

The Standard Bearer

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

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Meditation: Israel Rejects Their King

Editorial: Publication Plans—Progress Report

Some Interesting Questions (see Question Box)

The Importance of Preaching

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MEDITATION—

Israel Rejects Their King

by Rev. M. Schipper

"And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! But they cried out, Away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar. Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified."

John 19:14-16a

Behold the man!

That is what Pilate said when he had brought Jesus forth before in an attempt to have Him released. Then Jesus appeared battered and bruised, wearing a crown of thorns and the faded soldier's robe, and holding the flimsy reed in His hand as a sceptre. Pilate had mocked His kingly office, showing to the people that

such an impotent figure could hardly be royalty that could command respect.

But the people failed to fall for Pilate's trick! Under the direction of the chief priests a chorus of voices cried out: Crucify him, crucify him!

Behold your King!

That is what Pilate said when he saw that there was

no possibility left to escape rendering the verdict that Jesus must be crucified. Now Jesus appears once more, no longer wearing the crown of thorns and the faded soldier's robe, but in His own apparel. Now Pilate is no longer mocking His kingly office, but ridiculing the Jews.

Shall I crucify your King?

There was a sting in that question!

Not especially directed against the Lord, though He continues to bear the brunt of their mockery, but directed especially against the Jews who were demanding Jesus' crucifixion!

Shall I crucify your King? Is that what you want me to do? He is your King, is He not? Who ever heard of such a ridiculous thing, that a people would desire the crucifixion of their king?

And the chief priests again supply the answer!

We have no king but Caesar!

Israel rejects their King!

* * *

Awful fact!

It must not escape our notice concerning the time mentioned in this sacred record. It is quite significant that John records here that it was the preparation of the passover, and that it was about the sixth hour. This seems to be in conflict with the notices of the other Gospel narrators. Matthew and Mark both speak of Jesus being on the cross and of the great darkness which was from the sixth to the ninth hour. And Mark especially says it was the third hour when they crucified Him. So that the question arises, How can John say it was the sixth hour? while it is evident that Jesus had not even been sentenced. This must evidently be explained from their different view-points of time reckoning. Matthew and Mark reckon according to Jewish time. Then when Mark says He was crucified at the third hour, he means nine o'clock in the morning. And when Matthew and Mark say that from the sixth to the ninth hour there was great darkness, they mean from twelve to three in the afternoon. But John undoubtedly reckons according to the Roman method of counting time. For them time began at midnight. Then about the sixth hour would mean from six to nine in the morning. And the apparent contradiction is resolved.

Much more significant, however, is the fact that John informs us that it was the preparation of the passover!

Strange paradox, indeed!

At the very moment that the Jew should be preparing himself religiously and ceremonially, as well as the paschal lamb to be used at the feast; we find Pilate being pushed to prepare and slay the very Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world! At the time of the morning sacrifice, we hear the cry of the Jews: Crucify Him!

To be sure, it was the proper time on God's schedule! The time when the shadows must meet the object that caused them. The time when all the little lambs that had been slain throughout the centuries must find their fulfillment in the Lamb to which they pointed. Time, too, it was when, according to the plan

of God, the royal seed of David should produce the King that should sit on the throne of David forever.

But consider the evil of the wickedness of those who feigned to be religious while they were rejecting not only the blood of the atonement but also the Royal Son of David, their proper King!

And he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!

But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him!

A complete rejection! It was, first of all, their way of expressing their bitter hatred for their King. For He was their King, whether they would acknowledge Him or not! What the Wise Men acknowledged through faith, they without faith rejected! The former came from the far East with the question on their lips: Where is He that is born, King of the Jews? and they fell down and worshipped, presenting unto Him gifts befitting Royalty. But the latter, when they see the King, the very King Whom God had appointed to deliver them from all the hosts of darkness, would have Him cast out of their sight. Verily they said, Let Him be hanged on a tree where it can be seen that He is not wanted, neither by heaven nor by earth. Let Him be as a thing that is accursed!

Secondly, they present a complete denial of His kingship!

We have no king but Caesar!

This was the answer of the chief priests! The elite, the very best among the people, and the people's representatives. That it was also the answer of all the people is plain from the fact that not one protested against the voice of their leaders.

It was, indeed, a case of Israel rejecting their King!

* * *

Despicable sin!

The despicableness can best be understood when you take note of the parties concerned. On the one hand, there is Israel! That is the church of the old dispensation, of course. The church as it must be viewed organically! It is the church as it developed from generation to generation, composed of the believers and their seed. But here manifestly with its corrupt seed in the majority.

And what does the church always do when the majority is corrupt? Exactly what Israel was doing here! All that is holy, just, and good is rejected! God is rejected in favor of the idol. The Word of God is rejected in favor of the word of the false prophet. The service of God is rejected in favor of the service of their own sinful lusts. The history of Israel is replete with illustrations of this corrupt conduct. To be sure, also now, under the persuasion of its reprobate element Israel is acting out its natural bent, and substantiating the truth expressed later by the Apostle Paul: "and were by nature children of wrath, even as others."

On the other hand, there was their King!

The promised Messiah! The Prophet Whom Moses had predicted the Lord God would raise up. The Priest Who would appear, not according to the order of Aaron, but the Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. The King Whom the daughter of Zion and the daughter

of Jerusalem should behold: Who is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass, as they saw Him riding only a few days before; and as they had seen Him only moments before, bowed, and wearing a thorny crown!

Awful sin!

For it was a denial of the Christ, and a plea for His blood!

What Satanic depravity!

They were willing that His blood be upon them and their children. Their feet were swift to shed blood, innocent blood. They did not care!

Thus they brought upon themselves a curse! And at the same time sealed their doom as a nation!

Strangely, it was concerning this latter that the leaders of the Jews with Caiaphas at their head had previously been so concerned! (John 11:47-53). In council the leaders said: "If we let him (Jesus) thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation." And Caiaphas unwittingly prophesied that it was "expedient that one man should die for the people, and the whole nation perish not."

Now they had not planned that He should die so publicly. They had planned to do away with Him secretly, for fear of the people. But God overruled their plans, and uses their wicked rejection of Israel's King in order to destroy the nation, and condemn the world; and at the same time save and redeem His people. This is why the Apostle John continues to say: "And this spake he (Caiaphas) not of himself; but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus

should die for that nation. And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad."

* * *

In this Lenton season, beloved reader, as you and I consider the passion and death of our Saviour, let us not fail to see not only how wicked that rejection was, but also that we belong historically to that Israel that rejects its King. Israel and the church are one. The King of Israel is also the King of the church.

We also are confronted with Pilate's assertion: Behold your King!

And the question we face is the same that Pilate placed before the Jews: What shall I do with Jesus? Shall I crucify your King?

What will your answer be?

By nature you can give no different answer than was given: Let Him be crucified! We have no king, but Caesar! Let us not exalt ourselves above the rejectors!

And God moved Pilate to deliver Him unto them to be crucified!

And here is the wonder of grace!

Not that you and I would stand in the midst of the milling mob to protest that sentence! But, beholding in Israel's King our Saviour, we will cry out with repentant hearts, Let Him Who is appointed to be our eternal King battle unto death against all the forces of evil that fill our wicked hearts and enslave our depraved natures, in order that He may overcome that evil, and renew us so completely that we may reign with Him now in principle over sin, and presently with Him in His everlasting kingdom!

EDITORIAL—

Publication Plans - Progress Report

by Prof. H. C. Hoeksema

As our readers all know by this time, "Reformed Dogmatics" has come from the press and, at this writing, has been on the market for about a month and a half. Here are a few facts and figures:

1) The first printing, of 1000 copies, is a little more than one-third sold out.

2) Of the approximately 350 copies sold, about 200 were sold to our Protestant Reformed people through the pre-publication sale and afterwards. Thus, well under one-third of our families have purchased the book thus far.

3) After all publication costs were met, the treasury shows a balance (including sales thus far) of \$1800, in round numbers.

Now what is the significance of these facts and figures?

In the first place, our people are lagging about purchasing the book. I have been told that some of our people were reluctant to buy it because they feared that the book was too technical and too "deep" for the non-theologian. Let me allay these fears. While it is true that there are passages which are too difficult

for the non-theologian to “tackle,” there are very many long passages of the book which will be extremely valuable and helpful to any reader. Besides, there are many texts explained in such a way that they will be valuable to anyone who takes the time to study. And there is a textual index to help in looking up the text you are interested in; and there is a subject index. I have it on the testimony of several “lay” purchasers already, that they have found the book very useful, — more useful than they had expected, — and that they look forward to making good use of it for Bible study for societies, for example. Several of our ministers have stated also that people should realize how valuable the book could be to them. Hence, if you have been hesitating for this reason, don’t!

In the second place, in more of our churches the good example of the Men’s Society of one of our congregations could be followed. They appointed an enterprising member to contact the people of the congregation, with the result that about 80% purchased the volume. If this example were followed everywhere, we would have sold about 500 copies in our churches. How about it? The society season is still on! Which society in your church will follow this example?

At any rate, get your order in soon! The price is \$14.95 postpaid. The address is: R.F.P.A., P.O. Box 2006, Grand Rapids, Mich. 49501.

There is another aspect to this progress report.

As reported before, the Permanent Committee for the Publication of Protestant Reformed Literature has two more ambitious projects on tap. The first is the publication of the late Rev. Herman Hoeksema’s complete commentary on the Book of Revelation under the title “Behold, He Cometh!” This will be a volume

about two-thirds as large as “Reformed Dogmatics,” and it will be a commentary in popular form. Many have been and are looking forward to this publication. The second project is a one-volume edition of Rev. Hoeksema’s exposition of the Heidelberg Catechism. Four of the ten volumes are already out of print, and we receive continual inquiries about this valuable work. We have already obtained the copyright to this ten-volume set from the Eerdmans Company; and our hopes are that we can proceed with this project soon after the Revelation-project.

Our publication fund, however, is intended to be self-sustaining. Now that the original fund has been collected, proceeds from the sale of one publication must finance the next publication.

This means that we cannot proceed with our next project until we have sold more “Reformed Dogmatics” and thus have sufficient funds on hand to make our next publication financially feasible. The sooner this happens, the sooner the committee will proceed.

The moral of the story? Your purchase of “Reformed Dogmatics” will not only bring you a worthwhile volume, but it will also hasten the publication of “Behold, He Cometh!”

Editor's Note:

Due to an abundance of extra copy, the editorial department is drastically abbreviated for this issue, and some of the regular departments have been omitted. This also serves to give our readers a bit of a change of diet. Incidentally, department editors are hereby asked to adhere to their regular schedule of writing, unless notified to the contrary. Your editor prefers a surplus to a shortage of copy.

Question Box

by Prof. H. C. Hoeksema

From brother N.D., of Byron Center, Mich. I have received two unrelated questions with a request to answer them in the *Standard Bearer*.

Question No. 1

“Why is the Law read in our churches every Sunday?” The brother adds: “Question No. 1 I ask because when we have a visiting preacher, the Law is read as we find it in Ex. 20 or Deut. 5, but when we have our own minister he says, ‘Let us read the Law as we find it in Question 92 of our Heidelberg Catechism — as being our rule for our life of thankfulness.’”

Reply No. 1

First of all, the Law, of course, is no different in the Heidelberg Catechism than in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5. Our Catechism, in fact, mentions these passages as references in the 92nd Question and Answer.

Secondly, I would suggest that the liturgical practice of the reading of the Decalogue has the same sound reasons behind it as are given in Question and Answer 115 for the preaching of the Law: “First, that all our lifetime we may learn more and more to know our sinful nature, and thus become the more earnest in seeking the remission of sin, the righteousness in Christ; likewise, that we constantly endeavor and pray to God for the grace of the Holy Spirit, that we may become more and more conformable to the image of God, till we arrive at the perfection proposed to us, in a life to come.

In the third place, if your minister introduces the reading of the law with the interpretive statement which you mention, he is, of course, in harmony with the second reason given in Catechism above. Moreover, he is in harmony with the liturgical practice of many in the Reformed churches from the time of the

Reformation forward. Many others, however, also in the Reformed line, tended to emphasize the first reason given by our Catechism as the reason for the reading of the Law. Besides, there has been variation in the Reformed churches as to *when* the Law should occur in the service (before or after the sermon) and as to whether the Law should be read by the minister or sung by the congregation, etc. A complete survey of this subject would not be possible here, however interesting and worthwhile it might be.

In the fourth place, for myself I prefer to save any interpretive statements for the preaching of the law and to limit myself as far as liturgical practice is concerned to the simple and always impressive introductory statement: "I am the Lord thy God, which hath brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." Here the Lord Himself, as the covenant God of our salvation (Jehovah *thy* God!) addresses His Law to His saved people (redeemed and delivered out of the house of bondage). Although this is old dispensational language, it is clear in its significance for us of the new dispensation.

However, in our churches there is a goodly measure of freedom as to liturgical practice, even though, of course, also the order of worship is subject to the determination and supervision of the consistory. Your pastor is exercising this freedom in his practice and I would assume that this practice has the approval, — or, at least, not the disapproval, — of your consistory. The above, therefore, is not to be interpreted as criticism of either your pastor or your consistory.

Question No. 2

"I read and hear off and on that we must love our enemies, but hate God's. That being the case, there are very few people I must love, because every unregenerated person is an enemy of God. My question is: suppose now, that my enemy is an unregenerated person, what must I do then, hate him and love him at the same time, or is it altogether wrong to say that we must hate God's enemies?"

Reply No. 2

I will not give an extensive answer to this question because the Rev. Heys is writing on this subject in "In His Fear." (cf. the present issue and the Feb. 1 issue) Hence, I will make a few brief remarks, and if brother N.D. has any remaining problems, he is welcome to write in again. My remarks are as follows:

1. The last suggestion of N.D. is ruled out by Scripture itself. Psalm 139: 19-22; II Chronicles 19:2; and James 4:4 should be sufficient proof of this.

2. We must carefully distinguish between God's enemies and our own personal enemies. The former are described in terms of Psalm 139 as "bloody men" and men who "speak against thee (God) wickedly" and those who "take thy name in vain," and "those that rise up against thee." The latter are described in Matthew 5 as those who "curse you...hate you...despitefully use you, and persecute you." (vs. 44) In the former case, therefore, it is a matter of God's law, God's sovereignty, God's name, God's honor; in the latter case it is a matter of our own person, name, honor, etc.

3. The question presents the hypothetical case (but nevertheless a very really possible case) of a man who reveals himself as an enemy of God and as an enemy of me personally at the same time, and the apparent paradox of the necessity of loving and hating the same individual at the same time.

4. I would suggest the following with a view to a solution of this problem:

a. The love of our own enemies required in Matthew 5:44, 45 cannot be a bond of fellowship between the wicked and the perfect in Christ. This love, therefore, must needs be onesided; and it will manifest itself in rebuking our enemy and demanding that he forsake his wicked way, walk in the light, and thus have fellowship with us, in the meantime not returning evil for evil, reviling for reviling, but repaying evil with good, etc.

b. This very manifestation of the love of Christ will reveal itself as a holy hatred for God's sake of that same man as he manifests himself as hating, reviling, and taking *God's* name in vain and as trampling *God's* commandments under foot. The child of God will not help the ungodly in his wicked purposes and deeds against God and will not make common cause with one who is an enemy of God, as, for instance, Jehoshaphat did with Ahab (II Chronicles 19:2). On the contrary, he will burn with holy wrath against his ungodliness and against his wicked devices against God.

c. This is not only basically a matter of grace (so that only the Christian, who has himself been saved by the power of sovereign love and tasted God's love can do this), but it also requires much grace to practice this. We are by nature inclined to hate our own enemies and to love God's enemies; and we as Christians easily follow that inclination of our old nature and easily deceive ourselves that we are hating God's enemies while actually we are hating our own enemies. Is not this also a prime reason for the prayer which concludes Psalm 139: "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting?"

Once more: call again, brother N.D., if, after you have read the above and followed Rev. Heys's writings, you still have questions.

Thanks, too, for activating our Question Box.

* * *

From L.W., of Spokane, Washington, I received a few questions as a result of some earlier, private correspondence. Part of these questions concern the Rev. Harbach's writings on dispensationalism. I think I know what the Rev. Harbach means and what he would answer; but since each department editor is responsible for his own writings, I shall refer these questions to him. Undoubtedly he will answer in a future issue. One question, however, I can answer immediately. Brother L.W. writes:

"You wrote in your letter that: 'We hold that any baptism administered by an ordained minister under the authority of a church and administered according to the Trinitarian formula is a valid baptism.' As you undoubtedly know, the word 'baptism' is ambiguous, having different meanings in various denominations.

(Here follows a quotation from Dr. Thomas Smyth, a Presbyterian, who maintains that sprinkling and pouring are the only proper method of baptism. H.C.H.)

"The logical conclusion to draw from the quotation from Dr. Smyth is that any so-called 'baptism' performed by any other mode than sprinkling or pouring is unBiblical. Since sprinkling and pouring are the only methods of baptism described in the Bible, and as the Bible is of absolute and final authority both as to faith and to practice, therefore, those so-called 'baptisms by immersion' administered by such groups as Baptist, Christian and Missionary Alliance, and Plymouth Brethren are absolutely invalid. Does not the Protestant Reformed Churches have the same view of baptism as that of Dr. Thomas Smyth? If any member of any 'immersionist' denomination was converted to the theological position represented by the Protestant Reformed Churches, he or she would have to be 'baptized for the first time', since it is one of the doctrines of the Protestant Reformed Churches that 'immersion' is not Christian baptism. Is the above your correct theological position?"

Reply

Welcome to our Question Box, brother L.W., and thank-you for your interest in our magazine. Undoubtedly many of our readers will be surprised as well as

pleased to hear that we have an interested subscriber in Spokane, Washington.

As to your question about immersion, the following:

1) It is entirely possible that the original word for *baptism* in the Bible signifies "to dip, to immerse." On the other hand, Reformed churches generally hold that immersion is not the *necessary* method of baptism, but that sprinkling or pouring are equally as proper.

2) The more common objection is not against immersion, but against sprinkling or pouring. There are many churches who insist upon immersion to the exclusion of sprinkling or pouring, but comparatively few who insist on sprinkling or pouring to the exclusion of immersion.

3) The official position of the Protestant Reformed Churches does not exclude immersion, and our churches would not refuse to recognize as valid a baptism by immersion. That this is indeed our official position is plain from the italicized words in the following sentence from our "Form for the Administration of Baptism": "This, *the dipping in*, or sprinkling with water teaches us, whereby the impurity of our souls is signified, and we admonished to loathe, and humble ourselves before God, and seek for our purification and salvation without ourselves." The practice in our churches, however, is baptism by sprinkling.

FROM HOLY WRIT—

The Book Of Hebrews

by Rev. G. Lubbers

THE THINGS SPOKEN THROUGH ANGELS STEADFAST AND SURE Hebrews 2:2 (Continued)

It is true that Exodus 19 tells us nothing concerning the presense of the angels at the law-giving to Moses and Israel at Sinai. But from this silence of the sacred record it cannot be concluded that the angels were not present. For in Deuteronomy 33 we read of the blessing wherewith Moses blessed the children of Israel before his death. Here Moses is designated as "the man of God," which is an official title. And the starting-point of this blessing is what God did in the law-giving at Sinai. The language is poetical and lofty, it is the loftiness of a Psalm in which we have portrayed the appearance of God at Sinai, together with the myriads of angels; it was the great moment in Israel's history when God gave his Ten Words and all the law and the prophets which depend upon it. (Matthew 22:40).

What a majestic sight this was! Did not Israel fear and quake before it, and even Moses said "I exceedingly fear and tremble"? The whole desert range of mountains was lit up with the light of heaven's glory, even from mount Seir in the south to mount Paran in the north, a distance of 150 miles. And He came with the ten thousands of His saints. We agree with Calvin and many others that the "saints" here must be translated the "holy ones," that is, the holy angels. It was in the midst of the holy angels, the messengers of His throne, that Jehovah appeared on Sinai. And God had the fiery oracles in his right hand. It is the law which is the rule for life and faith of redeemed Israel. It was for the people which He loved. And the people sat down at the feet of God to hear this law! (Deuteronomy 33:1-4) This is the law-giving to which Stephen refers in his apology before the Sanhedrin in Acts 7:52, where he accuses the adulterous Israel of their spiritual infidel-

ity in these words "who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it." And Paul speaks of this great event at Sinai in the letter to the Galatians when he writes "and it (the law, G.L.) was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator." (Galatians 3:19b) Moses could not receive this law directly from the hand of God. God wrote it with His own finger in Divine glory, (a glory before which even the angels cover their faces) and give it to angels to put into Moses' hand to carry it down the mountain to the people of Israel. It was, in a sense, a word which was spoken from afar. Moses is not the mediator of God and man, but rather a messenger who gave the law to Israel. The law was given through Moses, but grace and truth became a tested reality through Jesus Christ (John 1:17)

And this law, given by angels in the hands of a mediator, is called the "word" given by angels; it is not the great salvation itself. Nevertheless, it was a "word" which became steadfast. (*egeneto bebaios*) That it *became* steadfast means that it was *proved* sure in history. It was a steadfast and reliable word in itself, since it was spoken by God who cannot lie, but this reliable word proved to be steadfast by God each time that Israel departed from the way of the Lord, carried away to dumb idols and to the abominations of the heathen. (See Westcott's "The Epistle To The Hebrews," page 38, where he writes the following "...not only was *assured, confirmed* by some external authority; but it was, as it were, vindicated by its own claims. There is in the divine law a self-executing power. It confirms itself") The divine sanction of Sinai's law was proven in the maintaining of it in history. And these lessons of history the church must observe, which were written for us as an example, lest we walk in the same unbelief. (I Corinthians 10:11, 12) Paul refers in I Corinthians 10:1-13 to what happened to Israel at the worshipping of the golden calf, (Exodus 32:6) and to what happened to Israel when they were at Baal-Peor, where there fell three and twenty thousand in one day. All of Israel's history and their unbelief attests to the mighty fact, that the word spoken through angels proved to be steadfast.

So steadfast did the law, spoken by angels, prove to be that "every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward. Two facts of sin are here articulated. Transgression (*parabasis*) was the actual transgression, the positive sins and overt acts; disobedience was the root of it. It was a failing to give heed to the word spoken by God through angels. But each of these received a just recompense of reward, that is, there is an "absolute correspondence" between the punishment and the transgression. The question was not: who perpetrated the misdeed; the sole question was: what was the transgression. For a *just* retribution corresponds to a rule. And the recompense of reward shows that it is an exact requital of good and evil by the righteous Judge in His divine sovereignty.

Wherefore the children of God in the Old Testament dispensation were always and again exhorted to give earnest heed to the things spoken by God through angels. It is the key-note of Moses in the entire book of Deuteronomy (Second law-giving) in the fortieth year

of Israel's wanderings in the desert. Just one instance out of many will suffice to make this abundantly clear. We refer to Deuteronomy 4:9 "Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons and thy son's sons, specially the day that thou stoodest before the LORD thy God in Horeb, when the LORD said unto me, gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children...." Compare Deuteronomy 4:15, 23; 11:16; 12:13, 19, 30.

Surely Israel needed to be warned that they depart not from the word spoken through angels, lest this word prove to be steadfast even in their own disobedience and transgression in departing from the living God. For our God with the fiery oracles is a consuming fire!

A WARNING BY COMPARISON AND CONTRAST Hebrews 2:3-4

The writer to the Hebrews continues his warning and exhortation that we shall give the most earnest heed to the things heard. By the "things heard" he indicates the "so great salvation" which is ours in Christ Jesus. Able scholars and exegetes as Delitzsch and Westcott call attention to the fact that the term "gospel" is not found in the book of Hebrews. This is corroborated by a reference such as Young's *Analytical Concordance*. And the things heard are ever connected with the concept "preached." (Hebrews 4: 4, 2, 6) and the things "spoken." (Hebrews 2:2, 3; 3:5)

It is by way of contrast, first of all, that our writer underscores the need of our giving heed to the salvation in Christ. Here we do not merely have a word spoken by angels, but we have a salvation which is ours in the LORD himself, our Lord Jesus Christ. Here is the contrast between the law given through Moses and grace and truth which came through Jesus Christ.

Both what God spoke through angels at Sinai and what He performs in Christ in "these last days" in Christ's death, resurrection and ascension at God's right hand are sure and steadfast. They are two manners of speaking which are related as type and reality. Now if the shadow of things must be given earnest heed and be taught to the children and children's children, how much more must we give earnest heed to the gaze of God which has been preached to us in Christ.

For this which we have heard in these last days has reference to *us*. *We* must give heed, for the kingdom of God has come upon us. Did not the Lord himself begin to speak these things on earth. He did not speak them from a fiery mountain; yet, speak he did, in prose, and he spoke as one having authority. Never a man spake as he did. Such was the testimony even of the enemies who did not obey him. In Mark 1:14 we read "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye and believe the

gospel." It might be objected that John the Baptist also preached the kingdom as being at hand, but it must be remembered that John was but the forerunner who pointed to the Christ. However, Jesus began to preach that the kingdom of God is come in him. He is the Son of God, Immanuel, God-with-us. He opened the eyes of the blind, caused the lame to walk, the deaf to hear, and the poor were preached glad-tidings of the forgiveness of sins. Without Christ there would not have been a beginning. God spoke in these last times in Christ. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. God spoke unto us *through* the Lord.

And these very things which the apostles heard him speak, and the signs which they saw him perform, and the death and resurrection and ascension which they had witnessed as eye-and ear-witnesses, were made sure and steadfast to us by them. And God was with them accompanying their preaching with signs and wonders. (Compare Mark 16:20; Romans 15:8.)

The writer mentions: *signs, wonders* and *divers powers*. Perhaps we can say that there is here a progression from that which is most strikingly visible to that which is most decisively inward in these signs and wonders. "Signs" are ever something visible to the eye, while "wonders" refers to the effect these have upon those beholding them, and "powers" refers to the inward ability of God in them, demonstrating that surely nothing is impossible with God. And these

powers were "divers." The term translated in KJV "divers" is "*poikilais*" in the Greek. Twice this term is translated "manifold" in the New Testament, but more often it is translated "divers." The idea of what is manifold is: a whole consisting of many and diverse elements. Thus the wisdom of God in Ephesians 3:10 is called "manifold wisdom of God." Here, however, the signs, wonders and power are diverse. The idea of diversity implies both contrast and distinctiveness. Each sign was distinct from the other and stood out in marked contrast. They did not all come together in one grand blur, but each had a distinctive message in connection with the mysteries of the kingdom.

Besides, they were not man-wrought signs and powers, but they were wrought by the Holy Spirit who distributes to each as He wills. It was the active exercise of the Divine will of the Holy Spirit of God. When Peter and John command the man, who was born a cripple, to walk at the gate of the temple, this miracle did not have its origin in Peter, but in the exercise of the Divine will, as a distribution of the Spirit. And thus God confirmed their word and opened the eyes and ears of the people in Jerusalem, even causing a Gamaliel to say: Let us let them go lest we be fighting against God. (Acts 5:39) It was a distinct sign, divers from others, wrought by the Spirit according to God's active will.

THE CHURCH AT WORSHIP—

The Task Of The Ministry

(concluded)

by Rev. G. Vanden Berg

The last part of the Ordination Form for ministers of the Word reads as follows:

"Finally, it is the duty of the Ministers of the Word, to keep the Church of God in good discipline, and to govern it in such a manner as the Lord hath ordained; for Christ having spoken of the Christian discipline, says to his apostles, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven. And Paul will have the ministers to know how to rule their own house, since they otherwise neither can provide for, nor rule the Church of God. This is the reason why the pastors are in Scripture called stewards of God, and bishops, that is, overseers and watchmen, for they have the oversight of the house of God, wherein everything may be transacted with good order and decency; and also to

open and shut, with the keys of the kingdom of heaven, committed to them, according to the charge given them by God."

In our last article we questioned whether the task of exercising Christian discipline in the church belongs, strictly speaking, to the office of the ministry of the Word. That it belongs to the office of the elders is evident from both Scripture and the Form for Ordination of elders. They are the overseers who are called to watch over God's heritage. The office of the ministry of the Word, on the other hand, corresponds more with the function of Christ in the church that is prophetic, the teaching and preaching of the Word. However, there is really no difficulty here if we keep in mind the fact, first, that no single individual in the

church, be he minister or elder, wields the power to discipline and excommunicate from the Christian Church. This power Christ gives to the consistory, the body chosen and called to exercise ruling power over the church. In the second place, within that body there is unavoidably a certain overlap of functions, as we have seen last time. And, finally, as the Form quoted above also clearly indicates, the purpose of good discipline in the church is always "to govern it in such a manner as the Lord hath ordained." All things in the church must be maintained in subjection to the Word of Christ. Since the office of the ministry of the Word has to do primarily with the Word, it follows that the function of discipline would in part pertain also to this office, even though it must also be maintained that the primary function of the disciplinary actions of the church must proceed from the elders. Then there is no conflict, but there is a harmonious working together to maintain good order and decency in accord with the Word of God.

THE LITURGICAL PART

In the actual ordination ceremony there are two things that must be noted. First, we must consider the questions that are asked of the person to be ordained and, secondly, we take note of the ceremony of the laying on of hands which is used when the candidate is initially ordained in office.

The questions asked of the person to be ordained in the office of the ministry of the Word are preceded by this statement of significance:

"Forasmuch, therefore as we (the church), for the maintaining of this office in the Church of God, are now to ordain a new minister of the Word, and having sufficiently spoken of the office of such persons, therefore you, N.N., shall answer to the following questions, which shall be proposed to you, to the end that it may appear to all here present, that you are inclined to accept of this office as above described."

The implication is that the church and the minister to be have a common conception of the office of the ministry and that they understand the nature and function of that office as afore described. The purpose of the questions is to assure the entire congregation that the minister to be will accept this office in the church. He is not accepting some invention of his own in the church, nor is he being given license to create some position to his own liking. The task he is called to assume has been clearly defined so that all understand what it is to be, and accordingly he is now asked to indicate his willingness to accept this when he answers the three questions put to him.

The first question reads: "I ask thee, whether thou feelest in thy heart that thou art lawfully called of God's Church, and therefore of God Himself, to this holy ministry?"

It is evident that the emphasis in this question falls upon the calling, the calling by God Himself. Concerning this question Rev. H. Hoeksema furnishes us with a translation of the following remarks of Prof. Heyns in the latter's "Liturgiek," page 268.

"The first question is: 'Whether thou feelest in thy heart that thou art lawfully called of God's Church, and therefore of God himself, to this holy ministry?' From this question it is evident that the Reformed Churches place all the emphasis on the calling. The question is not: dost thou feel in thy heart the great significance of the favorable outcome of thy examination? Not even: dost thou feel in thy heart the high significance of this thy ordination. But: dost thou feel in thy heart the great significance of the fact that thou art lawfully called by God's church, and therefore by God himself to this holy ministry. For the intent of this question certainly is not to inquire whether he is convinced that everything in connection with his call was conducted legally. Of this no doubt can be left at this time any more. In that case it would have been better that the question had been directed to the congregation, or rather, to the consistory. No, this, whether thou feelest in thy heart, assures us that the form has in mind not a purely intellectual certainty about the objective transaction of a certain matter, but something that is embraced by faith and is felt in the heart as a lively consciousness: dost thou feel in thy heart the significance of this voice of God, the congregation as the voice of God? Dost thou feel in thy heart, since thou art lawfully called of God's church, thou art called of God Himself? Only when thus understood is there good reason for this question, and need for an affirmative answer. From that answer it will become evident that he knows himself as one that is called of God, that he is deeply convinced of the divine nature of his calling, that he understands the significance of his ministry as an office that he has to fulfill for Christ's sake, and that therefore it may be expected of him that he will fulfill his office faithfully and with perseverance, trusting in Him whose cause it is, and that will with the calling also grant the necessary ability."

To this translation Rev. Hoeksema then adds the following remarks:

"With this interpretation of Heyns we can, of course, fully agree. Not the ordination, not the examination, not even the calling by the church, but fundamentally God's own calling must induct anyone in the ministry of the divine Word. The minister in all his labors undoubtedly is in need of the assurance and of the deep conviction that he is called by God. If not, he will soon be discouraged, and cannot remain a faithful minister of the Word of God." (Liturgy, Pgs. 22, 23, by H.H.)

God, therefore, moves the heart of man when he calls him to the ministry of the Word. This He does, not in a mystical manner, but through His Church, providing His Church with men as needed, that the ministry of the Word may continue to the end of the world. The Church institutionally may be destroyed or, by reason of apostasy become so corrupt that God removes the light of the candlestick or refrains from calling ministers in the church, but the ministry will continue. God is dependent upon no one. He calls men as He wills, and those whom He calls enter upon His ministry, and without that calling of God no one can

become a minister of the Word. One must feel that calling strongly to engage faithfully in the work.

The second question asked is: "Whether thou dost believe the books of the Old and New Testament to be the only Word of God and the perfect doctrine unto salvation, and dost reject all doctrine repugnant thereto?"

There are two aspects to this question, a positive and a negative one. Yet the two are inseparable. You cannot faithfully adhere to true doctrine without rejecting all that is repugnant thereto. The truth will harbor no compromise, not in confession nor in life. In the measure that one flaunts false doctrines and practices, he deviates in confession and life from the true and perfect doctrine of salvation. Consistency is indeed a jewel that is rarely found. Its price is immeasurable. The minister of the Word must display the jewel of consistency, holding fast to the Word of Life and rejecting utterly all that is not in accord therewith.

Rev. Hoeksema, in this connection, makes the observation that this second question "could have been more definite, and could have referred to the doctrines contained in the confessions of the Reformed church." This is no doubt true but not necessary because that which is in the books of Holy Writ is also the material substance of the Reformed Confessions and if this is ever proved not to be the case, the minister of the Word must adhere to the former and not the latter. The Confessions may never be held above the Word of God, equated with it, but always the rule of faith and life is God's unchangeable Word. And further, if this question is to be made more definite, we should then make it even more specific than suggested above and speak of the doctrines contained in the confessions of the Reformed Church as interpreted by our Protestant Reformed Churches. The candidate is being ordained in

the ministry of the Word in the Protestant Reformed Churches and he must then promise to defend the doctrine of these churches and reject all that is repugnant thereto.

The final question asked is: "Whether thou dost promise faithfully to discharge thy office, according to the same doctrine as above described, and to adorn it with a godly life; also, to submit thyself, in case thou shouldest become delinquent either in life or doctrine, to ecclesiastical admonition, according to the public ordinance of the churches?"

We observe first of all that this question is very similar to that which is asked of every member of the church upon their making confession of faith. The minister here promises the same thing with respect to his office and his functioning in that office as we all promise with respect to our place in the church and our entire life as it stands related to that place. Faithfulness is pledged before God together with the promise of submission to discipline in the case of neglect.

Secondly, the very question presupposes a calling and duty of the church with respect to its minister. The supposition is that in case he becomes delinquent either in life or doctrine, he will be admonished and tried by the ecclesiastical tribunal, to which process of trial he promises to submit. The church may not condemn and ostracize a minister without accusation, admonition and trial, for then there is nothing to which he can submit himself in accord with his promise. The questions asked of the minister to be ordained are very serious and must be answered in all seriousness, and the church, with equal seriousness, must maintain a normal status so that the promises made may also be preserved.

To all of this the minister to be ordained answers: Yes, truly, with all my heart.

IN HIS FEAR—

Doing Good Unto Our Enemies

continued

by Rev. J. A. Heys

"Bang! Bang! You're dead!"

So our children play; and so we teach them to play.

But death is no plaything. And although killing has become an American pastime, death is too awful in itself to be the matter wherewith we amuse ourselves; and death is God's means of punishing the sinner.

Who thinks of that today? In our atheistic world who gives any thought to the truth that killing is God's prerogative and that it expresses the fierceness of His holy wrath against sin? The murderer is lauded as a hero, and death is a natural enemy of man which he fights in hospitals and with antibiotics, surgical tools

and oxygen tents. Whoever thinks today that to conquer death and disease that leads to death a change of our legal status before God must be realized? Who looks to the cross for deliverance from death? Men will look to Him Who died on that cross for social improvement. They will quote His "Golden Rule" even while they spurn His command, "Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for the meat that endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of God shall give unto you; for Him hath the Father sealed." John 6:27. And they will kill each other to get that bread that perisheth. They will perish striving for the bread that perisheth and bar their fellowmen from the shop by their godless unions, and still hail this Christ as The Great Social Reformer! Were He to return to this world and apply for a job in one of our closed shops, He would be refused and called a scab! Yea, they would quote His own words and hurl them in His teeth and kill Him all over again. He would be accused of hypocrisy and fraud. Would He, as He surely would, refuse to join them in their riots and murders and coercion and cruelty, they would accuse Him of not living up to those words of that "Great Social Reformer" Who said, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28. And men would laud them for killing Him all over again.

But we said, and we mean every word of it, that killing is an American pastime. No, that does not mean that we all practice murder with gun and knife or poison and gas. There surely is plenty of that in our land. The murderer is bold in our land today. And he will become bolder because he is defended and the victim and his relatives are forgotten as far as justice is concerned. Killing in cold blooded murder is not looked upon any more as murder, but as the actions of an insane mind. "Envy, hatred, anger and desire of revenge," which the Heidelberg Catechism present as the causes of murder, are simply symptoms of a "sick" mind. There is no such thing as sin anymore. There are social injustices and crimes against society, but they are due to mental disturbances rather than spiritual depravity. Where is Evolution? The beast kills in cold blood. We expect it from him. Has the man who "evolved" out of this class of killers to become a social being somehow begun to devolve so that he is on the way back to becoming an ape through all the monkey business of mental quirks and temporary insanity?

Sin may by the sinner be ruled out, but it is still there to plague him. And although he may rule that sin out and therefore have no spiritual use for that cross of Christ, these sins will still continue to be in the world in increasing intensity and with tragic results for him. What is more, today we are amusing ourselves with death on every side. Some years ago, perhaps as many as twenty, we wrote in this department about the folly of trying to teach our children, "Thou shalt not kill" and then buy them for Christmas or for their birthdays toy guns so that they can run around and say, "Bang! Bang! You're dead!" Shall we teach them to amuse themselves with death? Is it after all

a plaything? But since the day that we wrote those lines — and how time flies and sin develops! — we have entered the television age when every night, and perhaps as a dessert upon a daytime meal of murder, in countless numbers even of covenant homes, killing is sought *for amusement!* We create an appetite — the world does — for murder, and then call our children insane when they act according to that appetite! But God is not mocked; and what we sow we also reap.

A pastime, according to Webster is "that which amuses or makes time pass agreeably; diversion; recreation." How awful! no matter which of the three variations of meaning you choose. Amuse ourselves with death? Seek God's curse upon mankind for diversion? Diversion from what? Seek a more awful degree of the curse for the phase that is bothering us at the moment? Refresh our spirits with death? When under the curse we languish and suffer, shall we seek that which the curse ultimately brings to every man here below for a reviving of our souls? Shall we play with death?

But these are the plays on television and in the movie that get the highest rating. Murder and adultery form the warp and woof of all the entertainment of the world, as even the titles will show. Walk down an aisle where the paperback books are lined up — hundreds of them. Scan the titles and observe the pictures. You will see what entertains America. Look for only a few moments in the TV and Radio sections of department stores where there are a dozen or more television sets on at a time with several programs. You see murder and sexuality in full color. And what was that written by the Apostle Paul in his epistle to the Romans? "Not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them." The heroes of the world today are murderers, filthy adulterous entertainers. Instead of condemning all this playing with murder, instead of pointing out the evil of it all to their children, many parents sit down with their children to enjoy it and to converse with them about these heroes of the world instead of Scripture's "heroes of faith."

But, as we wrote, killing is God's prerogative, and it is His means of punishing the sinner. For that reason not all killing is breaking the fifth commandment. He has given the sword to the authorities to wield in His name. Killing our enemies is always sin; but there are times when we must kill His enemies in His name or even in self-defense. And we cannot honestly be conscientious objectors and so avoid the draft. Even though we may think that the war is unjust and unnecessary, that is not a judgment we may make in order to disobey the authorities who demand our services. The hangman may in his heart believe that the prisoner is not guilty; but he must execute the man because the authorities have found that man guilty. God has not given to the subjects the right to decide for the king that the war is unjust and so refuse to obey. If the war is unjust, the guilt of it will be that of the authorities who had declared it and insist on it. The soldier in the field who kills at his government's command is not guilty of that sin. But let that soldier beware lest he kill in personal revenge. He sees his

buddies killed and ventures forth to see how many of the enemy he can kill in retaliation. God keep our covenant young men on the battlefield from hatred of their own enemies. And may He give them grace to help the wounded, feed the hungry and conduct themselves as soldiers of the cross as well as soldiers of our land.

But here at home as well, how often are we not careless with the neighbour's life? We see danger and avoid it for ourselves. But who thinks today of stopping and removing from the highway the obstacle we barely avoided in the dark, so that the next car will not suffer the tragedy we just escaped? No, today, it is every man for himself. We are not our brother's keeper, according to modern thinking. We want to advance; and so we do not warn the man with whom we compete of the pitfalls and dangers. Let him learn for himself; and to tell him and warn him might cost us that which we covet. And the trouble is that we do not covet righteousness. We are not first of all and principally interested in being pleasing in God's sight. We are not only grammatically incorrect but also ethically wrong when our slogan is — as it usually is — "Me First!" Paul tells us to esteem others better than self. Jesus tells us to love our enemies and to do good to those that hate us. And although we are supposed to be a civilized people, and with our lips we at one time say that we hate war and decry violence and bloodshed, we at the same time encourage our children in what ought to be friendly competitive games of sport and sportsmanship to cheer on their teams with such awful cries as "Clobber Them! Butcher Them! Kill 'Em! Slay Them and Mow Them Down!" The game of childhood days that requires a "Bang! Bang! You're Dead!" takes on a far more vicious form in later days, and when then these same children get into the business world there simply is no mercy, compassion at all; and you cannot find the blessed peacemakers but bitter rivals!

In the world you cannot and you must not expect anything different. You must expect hatred among individuals and nations to increase. It is utterly foolish to believe that a malignant tumor left alone is going to improve the body. If not cut out the cancer will destroy the whole body as it continues to grow. God has no intention of performing that surgery upon the world. He intends to come with a judgment day to visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children who continue in that way and develop that evil much further. And when Jesus said that one of the signs of His return to execute this judgment is war and rumors of wars, He did not mean false rumors or simply empty rumors

of what actually was not taking place. He means that wars and fighting and killings would increase toward the end of time as sin develops and as the way is prepared for the man of sin. The world knows not how to do good to its enemies, for the world does not know how to do good unto the living God, Whom they rate as their principle enemy! Not loving Him, they cannot love the neighbour, and surely not the troublesome neighbour who becomes their enemy.

But in the church we are taught to expect it and to practice it ourselves. Paul writes it so beautifully in Romans 12:19, 20, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine: I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head." And he concludes with this sound advice in the next verse, "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

Of course it must be done with discretion. Many of the enemy that are in need of food you have to give food in the literal sense; and many who are thirsty may not be given the drink that they desire. Money would simply be used for anything but the food that is needed. It may be that clothing has to be purchased for the poor enemy, or else arrangements made to pay for what he selects when sizes are not known. But the underlying principle is do good.

Doing good is doing that which God considers to be good. It is doing His will. It is keeping His commandment: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself! And it is then also in love rebuking him for his sins and enmity against the living God. Material good that you may bestow upon him has but temporary value for the flesh. Be not stingy with spiritual exhortation and instruction. If God has blessed you with more of this earth's goods than that enemy who is in want, feed him with bread. But since God has blessed you with spiritual treasures and the knowledge of the truth and that precious gift of faith, speak to the neighbor of these things spiritual. You may not take from him his natural life, but you have a calling to speak to him about his spiritual death. A witness of the God Who saved you from your spiritual death you must always be. Do good then to the enemy that spitefully uses you with material gifts; but do him spiritual good as well by testifying of the salvation God's enemies have in Christ. Let your love of God shine forth and speak to the enemy of God's love for you. The enemy may reject it all, but you have walked in love towards God as one who lives in His fear.

Yes, faith is by grace; it is the gift of God!it is not superfluous to accentuate this truth. How often this truth is distorted in our day! How many there are who, even though they do not literally preach that faith is the work of man, leave the impression by their way of preaching, their pleading and begging, that it is in the power of any sinner to believe in Christ whenever he pleases, and to reject Him as he pleases!And so they change the wonderwork of God into an arbitrary whim of the sinner's will! But it is not so. It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.

— H. Hoeksema, "The Wonder of Grace"

A CLOUD OF WITNESSES—

Jonathan's Covenant

by Rev. B. Woudenberg

So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, Let the Lord even require it at the hand of David's enemies.

And Jonathan caused David to swear again, because he loved him: for he loved him as he loved his own soul.

I Samuel 20:16, 17

It is hard to imagine a more tender or more anguished meeting than that which took place between David and Jonathan at their secret hiding place in the fields surrounding the palace of Saul. David had come here from Naioth of Ramah where he had been with Samuel and where Saul had come seeking his life. Only by an ecstatic spirit from God which fell upon Saul was David spared, and he had come here to the only hiding place he had ever known. There, in the very fields where the two young men had so often walked and hunted and practiced their tactics of war, David and Jonathan met. It was as painfully joyful a meeting as there could ever be. The two were overjoyed to see each other; but their anguish could not be suppressed. As he threw himself on Jonathan's shoulder, David cried, "What have I done? what is mine iniquity? and what is my sin before thy father, that he seeketh my life?"

Jonathan was fully as troubled as David. There was no denying any longer that his father was out to kill David; and yet he could not conceive of it actually happening. Surely he, Jonathan, the oldest son of Saul and the crown prince of Israel would be able to prevent it. He answered David, "God forbid, thou shalt not die; behold, my father will do nothing either great or small, but that he will shew it me; and why should my father hide this thing from me? it is not so."

But this reasoning did not hold up. Saul was never really one to share his intents with anyone, and surely not in this matter where he knew the situation perfectly well. This David pointed out, "Thy father certainly knoweth that I have found grace in thine eyes; and he said, Let not Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved; but truly as the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth there is but a step between me and death."

There was no arguing. What David had said was undoubtedly true. Utterly crushed, Jonathan could only answer, "Whatsoever thy soul desireth, I will even do it for thee."

It was surely an amazing thing for Jonathan to say. Here he was, the son of the king, the crown prince of the nation, and he was offering his life without reservation to one who was now considered little more than a criminal, a fugitive from the wrath of the king. Still,

it was not really surprising. Such is the manner of love, and Jonathan and David had long been bound together in a most intimate bond of love. Ever since David had first come into the palace of Saul, they had talked together, played together, lived together, fought together, and above all they had shared together the deep dedication which both felt to the service of Jehovah their God. It had come to the point that whatever the problem might be, they responded to it as one. All feeling of competition between them had disappeared, and their hearts were knit together as one. Now the problem was David's safety, and Jonathan wanted him to know that in spite of the vicissitudes of his father, his feelings toward David remained the same.

But if Jonathan had not changed, David had. It was not so much the persecution of Saul that had brought this about; it had been his visit with Samuel. There, in those few quiet days which he had spent with the old prophet, he had for the first time come to the realization that he was ordained to be king some day in Israel. He remembered, of course, how Samuel had come to his father's home while he was still hardly more than a child and had anointed him with holy oil; but somehow he had never put that together with the office of king. It had taken finally the blunt assurance of the old prophet to point it out to him; and for David it had not been a pleasant experience. He had never wanted to be king. His ambitions had never run in that direction. He had been quite satisfied to think of Jonathan as the next king of Israel and himself perhaps as the commander of his army. But now that was all changed. He knew that the will of the Lord for them was different. He had so hoped that it would make no difference in his relationship to Jonathan; but now as they stood there together, he knew that it did. Jonathan was the same, the same as he had always been with that same overwhelmingly generous love. But David standing there with him could not keep himself from feeling as though somehow he was betraying his friend. At least, there was that inescapable fact that because of him Jonathan's future as king in Israel was undermined and destroyed. It tore at his heart with a feeling of guilt; and could he be sure that if Jonathan knew, he would not feel the same too?

But he couldn't mention it to Jonathan, he couldn't mention it. That would be too mean, too painful. Returning half-heartedly to their problem, David proposed a plan. "Behold, to morrow is the new moon," he said, "And I should not fail to sit with the king at meat: but let me go, that I may hide myself in the field unto the third day at even. If thy father at all miss me, then say, David earnestly asked leave of me that he might run to Bethlehem his city; for there is a yearly sacrifice there for all the family. If he say thus, 'It is well'; thy servant shall have peace: but if he be very wroth, then be sure that evil is determined by him."

It was a good plan, well conceived to reveal the true feelings of Saul. But David's heart wasn't in this matter. He was concerned about the feelings of Jonathan. Could he be sure of the love of Jonathan? Was it true that Jonathan suspected nothing as yet? Might he also turn against him in the end? In a desperate attempt to find some assurance on this, David went on to add, "Therefore thou shalt deal kindly with thy servant; for thou hast brought thy servant into a covenant of the LORD with thee: notwithstanding, if there be in me iniquity, slay me thyself: for why shouldest thou bring me to thy father?"

Jonathan's first reaction was one of complete astonishment to think that David might suggest that he would ever keep anything from him or do anything to harm him. He replied, "Far be it from thee: for if I knew certainly that evil were determined by my father to come upon thee, then would not I tell it thee?"

It was apparent, however, that this had not gotten through to David. It was not so much from what David said, for his reply was merely a suggestion that there might be difficulty in informing him as to Saul's reaction. He said, "Who shall tell me? or what if thy father answer roughly?" It was indeed quite possible that if Saul was still very angry with David, he might do something to prevent Jonathan from going out to talk to David. But even as David spoke, it was apparent that he was still very troubled and concerned about his relationship to Jonathan.

It was then that Jonathan determined to have the whole matter out. He understood the situation much better than David realized, and it was time that the two of them should come to an understanding between each other. Looking at David, he said, "Come, and let us go out into the field."

The field into which Jonathan and David went was a very familiar place to both of them. Many had been the hours and days which they had spent walking and talking together there. It had been the setting for some of their most precious memories. There, in the middle of that field, Jonathan stopped, and speaking to both David and to their God, he said, "O LORD God of Israel, when I have sounded my father about tomorrow any time, or the third day, and, behold, if there be good toward David, and I then send not unto thee, and shew it thee; the LORD do so and much more to Jonathan: but if it please my father to do thee evil, then I will show it thee, and send thee away, that thou mayest go in peace: and the LORD be with thee, as he hath been

with my father." It was the most that Jonathan could do, for his words were an oath before God that he would deal honestly with David regardless of what the outcome might be.

But Jonathan was ready to go much further than this: he was ready to assure David that this oath was made in full consciousness of what lay ahead in the future for both of them. It was implied in his last phrase and he went on to express it even more clearly by continuing, "And thou shalt not only while yet I live show me the kindness of the LORD, that I die not: But also thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house forever: no, not when the LORD hath cut off the enemies of David every one from the face of the earth."

It was an amazing statement. With it Jonathan made perfectly clear that he understood full well that he would never be king of Israel after his father Saul; the position was David's. It could well have been that he had discerned this long before David had himself, and maybe even before Saul. He had discerned the fine hand of the Lord guiding, preserving, preparing David for a position far greater than David himself had understood. What else could it be but the position of king in Israel? But for Jonathan this realization held no bitterness. He held for himself no personal ambition. His love for David was fully as great as his love for himself, and above all he was quite willing to be subject to the will of his God. Without reservation and with complete humility, he wanted David to know this. Only one thing troubled him, that was that anything should come between him and David. He longed for assurance and promise that David would not turn from him either. Thus, with all meekness, he asked David to make a covenant with him there in the presence of their God.

Surely what followed constituted as impressive a moment as one could imagine. Together they stood in the field alone; and yet they were not alone for both were very conscious of the presence of their God. In the past they had lived together in a most intimate relationship of friendship; but now they would have to go on in separate ways as the will of the Lord would lead them. But before they separated, they stood together in the presence of their God to establish a covenant together—to affirm that regardless of where their separated paths might lead them, they would remain faithful to their mutual love and friendship forever.

In all of the history of the church of God, there are few whose lives shine so radiantly in meekness, love and faithfulness as does the life of Jonathan. Here was a man who was born a prince, who was raised to be a king, who had every reason to expect to receive the highest position in the land; yet he saw it all slip away and given into the hands of another without a complaint. In fact, in that hour there was only one thing that concerned him—that his friendship and love with the one who displaced him should not be disrupted. There is an amazing beauty to I Samuel 20:17 when it says, "And Jonathan caused David to swear again, because he loved him: for he loved him as he loved his own soul." Greater love hath no man. It was founded in the grace of God.

THE LORD GAVE THE WORD—

Some Principles Of Missions

The Importance Of Preaching

by Prof. H. Hanko

Since we live in the dispensation of the return of Christ, the principle *sign* of Christ's coming is the preaching of the gospel. This sign is the *cause* of all the other signs which speak eloquently that our Lord is coming back.

This, while specifically elucidated in Scripture, is evident also from the fact that the return of Christ is most intimately connected with His work of atonement on the cross and in the resurrection. Christ comes again to finish the work which He began to do so long ago on Calvary and in Joseph's garden.

The point of connection between the work of Christ upon the cross and His return is His sovereign rule over all things from His Father's right hand in heaven. He is the sovereign Lord of lords and King of kings. All that takes place, according to the counsel and will of God, is through the work of Christ. All the events of history, all the work of the preaching of the gospel as the power of the salvation of the elect, is Christ's work which He performs. And these works are all performed by Christ *in order that* He may come again. They are preparation for His coming. They are necessary works which have to be done to make all things ready for His return. He is doing what still must be done, according to God's eternal purpose, that His kingdom may come at the end of the age. All things which take place therefore, are subservient to this glorious purpose—the culmination of history and the establishment of the everlasting kingdom of righteousness in the new heavens and the new earth.

Hence there are signs of Christ's coming. All the work which He does are signs. They are signs because they point us to the fact that Christ is working according to God's will. And when we see that Christ is working, then we know that these works are necessary works which must be performed that He may return. We see in these works of Christ signs which point us therefore, to the end of the ages.

The preaching of the gospel is the principle sign. It is the principle sign because it is the chief work of Christ. It is the work therefore from which all the other works proceed. There are two reasons especially for this. To one reason we have called your attention in our previous article. (Cf. *The Standard Bearer*,

January 1, 1967) There we called attention to the fact that the gospel is always a two-fold power. It is the power to save; but it is equally the power to harden. It is the sovereign means in the hands of Christ to bring the elect to repentance and salvation; but it is also the sovereign means to harden the wicked in their sin.

There is another point here however, which ought not to escape us. The purpose of God which He has determined in His eternal counsel is the glory of His own name. On this we are all agreed. But this glory of God's name, God determines to attain through Jesus Christ. That is, God chooses to attain this noble and lofty purpose of His will by *revealing* all the depths of His glory and all the riches of His infinite perfection through His only Son Christ Jesus. But just as soon as we have said "Christ Jesus", we have also spoken, necessarily, of all Christ's work which He performed on earth. Christ, in His work, is the full revelation of God's glory. But now, just as soon as we have said "Christ's work" we have also said "Christ's people." That is, God chooses, eternally, to reveal His glory through Christ by saving His elect people whom He has chosen to be His own possession in Christ. The cross is the redemption of the elect. The resurrection is the justification of all God's chosen people. Hence, the purpose of God is fully realized when all these elect are gathered into heaven, where all sin and death are banished, where righteousness fills the earth, where Christ and His elect church live forever to the praise and the glory of God.

But this purpose in the salvation of the elect is accomplished through *the preaching of the gospel*. All that takes place in all the history of the world is subservient to this. Hence, it follows that the preaching of the gospel is chiefly the power whereby all things take place.

* * *

It is time now to develop this more specifically and carry through the broad lines suggested by these truths. We shall do this in the remainder of this article and in subsequent articles.

We return first of all (as we said we would) to that important quotation we made in our first article which we took from Rev. H. Hoeksema's Commentary on the

Book of Revelation. We shall not quote the entire section again; only that part of it which is now of concern to us. The quote can be found in *The Standard Bearer*, Vol. XXXIV, p. 30. In discussing the opening of the first seal and in explaining the running of the white horse as being the progress of the preaching of the gospel, Rev. Hoeksema goes on to say:

That victorious warrior, going forth conquering and to conquer, shoots his sharp arrows into the hearts of the enemies, and thus brings them into subjection to the Lord of lords and the King of kings. Up to the present day this rider has pursued in the main a very definite course. He did not ride at random and roam in every direction, all over the earth; but clearly he had his course prescribed and definitely mapped out. Starting from Jerusalem, he drove to Antioch and through the various cities of Asia Minor. From thence he crossed over into Europe, first scoring his victories in Macedonia and Greece, then boldly striking for the very heart of the mighty Roman Empire, in order from there to sweep over the mountains and plains of Europe, and finally cross over into the western hemisphere when the time was ripe. Surely, today he also rides in other parts of the world, and the inhabitants of Asia and Africa must bow before his power. But there is a distinct difference between his work in Europe and America, and that among the nations of the far east and south. In the former countries his victories were so pronounced that outwardly entire peoples have been christianized, while in the latter the result of his drive is noticeable only in the conversion of individuals. And thus the ultimate result of the drive of the first warrior is that the tremendous contrast is called into existence between the so-called Christian world and the world of heathendom, Israel and the Gog and Magog.

There are many signs of Christ's return. These signs can, in general, be classified into three groups: signs in creation; signs in history; and signs in the church. The signs in creation are such as the pestilences which stalk the earth, earthquakes and other catastrophes in the brute world, signs in the heavens such as the falling of the stars, the turning of the sun into darkness and the moon into blood, etc. These signs also are caused by the sovereign rule of Christ which extends over the whole creation of God. The creation is groaning and travailing in pain waiting for her final redemption.

Signs in the history of the world include such signs as wars and rumors of wars, the division of the nations between Christendom and Gog and Magog, the rise of Antichrist and the establishment of his universal kingdom, etc.

Signs in the church include such signs as the great apostasy, the great tribulation, the preaching of the gospel, etc. (It is interesting to note that there is an overlapping between these groups. E.g., the sign of Antichrist belongs both to the signs of the church and of the history of the world. He is the head of a universal political kingdom, but he is also the head of the false church. He arises out of the church, i.e., out of false Christianity, and is also the chief agent in the persecution of the saints.)

Now Scripture is quite explicit about it that the preaching of the gospel is the cause of all these signs

in history and in the church. And the history which has gone by is adequate proof of the truth of this.

According to Revelation 6 the running of the white horse is followed by the running of the red horse, the black horse and the pale green horse. If, in general, the running of the white horse is symbolic of the progress of the preaching of the gospel, the running of the red horse speaks of war; the running of the black horse of poverty and its contrast in riches; the running of the green horse, of death. But it can readily be seen that there is the closest possible connection between these signs. War brings with it poverty and wealth and its horrible contrasts. And also the opposite is equally true. War brings in its wake death and destruction, pestilence and famine. And yet the fundamental cause of it all is to be found in the running of the white horse. How important a part in the history of the world do not these horses play. But principle to it all is the white horse in its predetermined and fixed path through the ages.

From the day of Pentecost onward the preaching of the gospel has dominated the history of the world. As Rev. Hoeksema pointed out, the progress of the gospel has been predominantly westward. According to the book of Acts, with the close of the apostolic era, the gospel has already been preached in the whole known world of that day. It had penetrated into the far reaches of the Roman Empire. And by the beginning of the Fourth Century it had become the established and favored religion of the empire. After this, it was the gospel which brought civilization to the heart of the continent of Europe and to our own country in the 16th Century. We need not specifically spell this out in detail; the fact of it is obvious.

However, because the gospel always has a two-fold effect, the history of the church is a history filled with bitter and lengthy struggles in the defense of the faith. All those who came under the influence of the gospel and were brought by it into the outward institution of the church were not, by any means, God's elect. The result was again and again, that wicked men arose in the church to destroy the truth of God's Word and thus destroy the cause of God. Think of the great Trinitarian and Christological controversies of the Fourth and Fifth Centuries. Think of the Pelagian Controversy of the Fifth Century in which Augustine played such a vital role. Think of the terrible heresies which developed in the Roman Catholic Church which made the Reformation a necessity to preserve the true church of Christ and the heritage of the truth. And so it has continued till today. But these controversies which swirled through history and affected so greatly the course of history were brought on by the preaching of the gospel. The gospel is the determinative factor. Without its preaching, there never would have been any of these things. It gives the impetus to all history and has principle control over the events which take place in the world. And through it all has arisen a large mass of false Christianity, the apostate church.

But you can readily see the results of this all as far as the signs of Christ's coming are concerned.

The gospel operates differently in different parts

of the world. This is not an arbitrary and senseless and inexplicable consequence of the gospel. This is sovereignly determined by Jesus Christ.

In Asia Minor, in Europe, in America, the gospel has what we may call national influence. It brings under its influence entire peoples, whole nations, complete continents. The result is that, because the gospel always has a certain civilizing influence, these nations become civilized nations where culture advances rapidly and where there is dramatic development in science, technology, the arts — all culture in general. And, not only is this true, but these nations become Christian nations in the outward sense of the word. We do not mean that all the citizens of these nations are true people of God; that the church to be found in these nations is entirely the true church. This is far from the case. But it does mean that there is a certain external Christianity brought about by the gospel in the nations as a whole. They, from the highest to the lowest, profess some kind of faith in God. They are interested (for good or bad) in the truth of God's Word contained in the Scriptures. They belong, be it but outwardly, to the institutional church. The gospel

brings all this about.

Yet the gospel does not always have this effect where it is preached. Because it is the Lord's purpose to save His church from every nation under heaven, the gospel is also preached in other nations of the world. But in many of these nations, the gospel does not have the national impact that it does, e.g., in Europe and America. So to speak, the gospel strikes at the periphery of these nations, glancing, as it were, off their borders. It plucks out a certain number whom God has ordained to eternal life; but it never enters into the life of these nations and makes the radical and extensive changes brought about in those countries which are civilized by the power of the gospel. Indeed, even in these nations, the gospel is the power of God unto salvation. The elect are called out of darkness into light. They are brought into the fellowship of the church of Christ. But they are saved as individuals. They are saved as a small minority in the hordes which populate these nations. And the nations themselves remain under the dark sway of pagan religion. This too the gospel does according to the purpose of Christ.

TRYING THE SPIRITS—

Dispensationalism A Blind Legalism

by Rev. R. C. Harbach

The Apostle John wrote in his gospel, "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." (1:17) John referred to the law as the day of shadows, and grace and truth as the realities. The law provided Israel with a copy of things to come. Grace and truth brought the genuine articles. The law furnished the sketch, while grace and truth completed the finished picture. The "Scofield Reference Bible" at this point is then in error. When we have here is not a contrast between law and grace, but a comparison of the two sides of one truth. Law and grace are not any more antithetical than law and truth. Sin and grace are antithetical, which antithesis, however, is not here in view. It is superficial to say "Law is connected with Moses and works; grace with Christ and faith..." For law is also connected with Christ (Mt. 5:17) and with faith. (Rom. 3:31) Also Moses is connected with grace! (Ex. 33:12, 13, 16, 17, 19) Nor are works really antithetical to faith, as the Epistle of James proves. It is worse to say that, "Law demands that blessing be earned; grace is a free gift...." The

law never demanded that blessings be earned. The purpose of the law was to show that blessings could *not* be earned! It is true that the law demanded what grace gives. But although "grace is a free gift," the law, too, was a gift, and a gift of love at that, as the preface to the Ten Commandments proves. Also in this connection, two things should be kept in mind: (a) The command is to love (Dt. 10:1, 13, 22), and (b) The law was granted by grace. (Ps. 119:29)

The Scofield footnote goes on to say, "As a dispensation, grace begins with the death and resurrection of Christ...The point of testing is no longer legal obedience as the condition of salvation, but acceptance or rejection of Christ..." This is a failure not only to see that if "acceptance of Christ" were made a condition of salvation, no one could be saved (cp. Isa. 53:3a with John 5:40; 6:44), but also is a failure to see what God has been dispensing throughout all the ages, namely, *grace*. All the dispensations of time are the various dispensations of God's grace. There are different dispensations, but always of the same grace

of God. Then, in the fulness of times, it is not true that at last we are through with "legal obedience as the condition of salvation," for the simple reason that legal obedience never was the condition of salvation. There are not two ways of salvation, one in the dispensation of law, by works, and the other in this dispensation, by grace. The Lord never had but one way of salvation throughout all the dispensations of His covenant. It was always and only by grace. The Old Testament saints were saved the same way we are, by grace through faith, apart from works; only they looked prospectively to Christ crucified, while we look retrospectively to Him. But Scofield became entangled with the inconsistency of two ways of salvation in his note on I John 3:7. There he wrote, "The righteous man under law became righteous by doing righteously; under grace he does righteously because he has been made righteous..." Here is salvation in the old dispensation by works (for attach "conditions" to salvation, and you make it "by works"), while in the new dispensation it is by grace only. But both David and Paul deny that the righteous man under law became righteous by *doing*. For the old covenant describes the blessedness (salvation) of the man to whom God *imputes* righteousness *without* doing! (Rom. 4:6) The righteous in *that* dispensation, too, as well as in this one, were righteous not because they *became* so by *their* doing, but because God imputed righteousness to them. In the old and the new dispensations there are not objectively two different righteousnesses, one a by-works righteousness, and the other a by-faith righteousness. The "by-works righteousness" was an invention of the Pharisees, who legalistically turned the law from the rule of gratitude that it was (Ps. 119:62) into a system of self-righteousness.

The way of salvation has always been the same. The plan of God for the whole human race has been at all times the same, and has been, is and shall be executed upon the same principles that always directed this same plan to its same destined end. In the admittedly different dispensations of God's plan, the chief difference lies in the ever fuller and more complete revelation He has progressively made of it through the ages.

Although we may legitimately speak of many dispensations of God's covenant, there are basically but three, the Patriarchal, the Mosaic and the Christian; or, more fundamentally, but two, the Old and the New Dispensations. In all of them, the Lord has always manifested His sovereign grace. It is worse than a great mistake to believe that grace is limited to this Christian era. It does not properly distinguish, to call this age "the dispensation of grace." Were not all the other ages dispensations of grace? Of course, the Dispensationalist will answer, No, which he does because of a wrong understanding of John 1:17, above, and of Eph. 3:2. He thinks, according to the footnote in the Scofield Reference Bible at Matt. 28:19, that the dispensation of grace began "with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ." Now, "under grace, God freely gives to the believing sinner eternal life, accounts to him a perfect righteousness, accords him a perfect position," in fact, this dispensation is marked

by the salvation of all who believe, and judgment upon the profane world and apostate church. But the truth is, this has always been the case from the beginning, from Abel onwards, from the times of the sons of God and the daughters of men unto the present.

Of that day it is recorded, "But Noah found *grace* in the eyes of the Lord," (Gn. 6:8) and that in times which were so bad that the Lord was grieved in His heart because of them. The earth was corrupt before God and filled with violence, so much so, that God no longer could stand the sight of it. This was the end, as far as He was concerned! He would destroy all flesh, except for "a remnant according to the election of grace." God reserved to Himself one family out of those wicked, corrupt, reprobate generations. Sovereign grace saved them from the prevailing apostasy. Grace was evident in Noah by the saving faith God had given him, (Heb. 11:7) and by works of obedience and righteousness. (II Pet. 2:5) Noah was delivered from that wicked world by the flood not because of anything in him, for he was a man of like passions with us, (Gen. 9:21f) but of grace only.

All of the patriarchs lived in an age of grace, according to the truth expressed in Romans 4. Abraham was justified by grace. He, as well as Noah and Enoch, lived by faith, not by works. Lot, too, "a believing sinner" to whom God accounted "a perfect righteousness," (II Pet. 2:7f) *found grace*, mercy and salvation in God's sight (Gn. 19:19). The patriarchs did not have this truth and experience withheld from them, for they all coveted the Lord's *gracious* favor, as evident in Joseph's "God be *gracious* unto thee" to Benjamin, (43:29) Was it not grace that God clothed Adam and Eve with the coats of skins? Was it not grace that God redeemed Israel out of Egypt? that He gave them manna from heaven and water from the Rock? (For remember, the manna and water were types of Christ and "that Rock was Christ.") If this be acknowledged, then the patriarchal age was an age of grace. This Scofield himself as much as admits on page 20 of his Bible.

However, with the Mosaic dispensation, this is regarded as changed. That is, at Sinai and the giving of the law (Ex. 19 and 20) the "dispensation of *law*" began. According to Scofield and his note on Ex. 19:3, in the dispensations prior to the law "the people... hitherto... had been the objects of free grace" but "the dispensation of promise ended when Israel rashly accepted the law. (Ex. 19:8) Grace had prepared a deliverer (Moses), provided a sacrifice for the guilty, and by divine power brought them out of bondage... but at Sinai they exchanged grace for law." (note on Gen. 12:1) Now in the first place, this is wrong because it implies that God's people were not "under law" previous to Sinai, but they surely were: Ex. 16:27, 28. In the second place, this is wrong because it implies that they were not the objects of free grace from Sinai onward. But this is not so, for the righteousness of God *without the law* (and *that* means "righteousness by *grace*") has been manifested, being witnessed *by the law* and the prophets." (Rom. 3:21) Will anyone say

that this does not mean that grace was revealed also in the days of the law? It should be plain to anyone who knows how to make use of a Bible concordance that Israel knew *grace* after they had received the law at Sinai. For very shortly after the law was given, after the golden calf, Israel was judged for this sin with a very severe judgment—three thousand were executed by the sword. Yet “the people which were left of the sword *found grace* in the wilderness, even Israel.” (Jer. 31:2) It hardly is now necessary to point out, in the third place, that this view, that Israel acted *rashly* in accepting the law, i.e., in so doing gave up grace, is wrong! For Moses, in the receiving of the law, had the Lord proclaim to him, “The Lord, the Lord, *merciful and gracious*, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping *mercy* for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin...” (Ex. 34:5ff). Why! from the beginning of this so called “dispensation of law” to its end the saints therein lived on the strength of this promise of grace given to Moses; so David (Ps. 86:5, 15; 103:8-13), so Nehemiah

(9:17, 31), Hosea (14), Joel (2:13), Jonah (4:2) and Micah (7:18-20)!

Immediately after the giving of the law, the Lord guaranteed, “I will come unto thee and I will bless thee.” (Ex. 20:24) No “earthly blessing” this, but a promise of grace along with the law, as is plain from the “judgments” immediately following as further enlargement on the law, in which (under Scofield’s heading, *The Law, the judgments*) the Lord assures, “*I am gracious!*” (22:27) At the end of the dispensation of law it is lately promised that God will be *gracious* unto “us” of the old covenant (Mal. 1:9).

In the age from Sinai to Calvary the children of Israel were not dismissed from any worship service without this blessing by the high priest: as found in Num. 6:23-27. (Underscore: *bless, gracious, peace!*) This from the “legal dispensation,” yet Christians could desire no more! The great difference between that Mosaic and this Christian dispensation is that then grace was reposed in *one* nation, but now it is poured out to *all* nations!

FEATURE ARTICLE—

The Significance Of The Races In The World (continued)

by Rev. R. C. Harbach

After the Flood, what was the first civilization with which the church had contact? At that time, the church was found in the Ararat mountains of Armenia. From there the church moved to Chaldea, where both Hamites and Shemites dwelt. Here the original centers of civilization were founded, especially in the cities of Babel and Nineveh. (Gen. 10:10,11) Here the children of Shem sprung up: the children of Elam (Persians), of Assur (Assyrians), of Aram (Syrians). The earliest ties of the church in the new world began in this Tigris-Euphrates region. Abram, a Hebrew, a descendant of Eber, lived here in Ur, Chaldea. The Shemites, then, were the hub of the nations, had closest contact with the Hamites, the Canaanites, Egyptians and Ethiopians, and, then finally, with the Japhethites, the Cyprians, Greeks, Romans and Germans. Among the Shemites were the Joktanites (probably the Arabians), who were, according to the tabulations, as numerous as the Japhethites. This means that the main line of the Shemites contains, among these seventy nations, the

briefest record of all (although eventually itself increasing to seventy, 46:27), the reason being that the smallest branch of humanity is under special providential guidance, since it was destined to become the hub about which the whole world revolves.

This wheel, if we may think of it for a moment as a gear-wheel, is the connecting link between the times of Noah (Methusaleh, Lamech) and the times of Abraham. World history, then, has its source material in this chapter of Genesis. Without it, we could not understand the relation of “secular” history to sacred history, nor appreciate the problems of ethnology, nor understand that all history is at bottom church history.

History therefore moves in the direction of Christ. (Eph. 1:10)

The races of men, too, move in the direction of Christ. They are not in Scripture distinguished by color. Holy Writ never developed a “color complex.” For example, in the O.T. there is no hint of the pres-

ence of the negro race. Mere color is no index of race. For example, the Jew is of every complexion according to the climate he inhabits, from the darkness of the Hindu to the fairness of the Dane. When Jeremiah says, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin?" (13:23) there is no proof that he had in mind the negro race. For there are African races in this part of the world which are only dark, others black, but do not have the features, shape of skull nor the woolly hair of the negro.* The point that Scripture makes is that the races and nations descended from the families of the sons of Noah. (10:32) They became divided throughout the earth, after the Flood, and after the building of the city and the tower of Babel. They were not divided until the time of Peleg, (10:25) for up to that time the earth's families were together and plotted to remain together. One-worldism is a conspiracy.

Originally, "the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech." (11:1) literally, of "one lip and one kind of words," i.e., *formally* one lip and *materially* one kind of words. Language was one and the same for the whole human race, the entire globe, and not just the land of Shinar, having one pronunciation and one vocabulary. It is not possible to absolutely identify this language. Many, including the O.T. rabbis, and the early church fathers and the older theologians, thought it was the Hebrew language. Hebrew, they said, was propagated after the Flood by Eber. Abram, a descendant of Eber, came from Mesopotamia where Aramaic was spoken, (31:47) yet he undoubtedly spoke Hebrew, since he was called Abram, the Hebrew, and used a name, Mizpah, which is neither Aramaic nor Chaldean, but Hebrew.

From this period in history three basic languages arose from the three basic national families. Hence there were three basic directions in which they were scattered. There were the Semitic languages: Hebrew, Assyrian, Phoenician, Aramaic (Syrian), Arabic, all different varieties from one original parent tongue. Then there were the Aryan (Japhetic) languages: the Indian (Sanskrit), Iranian (Persian, Celtic (Welsh, Cornish, Irish), Italian, Thracian-Illyrian, Hellenic, Slavonic (Russian, Polish, Lithuanian), Teutonic (German, Anglo-Saxon, English, Dutch, Icelandic, Swedish, Danish, Norwegian). All these have such common features as to indicate a single original parent-tongue. The Hamitic languages were Egyptian, Coptic, Abyssinian and Libyan. Present-day projects to construct a universal language, such as Esperanto, are an attempt to obviate the divine sentence of judgment made and executed at Babel. But the confounding of language at Babel not only resulted in the various language divisions of the nations and races, but is destined to result in the degeneration of language itself. The low spiritual state of men lowers their language. Here was the beginning of great deterioration of language, a ruin which we see today when the best language in a community of bad men reverts to a degraded jargon, such as that used by gangsters, thieves, pirates, profane adventurers, or the "existentialist" caste, or the so-called "beat" generation. This is the result of the best of Greek philosophy

moving in the direction of the philosophy of pessimism and ending (because men's hearts fail them for fear) in a cowardly nihilism.

"And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there." (11:2) Now "the whole earth" (v. 1), including the Shemites, began to move out from the east, from the Assyrian empire, and to settle in the land of Shinar. However, the Shemites did not engage in the tower-building, for from chap. 10 we know that that was done by the Hamites, primarily. The children of men built it, not the children of God. (11:5) That they *journeyed* literally means that they pulled up stakes, an expression which indicates a new trend in man's history. For originally he was a gardener. After the fall the Adamic race became city-dwellers. After the Flood, man became a nomad, as later he was in the wilderness journeys. The human race in this period was an encampment, as Israel under Moses.

That "they dwelt *there*" in Shinar (probably the Hebrew name for Chaldea), instead of replenishing the *earth*, indicates the beginning of a world-kingdom, headed by Nimrod. He is not mentioned in this chapter, but was undoubtedly the leader of this one-world empire-building (cp. 10:10). Under his management, the empire-expansion movement was not intentionally atheistic. It styled itself as furthering the cause of God's kingdom, and its plan of one-worldism was advertised as being for the benefit of all mankind. Therefore, for any to oppose it, as the covenant people would, was to become embarrassed as an enemy of God. This would mean that the church would be hampered by the state's "red tape" methods, social ostracism, polite, recondite persecution, and, eventually, open opposition and aggression.

These Hamitic Babel-builders began on their city. It was not God's city, for that has a Builder and Maker who is God. Their calling was to seek God's city (Heb. 11:10-16) and to live on this earth as citizens of it. (Phil. 3:20) They began their project in the interest of union. But their way of union led to dispersion and disunity. In the city of God is true unity. But man is not called upon to build that city. God is the Builder, and constructs it not of dead brick, but of living stones (I Peter 2:5). The city was then soon being land-marked by its space-needle, its own united nations building. For they built a tower in case of another flood, to keep above it, not only above the height of Ararat but even the 23-foot height of the flood waters above the highest mountain! (7:20) Godless "science" attempts to overcome nature, to gain the supremacy over it, recognizing no power or authority that is above that of science. The boast is that man will conquer space and time, control the lightning, harness the sun, subdue all the forces of nature, make the ocean subservient to man's genius, and so usher in the utopia of human achievement, making man superior to any power now above or beyond him.

Before Nimrod, government had been centered in the patriarchs of the tribes. Under him, the rural rulers were amalgamated in an urban society, under

his popular, humane dictatorship. He was the first head of an imperialistic civilization. He adopted and put into execution the principles of territorial expansion. He also would have done credit to a modern civil-rights leader. For he was anti-racist and anti-nationalist. In his scheme of things there was no place for nationalism, nor for national independency, nor for national sovereignty, nor for statism. He was the kind of leader the races of the world look for today. In the eyes of the world he was a servant of God. (10:9) He was a messiah, like President Franklin D. Roosevelt. He was a favorite politician, like President

Eisenhower. He had the personality and attraction of a President Kennedy. He was also a combination of Frank Buck and Benjamin Franklin. He was a pure humanist-socialist of great physical, intellectual, psychological and political power. Today he would champion the cause of the pope, the UN, the world-church, the Red Feather, Community Chest, urban renewal, the housing commission, the war on poverty and world peace. Nimrod is a sketch of the final antichrist who will temporarily succeed in uniting the races of men in Satan's world-kingdom, which is a counterfeit of the kingdom of God. * Geike, *Hours with the Bible, I.*

Contribution

by Prof. H. C. Hoeksema

Dear Brother in Christ:

I do not like to disagree with our professor, but in this case I may not be silent. I must disagree with your recommendation of hymns for the youth in our schools. (Book Reviews, *Standard Bearer*, Jan. 15, 1967).

According to Article 69 and 86 of our Church Order, we may not recommend hymns in our schools. We must teach our children to sing the songs of the Psalter in order that they can sing along in our worship services on Sunday.

If we recommend hymns in our schools we can only expect more clamoring for hymns to be sung in our churches.

History teaches us that churches who have introduced hymns no longer sing the Psalms, or at best, sing them but very little.

The Presbyterian Church from whom we are using many numbers in our Psalter, do not sing the Psalms. The Reformed Church of America used to sing only the Psalms and they do not sing them any more. The Christian Reformed Church introduced hymns into their Christian Schools when I was in the eighth grade. A few years later they were introduced into their churches. History proves the results. The Psalms are sung very little in this church today.

Oh, how the devil would like to turn us away from singing the Psalms! The devil knows history too! He knows that once introduced, the singing of hymns would quickly replace the singing of Psalms.

God forbid that we should go a-hankering after the songs of churches who are departing from the truth. Let us not be discontent with the spiritual

food of the Psalms as the Israelites were discontent with God's manna. Let us be content with the songs that God has given to the Church. God gave us great men to write our wonderful creeds; men with wisdom and foresight to write our Church Order to safeguard God's church.

Watchmen, beware! Let us not be like the watchmen in Isaiah 56:10-12, but let us be like the watchmen in Isaiah 62:6.

Faternally yours,

Henry Huiskens

Edgerton, Minn.

Reply

Your editor is always happy to hear from readers of the *Standard Bearer*, even, — I am almost inclined to say: especially, — when they disagree.

To refresh the readers' memory and for accuracy's sake, let me quote the recommendation to which you refer in your letter: "With the exception of a few questionable selections, this book can find good use, both in our schools and in our homes, where, incidentally, family and group singing has become too much of a lost art."

For my part, this recommendation will stand. And without entering into a long and detailed debate with brother Huiskens, I will briefly call attention to the following points:

1. Article 69 of the Church Order says nothing about singing hymns in our schools and homes. It refers only to our singing in our church services. To my knowledge, no one has ever interpreted this article as saying anything about what we sing in our homes and schools.

2. While I have great love and respect for our "Psalter" and fully

subscribe to its use in our churches, I would caution against equating man-made versifications of the Psalms with the Psalms themselves. The latter are inspired; the former are no more inspired than any Scriptural hymn. I mention this because brother Huiskens repeatedly speaks of the Psalms. Strictly speaking, we do not sing the Psalms, but man-made (and in some cases, inaccurate) versifications of the Psalms.

3. I also believe that at school and at home our children should learn to sing from our "Psalter," but not exclusively. There is a great wealth of good, sound Scriptural music (hymns, anthems, cantatas, oratorios) from which we would not benefit if we tie ourselves down to the "Psalter."

4. In my opinion (and, incidentally, I sang hymns both at home and in school not only from the 8th grade on, but from kindergarten on), the solution does not lie in a flat ban on music other than the "Psalter," as brother Huiskens seems to suggest, but rather in the proper exercise of discretion and discernment by parents and in the teaching of proper discretion and discernment to our children.

5. Meanwhile, I am quite content with Article 69 of the Church Order for our churches, — not because it insists on psalm-singing as a principle (for this it evidently does not do), but as a wise and practical regulation for the music in our church services.

In conclusion; write again sometime, brother. And don't hesitate to disagree with your professor. He is also but a fallible man. And besides, you are also a prophet!

H.C.H.

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Priscilla Society of First Church extends its deepest sympathy to Dorothy in the death of her mother,

MRS. R. DE VRIES

May the God of all grace sustain her in her sorrow. "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." II Corinthians 5:1.

Mrs. J. Oomkes, Pres.
Mrs. C. Pastoor, Sec'y.

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Consistory of the Redlands Hope Protestant Reformed Church expresses deepest Christian sympathy to Mrs. Gretine Van Uffelen, in the loss of her husband

MR. JOHN VAN UFFELEN

Also, to Mr. Dick Van Uffelen, Mr. Christian Van Uffelen, and Mrs. Bernard Meelker. The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory that awaits him in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Rev. C. Hanko, Pres.
Mr. Wm. Feenstra, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Men's Society and the Mary-Martha Society of the Hope Protestant Reformed Church of Redlands, California join in expressing their heartfelt sympathy to its members, Mr. and Mrs. C. Van Uffelen, Mr. and Mrs. D. Van Uffelen, and Mr. and Mrs. B. Meelker in the loss of their father and father-in-law,

MR. JOHN VAN UFFELEN

May the God of all grace and consolation comfort their hearts in the assurance that they will be reunited in the kingdom of our Father unto His eternal praise and glory.

The Men's Society,
Everett Van Voorthuysen, Sec'y.
The Mary-Martha Society
Donna Huisken, Sec'y.

NOTICE

The Protestant Reformed Christian School of South Holland, Illinois, is in need of a teacher in the lower room, to teach in grades 1 through 3. Please submit applications to:

Mr. Gise Van Baren
16057 School Street
South Holland, Illinois 60473

IN MEMORIAM

On January 28, 1967 it pleased our heavenly Father to take from us our husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather

LAMBERT DOORNBOS

at the age of 80 years.

Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.

Mrs. Lambert Doornbos
Mr. and Mrs. Peter Doornbos
Mr. and Mrs. George Moerman
6 grandchildren
3 great grandchildren

Kalamazoo, Michigan

IN MEMORIAM

On December 24, 1966, the Lord took into the mansions of Father's House our beloved husband, father, and grand-father

MR. JOHN VAN UFFELEN

at the age of 64 years.

Also in our present loss we are grateful for what the Lord has given to us in him. And it is our prayer that our God may keep us in the faith which he so sincerely professed, and strengthen us in the hope of eternal glory before the throne.

The bereaved family,

Mrs. John Van Uffelen
Mr. and Mrs. Christian Van Uffelen
Mr. and Mrs. Dick Van Uffelen
Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Steenstra
Mr. and Mrs. John Van Uffelen
Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Meelker
Mr. and Mrs. Gerrit Van Uffelen
and 22 grandchildren

NEWS FROM OUR CHURCHES—

February 1, 1967

The Consistory of Holland, Mich. has named a new trio from which the congregation will make a choice at a meeting scheduled for Feb. 1; the trio—Revs. D. Engelsma, R. C. Harbach and J. A. Heys.

* * *

New clerks appointed this year are: *Holland*, Mr. B. Windemuller, 267 32nd St., Holland, Mich.; *Loveland*, Mr. W. Griess, 701 Clay St., Denver, Colo.

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Many of our bulletins name the new appointed clerks, without their addresses (of course their people know them), so we cannot list them on this page until they are supplied.

* * *

Rev. G. Vos, Hudsonville's emeritus minister, has volunteered to make the weekly bulletins again, with Rev. Veldman serving as a clearing-house for the announcements. In that way the old pro can still keep his hand in to some extent. During the years Rev. Vos wrote the bulletins they were uniquely warm and personal, and we are sure the Hudsonville people will welcome them back in the bulletin racks.

* * *

The Grand Rapids Press, in its Saturday evening edition of Jan. 28, carried a two-column ad of our Reformed Witness Hour which called attention to the fact that Prof. H. C. Hoeksema would preach a series of sermons expounding the first chapter of Genesis. The caption on the ad was, "Genesis One, Fact or Fiction?" Our brethren in Jamaica would find it difficult to believe that in a Reformed community we would find it necessary to devote a 20-week series to the truth that this chapter is *Fact*, but even we who live in this community probably do not realize the inroads our Adversary, the Devil, has made against the bastions of our Reformed Faith in this area of the Truth. The Radio Committee will be ready to meet the increased demand for copies of this series which is expected upon this broadcast.

* * *

On the same page, as the above, was a nine inch, two column ad regarding the "Studies in Biblical Doctrine" which Lynden's little church publishes. The ad spoke of the "spiritual coldness so common today" and that the "pathetic ignorance concerning the most basic teachings of the Word of God" are running parallel for they are related together. Rev. Woudenberg is hereby inviting any who are interested in following a "program of regular and systematic study in Biblical doctrine" to send for the "Studies" that treat those "various doctrines, not abstractly, but in direct connection with the Scriptures upon which they rest."

* * *

The above mentioned ads are a lively witness to

Western Michigan that the Protestant Reformed Churches (though not mentioned by name in Lynden's ad) are still vitally interested in maintaining the Truth of God's Word upon which our faith is founded. Probably those ads are also a sign that we no longer are made to cringe under the epithets of "Sect", "followers-of-a-man", "splinter-group", but that we are gradually lifting our head as a denomination that has not been founded upon a man, but on the Infallible Scriptures explained in the Reformed tradition, as we have received it from the Fathers of the Reformation.

* * *

The Reformed Witness Hour has acquired another outlet, this one in the South Holland-Oak Lawn area. The new station is WLNK-FM, and airs our program Sundays at 1:30 p.m.

* * *

Loveland's Young People's Society devoted a recent after-recess program to hearing a tape on the mission work of our churches in Jamaica. This tape was provided by the Mission Committee, and is available to any society that requests it. You may request it from Mr. H. Vander Wal, 1047 Alto Ave. S.E., Grand Rapids, Mich. 49507.

* * *

Prof. H. Hanko has been released from writing "The Covenant Witness", a monthly pamphlet put out by Hope Church of Grand Rapids. The press of Seminary duties necessitated his request, and the consistory "thanked him for the years of faithful service" by way of a bulletin announcement.

* * *

The public lecture given in the Thornridge High School of Dolton, Ill. was attended by an audience of about four hundred people who were very attentive as Prof. H. C. Hoeksema spoke on, "The Reformed Faith in Crisis". The size of the audience might have been larger but for the competition given it by the Illiana Christian High School Band which gave a concert that evening, but was still considered good because of the difficulty of securing advertising media. But those in attendance said it was for them a worthwhile evening in that it strengthened them in their resolve to meet the attacks of the enemy in this crisis.

* * *

The first of the winter lecture series slated for Jan. 26 was postponed for one week due to the vicious winter storm which decended upon Western Michigan that day. All the main roads were impassable to all but horse-drawn sleighs which are extinct in that area. Hazardous driving warnings were changed to "emergency driving" warnings, and few of those were made. Again we were reminded that the "D.V." we so glibly add to our plans is not to be taken lightly. In this case the Lord did *not* will.

...see you in church

J.M.F.