equity, and charity. And those who love the Reformed faith and who have themselves been witness to these or similar calumnies in their own experience will readily understand that our fathers, as a matter of conviction, felt as they did toward those who insidiously infiltrated the Reformed churches, unethically propagated their evil heresy, wilfully fought to deprive the church of its heritage, and wickedly sought to destroy the churches, even enlisting the aid of a sympathetic government in order to persecute the faithful. And they will agree that our fathers are not in need of twentieth century excuses for their sharp language. Yes, and they will also express the earnest wish that there might be more of such warm zeal for the truth and upright enmity against the enemies of God's cause in our own time.

(to be continued)

H.C.H.

## DECENCY and ORDER

### Office Bearers' Subscription

Articles 53, 54, D.K.O.

*"The ministers of the Word of God and likewise the professors of theology (which also behooves the other professors and school teachers) shall subscribe to the Three Formulas of Unity, namely, the Belgic Confession of Faith, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dordrecht, 1618-19, and the ministers of the Word who refuse to do so shall de facto be suspended from their office by the consistory or classis until they shall have given a full statement, and if they obstinately persist in refusing, they shall be deposed from their office." — Article 53, D.K.O.*

#### Decision Pertaining To This Article

*"The form for subscription for ministers, etc., shall be transcribed in the minute books of both consistory and classis. (Adopted by the Synod of 1944, Arts. 66, 67.)"*

\* \* \* \*

*"Likewise the elders and deacons shall subscribe to the aforesaid formulas of unity." — Article 54, D.K.O.*

"We . . . . do hereby sincerely and in good conscience before the Lord, declare by this, our subscription :

"a. That we heartily believe and are persuaded that all the articles and points of doctrine, contained in the Confession and Catechism of the Protestant Reformed Churches, do fully agree with the Word of God . . . .

"b. That we promise diligently to teach and faithfully to defend the aforesaid doctrine . . . .

"c. That we not only reject all errors that militate against this doctrine . . . . but that we are disposed to refute and contradict these, and to exert ourselves in keeping the Church free from such errors.

"d. That if hereafter any difficulties or different sentiments respecting the aforesaid doctrines should arise in our minds, we promise that we will neither publicly nor privately propose, teach, or defend the same, either by preaching or writing, until we have first revealed such sentiments to the consistory, classis and synod.

"e. That if the consistory, classis or synod should deem it proper to require of us a further explanation of our sentiments respecting any particular article of the Confession, etc., we do hereby promise to be always willing and ready to comply with such requisition . . . .

"f. That we reserve to ourselves the right of an appeal whenever we shall believe ourselves aggrieved by the

sentence of the consistory, classis or synod, and until a decision is made upon such an appeal, we will acquiesce in the determination and judgment already passed."

The above is in brief the substance of the vow that is made before God and His church by the office-bearers when they affix their signature to the Formula of Subscription. To sign this Formula is more than a mere formality. It is a very serious business and must be done in deepest sincerity with the fear of God. It would be shocking indeed to reveal from the minute books of our various consistories the names of those who have once pledged themselves to this vow and, without protest or submission of their grievances to the consistory, classis and synod, have forsaken the church and embraced the very errors they once promised to reject and oppose the truth they promised to defend. However, God is not mocked and to Him an account must be given in which He shall judge a righteous judgment.

*"When thou vowest a vow to God, defer not to pay it; for He hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed" (Ecclesiastes 5:4).*

Sometimes the signing of the Formula of Subscription is done in jest. Those called upon to sign it are accosted with remarks such as, "Be sure you read the fine print. Do you know what you're signing? Be careful, you sign your life away. This is going to cost you money." We understand, of course, that such jesting is sin. This is no joking matter. The fact is that this vow made unto God in the sincerity of our hearts may very well cost us our life. The defense of the truth overagainst all errors that militate against it may indeed involve us in a battle that has far reaching consequences with respect to the loss or retention of our earthly position and goods. Seriously and without any jest it may well be asked, "Do you know what you are signing and are you conscious of the implications of the vow which you make before God?" This act of signing the declaration of agreement involves every office-bearer in the church in a most serious responsibility. Never may it be done lightly.

Signing the Formula of Subscription was not always mandatory in Reformed Churches. The need for some definite declaration of agreement among the office-bearers was felt by certain Classes when various errors began to show themselves and especially when the monstrous evils of Arminianism began to appear. At first it was decided that the ministers and professors should sign their names to the Catechism and Confession as a token of agreement with the same. In 1608, however, Classis Alkmaar judged that this was not adequate and drew up a declaration of full agreement with the Catechism and Confession and a promise that the subscriber would maintain the doctrines therein contained and that he openly would reject all doctrines opposed to them. Other Classes and even Particular Synods soon began to follow this same practice and in 1618-19 the well-known Synod of Dort wrote the Form as it has come down to us almost unchanged. This Synod, as might be expected, re-



quired agreement also with the Canons, the doctrinal pronouncements composed against the Five Articles of the Arminians.

Article 53 of our present Church Order specifies that ministers of the Word of God and professors of theology are required to sign this Formula. Parenthetically it adds that "it also behooves the other professors and school teachers to do so." Article 54 declares that, "Likewise the elders and deacons shall subscribe to the aforesaid formulas of unity." In the Christian Reformed proposed revision of the Church Order this is all combined in one article. It appears as Article 52 and reads as follows:

*"In order that agreement with the creeds of the Church may be signified, the forms of Subscription shall be signed by the parties and on the occasions here stipulated: the elders and deacons at the first meeting of the consistory after their installation; all delegates to classis upon the occasion of their first delegation to a given classis; the ministers upon meeting with their consistories for the first time; the professors of theology and all other teachers in educational institutions controlled by the Church, upon assuming their office. All who refuse to do so shall by that very fact be suspended from their office."*

We note that this revision speaks of "forms" in the plural instead of a singular formula of subscription. This means that there are separate forms for ministers, professors, elders, deacons and instructors in educational institutions to sign. They do not all sign the same one. In our churches we do not have this plurality of forms but this may be a very good thing. For example, our formula of subscription begins with the words, "We, the undersigned, Professors of the Protestant Reformed Churches, ministers of the Gospel, elders and deacons . . ." This, of course, excludes school teachers and if we desire to maintain the parenthetical provision of Article 53 of our Church Order, we should either insert "school teachers" in the present form or adopt a new form for their use. But this is not too serious yet because our educational institutions are not church-controlled and, therefore, the matter of requiring a declaration of agreement from our teachers belongs with the school boards rather than with consistories, classes or synod.

It should be noted, too, that our present form states, "We promise therefore diligently to teach and faithfully to defend the aforesaid doctrine, without either directly or indirectly contradicting the same, by our public preaching or writing." Since elders and deacons are required to sign this formula, the last part of this quotation would seem to naturally imply that they also can, may or do preach. Since this is not the case, it would be well to have a separate form, based on the existing form but with slight alterations, for elders and deacons alone.

Then, too, it would be well to have a formula of agreement to be signed by the students of theology at such time

as they are given license to exhort in the churches. As it is now they are requested to sign the present form only after they have become candidates and accepted a call in the churches and have passed their final examination admitting them into the ministry. Even this is a bit irregular. The candidate, who is not yet ordained in office, is required to sign a Formula that presupposes throughout that those who sign it are office bearers. Now this may perhaps be done on the assumption that the candidate will very shortly be ordained in office but, if as a student and candidate, he were requested to sign a separate declaration of agreement with the Confessions, his signing the existing Formula of Subscription could wait until he is installed in office. This would eliminate the above mentioned irregularity.

The Reformed Churches of Holland have three different forms of subscription. The first of these forms is for Ministers of the Gospel; the second for Professors of Theology; the third for Rectors and Schoolmasters. The Holland churches do not have a general form for Elders and Deacons, although Article 54 of the present Dutch Church Order requires that these office bearers subscribe to the Three Forms of Unity just as our Church Order does. This matter is left to the Classes in Holland. The Classes can use the Forms adopted for Ministers of the Gospel with some minor adaptations, or they may draw up a special form of subscription as has also been done by some Classes in the past.

We feel that in our churches there is room for some limited revisions and minor alterations in our established custom and, yet, we must be careful in introducing any changes because there are also grave dangers in meddling with forms of such long standing. We must be mindful of the Dutch saying, "Alle verandering is geene verbetering." Translated: "All change is not improvement." We will demonstrate this, D.V., the next time.

G.V.d.B.

## ALL AROUND US

### *Comment on James Arminius*

In the October 10 issue of *Christianity Today*, there appears an article entitled "Arminius: An Anniversary Report." The author of this article is Carl Bangs, an associate professor of Religion and Philosophy at Olivet Nazarene College in Kankakee, Illinois. He tells his readers that the occasion for this article is the fact that October 10, 1960 marks the four hundredth anniversary of the birth of James Arminius (1560-1609).

Arminianism is undoubtedly the chief enemy which the Church of Christ confronts today. This error has determined more than any other the lines of the battle for the truth ever since Arminius began to propagate his views in the

Netherlands. Our history as Protestant Reformed Churches is a history marked by the battles against Arminianism in various forms and applied to various aspects of the truth of God's Word. No other error has made such inroads into the confession of the Church — especially the Church which stands in the historical tradition of John Calvin and the reformation of Geneva. And indeed, the Church which is determined to stand only on the basis of the truth of Scripture and the Confessions will be called to oppose this error time and time again.

The fact of the matter is, however, that although Arminianism has severely afflicted the Church world, and has had its insidious influences even in Reformed Churches, these churches still claim to fly under the Reformed and Calvinistic banner. They maintain their Arminianism under the pretense of the Reformed faith, and hold to the views of James Arminius while claiming to represent Calvin. They fail to see, or if seeing, fail to admit, that the Reformed faith has no place in it for the views of Arminius, and insist that while adopting the views of this seventeenth century heretic, they are still Reformed.

For these reasons, this article by Prof. Bangs is of interest. It presents what is evidently the position of the greater part of the Church world. That is, it presents an attempt to prove that Arminianism and Calvinism are not at all mutually exclusive.

The article points out first of all that Arminius was a

"Dutch theologian whose name has been given to the Protestant theological tradition of Arminianism. It is appropriate that attention be given again to this late voice of the Reformation whose influence has been so great and about whom so little study has been done . . . .

"Born in South Holland of simple people, orphaned at an early age, and raised by pious Reformed guardians, he was educated at Marburg, Leiden, Basel, and Geneva, his teacher in Geneva being Theodore Beza, the celebrated successor of Calvin. He was a brilliant student and later distinguished himself as pastor for 15 years of the Reformed churches of Amsterdam. He spent the final six years of his life as professor of theology at Leiden. During his pastoral and professorial years he became engaged in the controversy which gave rise to Arminianism."

Some of the general views of Arminius are briefly discussed by the author. He is described as one who "always regarded himself as a Reformed thinker," who "opposed the exclusive claims of the Roman church by appeal to the sole authority of the Scriptures," "professed allegiance to the Belgic Confession and the Heidelberg Catechism, the only Reformed symbols with any sort of binding authorities in the Low Countries at that time," who "had a high regard for the exegetical work of Calvin," but whose "insistence upon the sole authority of Scripture prevented (him) from ascribing to Calvin the kind of ultimate authority allowed him by the Leiden professor, Francis Gomarus. Gomarus had tried, unsuccessfully, to make Beza's extreme predestinarian reading mandatory in the Dutch churches."

In treating the thought and beliefs of Arminius, Prof. Bangs first of all tries to show that Arminius and Calvin were agreed on "the doctrine of the total inability of man as sinner to save himself, with salvation made possible by grace alone." It is no doubt true that Arminius spoke of the total inability of the natural man to save himself and to believe without grace. And it is also true that those churches who today have adopted the Arminian position also speak of the necessity of divine grace. But this is again merely evidence both in Arminius and in the Reformed churches that such theology is always "double-track" and that the ship of Arminianism sails under a Reformed flag. Arminianism also rejects man's total inability and the consequent doctrine of salvation by grace alone. This is demonstrated especially by what Prof. Bangs writes concerning Arminius' views of predestination.

"Calvin and his disciples had used the biblical figures of election and predestination to express the truth of *sola gratia* (by grace alone, H.H.) and to combat the Roman doctrine of works. Theological literature often gives the impression that Arminius simply 'denied predestination.' It was his well-grounded fear that Beza, and Gomarus, the supra-lapsarian interpreters of Calvin, were in danger of divorcing the doctrine from Christology and making Christ the mere instrument or means of carrying out a prior, abstract decree. Arminius sought to state the doctrine in the light of Scripture and in integral relation to Christology . . . .

"The 'first decree,' then for Arminius, was that by which God appointed 'his Son Jesus Christ . . . who might destroy sin by his own death, might by his obedience obtain the salvation which had been lost, and might communicate it by his own virtue.' Christ is thus not merely the agent but the very foundation of election. The second decree was to receive into favor sinners who are 'in Christ' by repentance and faith, and the third had to do with 'sufficient and efficacious' means of grace. The final decree was the election of particular individuals on the basis of the divine foreknowledge of their faith and perseverance."

In commenting upon this view with which Bangs does not completely agree, he notes that Arminius "retained the position that this makes man responsible for his own believing," and that "Arminius built his doctrine of election on the notion of foreseen faith, and thereby made man's decision the cause or concurring cause of salvation (man electing God)." Although Prof. Bangs goes on to say that Arminius put this idea of conditional election in a position subordinate to "the appointing (or electing) of Jesus Christ."

Prof. Bangs obviously does not agree with the position of Gomarus, the staunch and able defender of Calvin's view of predestination, nor does he subscribe fully to Arminius' position of conditional election. Although he does not say exactly what he does believe, it seems as if he is closer to Arminius than to Gomarus and Beza, and seeks only some minor modifications of Arminius' views.

From the above position of Arminius, according to the author, several corollaries follow which Arminius also adopted:

"Free will, for instance, is bound in the sinner and needs

liberation; yet it actually concurs in this liberation. Grace, moreover, is not an irresistible force. There is the possibility of falling from grace, although Arminius pointed out that properly speaking it is impossible for a believer to fall from grace, but that it may be possible for a believer to cease believing . . . Finally, Arminius showed a concern for the problems of assurance and holiness. He held to a necessary assurance of present salvation on the basis of faith, but to no present assurance of final salvation."

After making a few brief remarks concerning the development of Arminianism in various post-Reformation denominations, the author concludes with the remarks:

"Although much has taken place in theology in the intervening centuries, there are many Christians today whose religious thinking has been molded by the Arminian tradition. They would do well to examine the careful work done by the founder of that tradition, and they will find there firm support for resisting an easy-going, culture-Protestantism which confuses man's work with God's. And those who call themselves Calvinists will discover that it is too simple to dismiss Arminius as a Pelagian who did not see clearly the issue of *sola gratia*. They may find themselves closer to him than they had supposed."

Prof. Bangs forgets that the Synod of Dordrecht (1618-1619), representing the entire Reformed Church world of that century, and the flower of the reformation, condemned the views of Arminius and his disciples as being both thoroughly anti-Scriptural and Pelagian. It is true that the supralapsarianism of Beza and Gomarus did not prevail on the Synod of Dordrecht, but the position that was finally adopted in the Canons was nevertheless soundly Reformed and Scriptural and was signed by all the delegates of all the churches both of the Netherlands and of foreign countries. We may be grateful for the triumph of the Reformed faith on the Synod of Dordrecht. Would that the Canons were still the bulwark of the Reformed faith that they were on that faithful Synod!

#### *The American Clergy and the Basic Truths*

*Christianity Today* published the results of a survey of Protestant clergy to determine their basic beliefs. The results are broken down into denominations and cover several more issues than we have room to mention, but are of some interest to us. *Christianity Today* concludes from the entire survey that in America there is a slow moving away from liberalism to conservatism and that "the essentially conservative bent of the Protestant clergy is seldom reflected in theological surveys of our time, which center their interest in the changing tides of liberal and neo-orthodox theologians."

Concerning the doctrine of Holy Scripture, *Christianity Today* reports that "while 93 per cent of all ministers interviewed hold that the Bible is the authoritative rule of life and faith, and classify this as an essential doctrine, 33 per cent (26 per cent being liberal or neo-orthodox) dismiss as

unessential the view that the Bible was verbally inspired in the original writings."

Concerning other basic doctrines, "18 percent reject the virgin birth of Christ; 17 per cent, the vicarious, substitutionary atonement; and 11 per cent, Christ's historical, literal resurrection (neo-orthodox ministers being less prone than liberal ministers to question the importance of this doctrine)."

"Some 89 per cent of the Protestant ministers interviewed think it essential to teach and preach the unique deity of Christ as the Son of God; the others do not."

Other interesting facts: ". . . Only 27 per cent consider it 'very important' to work for organic church unity." Concerning the doctrine of the literal return or "second coming" of Christ, "It was held essential by 32 per cent of the Methodists; Baptists were highest with 83 per cent and Lutherans with 78 per cent; Episcopalians voted 48 per cent and Presbyterians 46 per cent. Only 25 per cent of liberal and 26 per cent of neo-orthodox clergy thought the doctrine significant."

#### *The Reformed Church in France*

Under the title "Recalling the Struggle," the following article appears in the October 7 issue of *The Banner*:

"The heroic struggle of the early Protestant Church to maintain its existence over against ecclesiastical tyranny was recalled in France last month, when 15,000 Protestants gathered in southern France to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the founding of the Protestant Church in that area. At the same time the spiritual heirs of these early Reformed believers honored the memory of a notable leader in the commemoration of the death of Antoine Court, who labored tirelessly and perilously to revive the French Protestant Church in southern France when it was all but overcome by the violence of persecution.

"The Reformed Church in France has won in history the name of the 'Martyr Church' because of the extent of the persecutions it suffered, and the great price paid in human lives for its Reformed confession. Except for a period of nominal religious freedom following the issuing of the Edict of Nantes in 1598, during which time the Huguenot Church enjoyed a measure of liberty in the face of strong Catholic opposition, the Reformed group maintained itself only through heroic struggle and suffering.

"The importance of recalling these two centuries of struggle was well and concisely put by one of the church leaders at the September observance, as quoted in *Time*, ' . . . our ancestors paid a great price for our faith and freedom. We must never allow it to be forgotten.'

"Perhaps the fact that Protestants in France are still a small minority group, one million out of a population of 43 million, helps to keep the memory of the struggle alive. One of the weaknesses of our religious life would seem to stem from our failure to keep alive the memory of the price that has been paid for the heritage that we possess. That is one of the perils of the religious freedom that we enjoy."

H. Hanko

## NEWS FROM OUR CHURCHES

"All the saints salute thee . . ." PHIL. 4:21

October 15, 1960

Rev. G. Vanden Berg of Oak Lawn, Ill., has declined the call sent to him by our Creston church. Creston expects to choose another trio October 31, D.V.

*Report of Classis East in session Oct. 5, 1960  
at Hudsonville, Michigan*

Rev. G. Lanting, president of our July Classis, presided over the opening devotions, and after credentials of the delegates were accepted, declared the Classis properly constituted.

Rev. A. Mulder, following the order of rotation, then took the chair and ably presided over this session, while Rev. Lanting recorded the minutes.

All the churches of Classis East were represented by two delegates each. A very fine spirit prevailed, and the work of Classis was carried out in good order. The routine reports of the Stated Clerk and the Classical Committee were received for information.

Two missives were received and treated by Classis. The first came from Classis West in which Classis East was requested to continue supplying the congregation at Randolph, Wisconsin with classical appointments, and the ministers of Classis East were asked to supply Classis West with two sermons each for reading purposes. Classis acted favorably in regard to both of these requests. The second was an overture of First Church in which it was recommended that the Classical Committee determine whether or not the July Classis is to meet hereafter. The grounds offered was the lack of business, which did not warrant the expense and delegates' time in the July session. Classis did not act favorably on this overture because should the overture be heeded, we would violate the Church Order as stipulated in Art. 41.

Besides the request to supply Randolph, the churches at Grand Haven and Creston also requested classical appointments. The following schedule was adopted: *Randolph*: Oct. 23 — H. Hanko, Oct. 30 — A. Mulder, Nov. 6 — C. Hanko, Nov. 20 — R. Veldman, Dec. 4 — M. Schipper, Dec. 18 — G. Lanting, Jan. 8 — A. Mulder. *Creston*: Oct. 16 — C. Hanko, Oct. 30 — G. Lanting, Nov. 6 — M. Schipper, Nov. 13 — G. Vos, Nov. 27 — A. Mulder, Dec. 11 — H. Hanko, Jan. 8 — R. Veldman. *Grand Haven*: Oct. 23 — R. Veldman, Oct. 30 — G. Vos, Nov. 20 — G. Lanting, Nov. 27 — H. Hanko, Dec. 4 — C. Hanko, Dec. 18 — G. Vos, Jan. 8 — M. Schipper.

Rev. M. Schipper was re-elected to serve as Stated Clerk, and the brethren Revs. R. Veldman and G. Lanting were chosen to serve on the Classical Committee, the latter being re-elected. Classis decided to meet next time on January 4 at Southeast Church.

Brother C. Lubbers was appointed to thank the ladies

of the Hudsonville Church for their excellent catering services.

After the questions of Article 41 of the Church Order were asked and answered satisfactorily by each consistory, and the minutes were adopted, the Rev. R. Veldman closed the meeting with thanksgiving to God.

M. SCHIPPER, *Stated Clerk*

From Grand Haven's bulletin we learn of our Missionary's itinerary which includes three lectures in the West: "The Infallible Earmarks of the Last Hour" at Prairie City, Iowa, Oct. 11; "Calvin And The Reformed Faith" at Pella, Oct. 18; "The Raging of Satan" at Killduff, Iowa, Nov. 3.

*Contribution from the Radio Committee.* Are you listening? Regularly? Each Sunday? You should! Every Sabbath Day the Reformed Witness Hour presents a distinctively Reformed radio program, with distinctively Reformed preaching of the Word of God and distinctively Reformed singing of Zion's songs. Many phases of Biblical Truths and Reformed doctrine are treated. For example — during the month of November Rev. G. Vanden Berg, of Oak Lawn, Illinois, will speak to you on "The Distinguishing Marks of the Church," "Membership In The Church," "The Thanksgiving Of A Rich Fool," and concludes his series with the theme "Marching To Zion." Be sure to hear these, and all the broadcasts of the Reformed Witness Hour. For our readers who live in a locality where this program is not aired, printed copies can be procured free by writing for them at our address: P.O. Box 8, Grand Rapids 1, Mich.

Loveland's bulletin gives a clever definition of the word "justified" — Say it this way, "Just-as-if-I-died!"

When "The Signs Of The Times," discussed recently in the after recess program of the Holland's Men's Society, have been fulfilled, then the "Communion Of Saints" discussed in Hope's Ladies' Aid Society, will no longer be on this earth, but will be a communion of redeemed saints in Glory. We wonder if the world's "subduing of the earth," and the recent meeting of 99 nations in New York, colored the above mentioned societies' discussions.

All of the area bulletins advertise a Reformation Day program as "something new, exciting and entirely different." Evidently Southeast Church will be the place, and Adams St. ninth grade will be the sponsor of this program to which we are all being alerted.

The Oak Lawn-South Holland joint Choral Society venture has advanced so that a study committee gave a report Oct. 19 on the director problem, and also provided a proposed constitution to be adopted.

In one of Hull's bulletins Rev. Kortering gave this quotation from Toplady: "Let Diotrephes say, 'It is good for me to have pre-eminence'; let Judas say, 'It is good for me to bear the bag'; let Demas say, 'It is good for me to embrace the present world'; but do thou O my soul, say with David, 'It is good for me to draw nigh to God'."

. . . see you in church.

J.M.F.