

**The
Standard
Bearer**

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

IN THIS ISSUE

Meditation

Seeing Jesus Crowned

Question Box

About Becoming "Human" Again

In His Fear

Television—A Homogenizing Influence

Signs of the Times

This Is 'Reformed' Evangelism?

CONTENTS

Meditation —	
Seeing Jesus Crowned	386
Editorials —	
A Significant Lecture	389
The OPC and the "Free Offer" (3):	
Basically, A Question of	
Exegetical Method (concluded)	389
Question Box —	
About Becoming "Human" Again	393
All Around Us —	
Christian Witnessing (2)	395
In His Fear —	
Television — A Homogenizing Influence	397
From Holy Writ —	
Exposition of the Book of Hebrews	
(11:24-26)	399
Signs of the Times —	
This is 'Reformed' Evangelism?	401
The Day of Shadows —	
Righteous In This Generation	403
Contending For The Faith —	
Eschatology — In The Old Testament	405
News From Our Churches	408

THE STANDARD BEARER

Semi-monthly, except monthly during June, July, and August.
Published by the Reformed Free Publishing Association, Inc.
Second Class Postage Paid at Grand Rapids, Mich.

Editor-in-Chief: Prof. Homer C. Hoeksema

Department Editors: Rev. Robert D. Decker, Mr. Donald Doezeema, Rev. David J. Engelsma, Rev. Cornelius Hanko, Prof. Herman Hanko, Rev. Robert C. Harbach, Rev. John A. Heys, Rev. Jay Kortering, Rev. Dale H. Kuiper, Rev. George C. Lubbers, Rev. Marinus Schipper, Rev. Gise J. Van Baren, Rev. Herman Veldman, Rev. Bernard Woudenberg

Editorial Office: Prof. H. C. Hoeksema
1842 Plymouth Terrace, S.E.
Grand Rapids, Mich. 49506

Church News Editor: Mr. Donald Doezeema
1904 Plymouth Terrace, S.E.
Grand Rapids, Mich. 49506

Editorial Policy: Every editor is solely responsible for the contents of his own articles. Contributions of general interest from our readers and questions for the Question-Box Department are welcome. Contributions will be limited to approximately 300 words and must be neatly written or typewritten, and must be signed. Copy deadlines are the first and the fifteenth of the month. All communications relative to the contents should be sent to the editorial office.

Reprint Policy: Permission is hereby granted for the reprinting of articles in our magazine by other publications, provided: a) that such reprinted articles are reproduced in full; b) that proper acknowledgement is made; c) that a copy of the periodical in which such reprint appears is sent to our editorial office.

Business Office: The Standard Bearer,
Mr. H. Vander Wal, Bus. Mgr.
P.O. Box 6064
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506

Business Agent for Australasia: Mr. Wm. van Rij
59 Kent Lodge Ave.
Christchurch 4, New Zealand

Subscription Policy: Subscription price, \$7.00 per year (\$5.00 for Australasia). Unless a definite request for discontinuance is received, it is assumed that the subscriber wishes the subscription to continue without the formality of a renewal order, and he will be billed for renewal. If you have a change of address, please notify the Business Office as early as possible in order to avoid the inconvenience of delayed delivery. Include your Zip Code.

Advertising Policy: The *Standard Bearer* does not accept commercial advertising of any kind. Announcements of church and school events, anniversaries, obituaries, and sympathy resolutions will be placed for a \$3.00 fee. These should be sent to the Business Office and should be accompanied by the \$3.00 fee. Deadline for announcements is the 1st or the 15th of the month, previous to publication on the 15th or the 1st respectively.

Bound Volumes: The Business Office will accept standing orders for bound copies of the current volume; such orders are filled as soon as possible after completion of a volume. A limited number of past volumes may be obtained through the Business Office.

Meditation

Seeing Jesus Crowned

by Rev. M. Schipper

"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."

Hebrews 2:9

But we see Jesus. . . !

Crowned with glory and honour!

Which He attained forty days after His resurrection when the Lord Jesus ascended into the highest heavens.

During those forty days He showed Himself alive, making no less than ten appearances to His disciples; thus giving to them infallible proofs that He had not been overcome by death, and that, as the living Lord He would be with them unto the end of the world, applying unto them the salvation He had accomplished

for them through His suffering, death, and resurrection.

Also during those days instructing them concerning the things of His kingdom, and the operations of the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, Whom He would send unto them.

And, O, how they needed that instruction! Were they not to be His witnesses unto the ends of the earth? But how could they be faithful witnesses unless they themselves understood first the things concerning His glorious work of redemption? How necessary,

therefore, it was that they understood perfectly the meaning, the manner, and the necessity of His coming into the world, and of His saving work accomplished in His suffering, death, and resurrection. Moreover, also now they must understand the significance of His ascension into heaven, and unto the Father, whence He would receive and dispense unto them the Holy Spirit, Who would lead them into all the truth, and sanctify unto them the benefits He so graciously merited for them.

And now, on the last day of the forty, He led them out unto the Mount called Olivet, from which place He would take His leave of them and return to the place whence He came.

It is concerning this glorious ascension that the text speaks.

Significantly, in the context the writer to the Hebrews had been reflecting on the creation of man, and the resultant high position man sustained in relation to the rest of creation. He was crowned with glory and honour, and placed over all the earthly creation as king under God. Musing on what the psalmist had said (Psalm 8), the author of this epistle quotes from the Psalm, and then shows how the sweet singer saw only in part the extended glories the Lord had in mind for man. "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hand. Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. . . ."

Of this glory bestowed upon man by virtue of his creation, our Psalter picks up the refrain:

O what is man, in Thy regard
To hold so large a place,
And what is the son of man, that Thou
Dost visit him in grace.
In man Thy wisdom hath bestowed
A pow'r well nigh divine;
With honor Thou hast crowned his head
With glory like to Thine.
Thou hast subjected all to him,
And lord of all is he,
Of flocks and herds, and beasts and birds,
And all within the sea.

Great and glorious, indeed, was the honour God had bestowed upon the highest of all the creatures!

But in all this, so the psalmist noted, man was nevertheless created a little lower than the angels. He was earthly, while they were heavenly. Paradoxical as it may seem, therefore, though man was high, yet was he low.

However, God had in mind something much greater for man. As king of creation only that which was earthly was subjected to him. He must be exalted to

still greater heights! He must have all things, also those in heaven, in subjection under his feet. The time must come when also principalities and powers, angels and devils, must be subject unto him.

This, the writer to the Hebrews says, we do not yet see!

Now we see not yet all things put under him. . . .

But we see Jesus!

We see Jesus crowned! In His ascension and coronation we see the beginning of an accomplished fact. In Him we see the first principle of the high estate the Lord of heaven and earth has destined for the highest of all His creatures who must reign with Him.

Glorious coronation!

And be sure that you pay special attention to the fact that it is Jesus Who is so crowned!

Jesus, the Son of God, Who became the Son of Man!

For He took on Him the flesh and blood of the children of men, and became like unto His brethren in all things, sin excepted. Not always was He like unto His brethren. From eternity He is in the form of God. Yea, He is God, the Wholly Other! Supremely exalted above all creatures, possessing in Himself the complete divine nature. The infinite and glorious God!

But wonder of wonders, He became man!

Paradoxical as it may seem, — God became!

The Infinite came into the finite. The Eternal came into the temporal. The Unchangeable became changeable man, a child of time; while He remained the eternal, immutable God. He took on Him the form of a servant, while He remained in the form of God. He became the Son of man on the earth, while He was simultaneously the Son of God in the bosom of the Father.

The Son of God, Who became the Son of man, also became a little lower than the angels!

Not, as some would interpret, did He become a little lower than the angels in His suffering and tasting of death. This would be indeed in conflict not only with the text itself, but also with the truth expressed in Psalm 8. As we will see presently, in His suffering and death, He is not made a little lower than the angels, but He is made the lowest of the low. Then He is made the most unworthy among men. Then He is made the Sinner among sinners. Then He descends into the lower parts of the earth, being despised and rejected of men, and in His darkest moment even forsaken of God. Sheer mockery it would be to say that in His suffering and death He is made a little lower than the angels.

Nay, rather, it is in His incarnation, His coming into the flesh, that He is made lower than the heavenly creatures. Thus He assumed the position of the first man, who was of the earth, earthy. However, in relation to that first man, there was this difference in position, — while the first man Adam could fall, and did fall from his high estate, the last Adam, the Lord from heaven, would not fall, but through the way of

perfect obedience would bring that position to its exalted heights. He would be crowned with glory and honour, not as lord over the earthly creation, but as Lord of all, even above the angels.

Shall He attain to these glorious heights, He in His human nature must ascend into heaven!

That place in God's creation, higher than the starry firmament, where the omnipresent God is enthroned in the beauty of holiness, and where He is pleased to receive the praises of men and angels, and all His creatures. From before the very eyes of His disciples He is taken up to the right hand of God, where He is given a name which is above every name, and before Whom every knee shall bow.

In that very nature in which He was conceived and born, by which conception and birth He was made a little lower than the angels — in that very nature He is crowned with glory and honour such as the first man of the earth could not know.

Indeed, we see Jesus crowned!

With glory. . . !

It is with the glory of Him, the living God, Who alone is glorious, that He is crowned. And that glory is the radiation of all divine virtues. A foretaste of that glory the Lord received when in the presence of His disciples He was bathed in glory on the Mount of Transfiguration, before the cross. Now His exalted human nature experienced the perfection of that glory at the right hand of God. Then the glory of God rested upon Him as a crown not only, but penetrated His whole nature.

With honour. . . !

When the King of glory entered the gates of righteousness He received all that authority and power God could give Him, not only as the symbol of victory, but as a reward of merit; the highest honor the creature could receive, — to rule in the Name of God over all creation in heaven and on earth. And with power and authority shall He rule until all is brought into subjection under His feet.

The ground for this coronation lay in His suffering of death. Here evidently is referred to not merely the fact that He had been overcome by death, but more particularly the fact that He had come into the world to die. We are wont to speak of His passive and active obedience. We do not wish to quibble about this

distinction. Rather we would emphasize here, in the light of the text, that the Son of God, Who became Son of man, came into the world to die. And this implies that His death was substitutional and propitiatory. He was not a victim of circumstance, who was simply overcome by death; but, as the Head of His people, He laid down His life for them.

By the grace of God!

He came into the world by the grace of God. He suffered and died by the grace of God. He reconciled the world unto God by His grace. That is the cause and the source out of which all flowed.

O, marvelous grace of God!

Precious Saviour!

No wonder He is crowned with glory and honour!

Not once while He was in the flesh did He think it a matter of robbery to be equal with God. But He made Himself of no reputation, became all Servant, and humbled Himself even unto death, in order to pay the penalty of our guilt, and to merit for us righteousness and life. Not once did He, like our first father Adam, bend to the wiles of Satan, and imagine that He could be God's equal. But in willing obedience He subjected Himself to the shameful and bitter death of the cross; while He lovingly passed under the vials of God's wrath, until God said it was enough. All His wrath toward His people had dissipated, and God could see His beloved people once more in perfect righteousness. Therefore God hath so highly exalted Him, and given unto Him a name above every name.

O, it is true, we see not yet all subjected to Him!

But we do see Jesus!

The grace of God which was given unto Him, He in turn has given unto us, the grace of faith and hope!

We behold in Him the beginning of our own exaltation and the hope of our crown!

And that is enough to tide us over until that day when He shall return in His glory to give unto us also the crown of life that fadeth not away!

With our eye of faith firmly fixed on Jesus, we shall overcome all our present woes, even death and the grave. We shall be glorified together with Him.

And when all shall be perfected, according to the plan of God, then He with us shall be subjected unto God; in order that God may become all in all.

Amen!

Gift idea? Give good books. Give RFPA publications!

Editorials

A Significant Lecture

Prof. H. C. Hoeksema

This department is not in the habit of commenting on lectures given by any of our ministers. Nor is it the intention of this article to editorialize about a lecture this time.

But the *Standard Bearer* is interested in witnessing to the truth with respect to burning issues of the day.

And we are interested, too, in having that witness reach as many as possible.

For this reason, we call attention to the lecture delivered by the Rev. David Engelsma on May 10 at First Protestant Reformed Church in Grand Rapids on the subject: "Key '73 — What Must We Say About It?" Before an attentive audience that packed the spacious auditorium, the speaker delivered a soundly Reformed and thorough-going critique of Key '73. There was much food for thought for any serious-minded Christian in this lecture.

To try to bring this witness to as many as possible, we are making this lecture available in several forms:

1. You can obtain a recording on a 7-inch reel for the price of \$3.00.

2. You can obtain a cassette recording for the price of \$2.50.

3. The July 1 issue of the *Standard Bearer* will carry a complete transcript of the lecture.

4. The lecture will also be published in a separate pamphlet as soon as possible.

If you want to understand what Key '73 is all about, and want to be instructed as to why Key '73 is both wrong and dangerous, take advantage of this opportunity to hear or to read this lecture.

For your convenience, we are making these recordings and transcripts available through the *Business Office of the Standard Bearer*. Write to:

The Standard Bearer,
Post Office Box 6064,
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506

Our Business Manager will give you prompt service!

The OPC and the "Free Offer" (3)

BASICALLY, A QUESTION OF EXEGETICAL METHOD

(continued from last issue)

But about this presently. I want to refer to a few quotations from Dr. A. Kuyper and Dr. H. Bavinck.

The latter writes in his *Dogmatics*, I, 644-666:

"Scripture is the principle of theology. But Scripture is no statute book; it is an organic unity. The subject-matter for theology, more especially for dogmatics, is scattered through the whole of Scripture. Even as gold out of a mine, so the truth of faith must be delved out of the Scriptures with the exertion of all spiritual power. *With a few loca probantia* (with a few proof texts, H.H.) *one can do nothing*. (I underscore, H. H.). Not on the basis of a few separate texts, but on that of the Bible in its entirety a dogma must be built; it must evolve organically out of the principles which are everywhere present in Scripture. For, the doctrine of God, of man, of sin, of Christ, etc., is not to be found merely in a few expressions, but is spread throughout the entire Bible and that not only in a few proof-texts, but also in sundry figures of speech and parables, ceremonies and historical narratives. No part of Scripture may be neglected. The

whole of Scripture must prove the whole of the system. Also in theology separatism must be avoided. *It is a distinguishing mark of many sects, that they proceed from a small part of Scripture and for the rest leave it severely alone.* (I underscore, H.H.)."

This is exactly what the Rev. Zwier does with the proof-texts for the so-called general goodness of God. He cannot find a place for it in the Reformed system. The texts which he quotes are a few aphoristic *loca probantia*, which are in conflict not only with a few other texts, but with numerous passages from Holy Writ, and which he cannot harmonize with such fundamental doctrines as God's righteousness, holiness, wrath over sin, predestination, particular grace, the cross of Christ, etc. Nowhere do those passages which the Rev. Zwier interprets as teaching God's lovingkindness over the reprobate ungodly fit into the current teaching of Scripture. And while, according to Bavinck, Reformed theology refuses to acknowledge a few individual texts as a basis for dogma, and would elicit from Scripture the truth of faith with exertion

of all spiritual powers, the Rev. Zwier finds his strength exactly in these separate texts, understanding full well that His entire theory of common grace must fall, as soon as he will take pains to compare Scripture with Scripture.

Reformed theology has always considered the doctrine of particular grace as being the current doctrine of Scripture and never did Reformed theologians hesitate to interpret other texts, that apparently teach general grace, in the light of that current doctrine.

But the Rev. Zwier refuses emphatically to do this. He condemns this method of interpretation as rationalistic. And thereby this method is branded as un-Reformed.

Let me quote one more passage from Bavinck's *Dogmatics*:

"The theologian must bestow some mental labor upon the material he thus obtained. The dogmas are not *totidem verbis, kata rheeton* but *kata dianoian* (not literally but in principle and according to their idea, H.H.) in Scripture; but they are *conclusiones fidei* (conclusions of faith, H.H.). The doctrine of the trinity, of the two natures of Christ, of the atonement, of the sacraments, etc., is not based upon a single declaration in Scripture, but is construed from many data, which are scattered throughout Scripture. Dogmas are a brief compendium in our language of all the Scriptures teach about the subjects concerned. Romish as well as Protestant theologians, therefore, have always maintained over against various tendencies, *that insisted upon literal expressions of Scripture, the right of dogmatic theology*. (I underscore, H.H.). Complete justice, according to them, was done to Scripture, not by quoting one single text literally, but by reflecting the entire truth comprised in many texts." I, 665, 666.

Anyone that is acquainted with Kuyper's *Encyclopaedie* and that is at home in his *Dictaten Dogmatiek*, knows that it would not be difficult to quote similar passages from his pen. But I would rather show how he himself applied these principles of Scriptural interpretation. For this purpose I refer to the well-known fourth volume of the series *Uit het Woord*, which bears the title: *Dat De Genade Particulier Is*.

On pages 39-67 of this work Dr. Kuyper reasons from some fundamental truths of Scripture to prove that the Arminian doctrine of common grace cannot be true, and that, for this reason, all Scriptural passages that seem to teach common grace must also be interpreted in the light of these fundamental truths of Scripture. The doctrine of general grace is in conflict with what Scripture teaches us concerning the deep corruption of man and his total incapability to accept the proffered redemption; is contrary to what Holy Writ teaches us concerning the unity and veracity of our God; cannot be harmonized with the doctrine con-

cerning the person of our Redeemer, who was ordained from eternity as the head of his own, nor with his work of redemption which was a payment for the guilt of sin and, on the basis of it, liberation from the power of sin, and therefore necessarily particular, for if it is not particular it could be no atonement for sin.

Let me offer a few quotations in this connection:

"And since it is a matter of complete indifference to us whether our confession of the truth is in harmony with what some people please to think of God; and since it is our sole purpose *to see to it that our confession completely harmonizes with the living God himself* (I underscore, H.H.), as He really is and exists, we can and may do nothing else than busy ourselves with Holy Writ, which alone knows and says and shows who God is and how He actually is."

Another quotation:

"And if, on the contrary, there is in Holy Writ a revelation of positive truth as we confess with humble gratitude, then it is not only my privilege, but my solemn obligation to attack your presentation concerning the scope of grace so consistently and perseveringly, that it no longer encroaches upon all that is revealed to us in those holy records concerning the *essence* of the Supreme Being." p. 54.

You see, according to Kuyper, the scope of grace is to be determined by what the Scriptures teach us concerning the essence of God. He compares Scripture with Scripture.

According to the Rev. Zwier this is rationalism.

In opposition to those who would prove the doctrine of general grace from the text in II Cor. 5:15; "And He died for all", he writes as follows:

"But even this more limited allegation (that the expression in II Cor. 5:15 refers to all baptized people, H.H.) cannot be maintained. For though it be true that every one who belongs to the church of Christ, be it only externally, shall be judged by the death of the Lord and by the holiness of His atoning blood; and though the blood of the Son of God concerns such a one, if he does not repent, so truly that he can only perish as an apostate and hypocrite; yet may we never draw the conclusion from this that the apostle of Christ presented the death of Jesus as being intended to be beneficial for such a one personally. The very fact that the apostle addresses the entire church as elect proves without a doubt that his epistle is directed to the congregation in its ideal character, that is, the letter is addressed exclusively to all and every one who essentially and as living members belong to the church, without figuring in the least with the counterfeit, false, and unsanctified elements, that adhere to her, wear her uniform, and present themselves as

belonging to her." p. 210, 211.

You see, Dr. Kuypers explains the apparently general expression of II Cor. 5:15: "And He died for all", in the light of the particular expression in chapter I, verse 1.

A clear illustration of the application of this method of interpreting Scripture is also found in p. 214-215 of the same work where Dr. Kuypers explains the text in Romans 5:18: "By the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life," in the light of verse 21: "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord". He writes:

"The most weighty objection against the doctrine of particular grace appears for many to be in what Paul wrote in Romans 5:18. There we read clearly in words that seem to allow only one interpretation: "Therefore as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men unto condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life". And we do not mean to deny the fact that this expression: *upon all men* in this passage of Scripture is sufficiently emphatic and striking, by a superficial reading, to mislead the very best and to confuse even him that is most strongly convinced.

"And yet there can be no doubt if we will but carefully study the context in which this passage of Scripture appears, that this confusion and hesitancy must gradually be replaced by the most positive conviction that sound exegesis does not permit the application of this term to all men that are born.

"To make this clear to our readers we begin by calling their attention to the closing verse of this chapter. For there sin and grace are once more contrasted from the point of view of their fruit, and there it is said of sin that its result is death, and of grace that it is the mother of life. But how is the operation of both there represented? Do we read that sin makes an attempt to bring death and that grace tries to work life?

"Not in the least.

"On the contrary, it is said of sin that it accomplishes its fatal work irresistibly, that nothing can oppose it, that with authority it calls upon death to appear. And to express this emphatically and in all its horror the apostle uses the word *reign*, to be king (*basileuein*).

"Sin therefore is *mistress, ruler, queen*. She has dominion. Her will could not be resisted. Man was subject unto her. She intended to bring death and no one could oppose this intention.

"It was not so, therefore, that she merely *threatened* death and that now, seeing that the operation of man's will interposed, she either succeeded or failed to bring

death. No, she caused death to come with power. She acted as ruler. And no one resisted her will. And it is because of this *that all men died*.

"But after having explained this clearly the apostle continues to declare that it is exactly like this in the case of grace, that grace just as sin has dominion, appears as ruler, and executes her will irresistibly. For thus we read in verse 21: that as sin hath *reigned* unto death even so might grace *reign* unto eternal life.

"Now, this cannot be true if we suppose that grace even as death is extended to all men that are born. For if this were the case we come to the conclusion that sin includes all men and results in the death of all; and that grace also implies all men but in such a way that in reality by no means all, but only a small part of them inherit life. In that case, sin reaches its purpose but grace fails to realize itself. And that means that sin indeed succeeded to *rule*, but that grace failed to reign; yea, rather that grace instead of ruling over man remained dependent upon his will. But this is absurd, for the apostle assures us directly of the very opposite since he writes that grace also REIGNS!"

From this interpretation of verse 21 Dr. Kuypers draws the conclusion that the expression "upon all men" in verse 18 cannot refer to all men that are born.

According to Rev. Zwier this method is rationalistic. But it was always followed by Reformed theologians.

These illustrations could easily be multiplied but I believe that I have abundantly proved that the exegetical method of the Rev. Zwier is not now and never was the method of Reformed people.

Bear with me if I have rather elaborated upon this point. I am convinced that I am here touching upon the very essence of the Rev. Zwier's argument. If only he would follow the method of Scriptural interpretation always applied by Reformed theologians and relinquish his own corrupt method, he would have to acknowledge that his entire argumentation concerning God's general goodness has no basis in Scripture.

Allow me to offer one illustration in proof of this last statement. In a latter connection I hope to examine all the proof-texts adduced by the Rev. Zwier in support of his theory. The interpretation which the Rev. Zwier offers of Psalm 145:9, following blindly the Synod of Kalamazoo, 1924, is: "The Lord is good to *all men*." Now, let us interpret the text in Psalm 145 according to the right method. Then we obtain the following:

1. All Scripture teaches always and everywhere that God hates the reprobate ungodly, that He is angry with them, that His wrath abideth on them, that He causes the things of this present time to work unto their destruction, that he sets them upon slippery places by means of prosperity and peace, and that He

casts them down in eternal desolation. This is the current teaching of Scripture and not merely deduced from a single text. Therefore, Psalm 145:9 cannot teach as soon as we understand it in the light of the whole of Scripture, that God is merciful and good to *all men*.

2. Bearing this current teaching of Scripture in mind, let us turn once more to Psalm 145. We notice at once that the entire Psalm speaks of God's grace, goodness, mercy, longsuffering, and great lovingkindness over His people. Generation upon generation (not, of course, of all men, but of His people) shall praise His works and shall declare his mighty acts. They shall abundantly utter the memory of His great goodness (again, over His people) and shall sing of His righteousness. For the Lord is gracious and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy. Vss. 4-8. The Lord upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up those that be bowed down. He is nigh unto them that call upon Him and will fulfill the desire of them that fear Him; He also will hear their cry and will save them. Vss. 14, 18, 19. And if there might be any doubt that by this grace, lovingkindness, mercy, and longsuffering of God the psalmist refers to God's people only and not to the reprobate ungodly, note then the contrast in verse 20: "The Lord preserveth all them that love Him, *but all the wicked will He destroy.*" I ask in all seriousness: would it not be extremely strange if in the midst of all this praise of God's grace over His people, we would suddenly find the sentence teaching that God is also gracious toward the ungodly, as the Rev. Zwier would have it? The answer of all sound interpretation is: that cannot be the right explanation of verse 9, as soon as it is viewed in the light of the whole of Scripture and in the light of its own context.

3. With all this in mind we turn once more to verse 9. And then we notice at once two things. The first is that we do not read *all men* in the text but merely *all* (The Hebrew simply has: *tobh Jehovah lakkol*). the question, therefore, is to what does the term *all* refer? What is its content? May we as the Rev. Zwier does insert here *individual men*, righteous and ungodly, This would be in conflict: 1. With the whole of Scripture; 2. With the whole of the Psalm; and 3. With the text itself. And in the second place, we note that the second part of this text explains, according to the rule of Hebrew parallelism, the first part. The Lord is good to *all*, and His tender mercies are over *all His works*. We explain therefore: the Lord is good to all His works even as over all His works are His tender mercies. All, therefore, means: all creatures in the organic sense of the word, all the works of God, without having reference to all the individuals of a certain kind of creatures, as, for instance, men. If we inter-

pret the text thus, it is not in conflict with the last part of verse 20; "But all the wicked will He destroy." All kinds of creatures are included in the word *all* of verse 9, but the ungodly are excluded.

In this wise sound exegetical method will interpret the text. And thus only we really do understand the word of God.

Lastly, I want to point out that the exegetical method of the Rev. Zwier, which was always condemned by Reformed theologians of every period, is also dangerous. In the first place, because it means death for all systematic theology. According to the method of Rev. Zwier, who employs several individual texts to support a certain theory, and refuses to explain them in the light of the whole of Scripture, all true dogmatics has simply become impossible. On this standpoint one cannot really speak of a current teaching of Scripture. That "wretched human logic" can never build up a system of truth. We must be satisfied with a concoction prepared by "Biblical theology" that does not care to proceed beyond a literal quotation of Scripture. And that would be the death of our entire Reformed faith and confession. Then there is nothing positive. All unity of view and conception is condemned as rationalistic and we have nothing left but a few separate, and mutually contradictory texts!

The result must be, and to this we call your attention in the second place, that the doctrine of sovereign grace cannot be maintained. It was not without good reason that our Reformed fathers always demanded so emphatically that certain passages of Scripture must be interpreted in the light of the whole of the Bible, and that they did not hesitate to tell the opponents of the doctrine of predestination, that one or more separate texts mean nothing to them. The doctrine of sovereign grace stands or falls with the method you apply in the interpretation of Scripture and if you follow the method recommended by the Rev. Zwier *it certainly must fall*.

Take, in proof of this statement, for example the text from I Timothy 2:4: "God will that all men shall be saved". In interpreting this text just apply the method of the Rev. Zwier. What do you obtain? The following: "The text clearly speaks of *all men*, and with that term you cannot tamper. I know, indeed, that Scripture also teaches that He is merciful unto whom He will be merciful, and that whom He wills He hardens. And also this I wholeheartedly accept. But I also believe just as wholeheartedly the word of Scripture, that God will that all men shall be saved. And all men certainly means everybody. You may not attempt to harmonize these two passages with each other, for this would be rationalism. I admit that these two passages are directly in conflict with each other; and I do not understand how they can be harmonized. But I accept both. God will that only the

elect shall be saved; and he also will that all men shall be saved."

The reader will admit that I am doing the Rev. Zwier no injustice. The above is the pure application of his method of Scriptural interpretation to a certain series of texts.

But the inevitable result of such an interpretation of Scripture will be that the one element of this so-called mystery is being abandoned, and that nothing remains but the doctrine of general grace and general atonement.

And, therefore, I would pray the Rev. Zwier: relinquish this un-Reformed and un-Scriptural method! Confess, for the sake of the seriousness of the truth that you departed from the true way, and that you may not so arbitrarily treat the holy Word of God! The issue at stake is not the question of "Recht-

haberei", nor is it merely a question of maintaining one's church. It is the question of the truth, of the maintenance and development of the *Reformed* truth, of which it certainly cannot be said in our day, and in our country, (and I may add, in your churches, Rev. Zwier, as you and many others well know) that it flourishes. In that truth I am sincerely interested, and earnestly hope and pray that also the Christian Reformed churches in our country, though they cruelly cast us out, may again love and understand and maintain that Reformed truth.

And, therefore, let the Rev. Zwier openly return from his dangerous ways on the which many of his readers will follow him and depart from the truth.

Then there may probably be hope for the maintenance of the Reformed truth in our country.

Question Box

About Becoming "Human" Again

Prof. H. C. Hoeksema

Question

From a reader in the province of Alberta, Canada, I received the following request: "What I really would like to see explained in the Question Box is all about the teaching about becoming 'human' again. This is something we hear about all around us." Since I was somewhat in the dark as to the meaning of this question, I asked for a little more light and for a reference. My questioner then called my attention to the fact that this is discussed in some of the recent catechism books of the Christian Reformed Church, and that it is also talked about in connection with "Evangelism Thrust" (the Christian Reformed version of Key '73). And in connection with the latter, my questioner furnished me with a rather lengthy quotation from *Who In The World*, pp. 31, ff. This quotation furnishes a good example of the kind of thing that is meant by this "becoming human again," and therefore I will pass the quotation along before I answer the question:

One fitting word to characterize the modern world is "fractured." Brokenness is the plague of our time. Things that belong together are separated and cannot get together again. Another, more personally tragic word is "estrangement." People who belong together are separated. One marriage in four ends in estrangement. This is only a symptom of an epidemic

inside of life. Call the disease segregation, and you get the division by races. Call it class war, and you get the clash between economic levels. Call it a generation gap, and you get the estrangement between ages. Call it sin, and you get the estrangement of man from his home with God. Reconciliation means bringing together what has been broken, reuniting what has been divided. The root of estrangement is man's separation from his Creator; the solution is in what God has done for His people; "Formerly you were yourselves estranged from God; you were His enemies in heart and mind, and your deeds were evil. But now by Christ's death . . . God has reconciled you to Himself." Alienated, hostile, at odds, divided, but now reconciled. This is the message the church has been given.

There are many estrangements in life, but the one with the most tragic consequences is to be separated from God.

The answer to it is what God did; and that is the message the church brings; God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. And the word is out; since God has reconciled the world — you — in your hostility and fear, you "be reconciled to God."

But there is another tragic estrangement that destroys happiness in human life: estrangement between people.

Life is meant to be lived together. Human life has to be shared to be human. Humanity really fails to be human as walls of suspicion and hate divide us. None

of us is truly human until those walls are broken down and we meet one another in love. This is what humanity longs for in its better moment. It is what the "youth revolt" and the "sensitivity group" fad are all about: people reaching out, grasping for a bit of humanness in an inhuman world. What better time to bring the message of reconciliation? God's purpose is precisely this: to break down the dividing walls between men, to make the social and racial differences between them irrelevant to their union as men, to make all men one in Christ. This is what Paul is talking about. There is no such thing as Jew and Greek, slave and freeman, male and female, for you are all one person in Christ Jesus.

In Christ we can stop being afraid of each other, stop making a path to success through the ruins of other people's lives, stop dividing the human race up according to color, race, or status. In Christ, nothing matters but that we are free to love and trust each other because we belong to each other. No wonder, then, that Paul says that Christians together form one new body. The good news is that Christ dismantled the wall. Once the wall was down, nobody had a special claim on God, and nobody had a reason to stay apart from anyone else. Now black and white meet on one common single platform, their oneness in Christ. Young and old can work out their age gap within the circle of oneness in Christ. The message is for today: reconciliation to a fractured world. One word of caution is in order. When the church preaches the message of reconciliation, it must also make sure that it is living the reconciled life together. It will be hard for a segregated church to preach the message of the broken down wall, since it has built the wall up again."

Reply

I must confess that I hardly know where to begin with criticizing corrupt nonsense of this kind. It is so completely foreign to my thinking — and not only to mine, but to any Reformed thought — that I stand aghast at the fact that this sort of stuff can come from a church which calls itself "Reformed," and that I am at a loss as to where to begin with criticism. I can very well understand that my questioner, in some related correspondence, wrote me: "People in our church who were members for a long time, members in good standing, are asking themselves: were our parents not Christians, because what we hear now is different?" Personally, I do not hesitate to say — blunt as it may be — that if what is set forth in this quotation is Christianity, then I am not a Christian. The insidious aspect of all this lies in the fact that the name of God and of Christ is used, that some Scriptural terms, such as reconciliation, are used, and that some Scriptural quotations are made, while the whole thought is totally anti-Scriptural and thoroughly humanistic, that is to say, anti-Christian.

Permit me to point out just a few outstanding

faults:

1. The entire notion of "becoming Human again" is sheer nonsense. I am human. I am not an animal. I am not a devil. I am not a stick or a stone. I am human. I was born human; I live the life of a human being; I shall die as a human being. I cannot help being human. This is my very nature. Whether in paradise, or in his fallen state, or in grace, man retains his human nature. It is simply impossible for him to "become human again," the reason being that man never loses his humanity. I realize, of course, that also the writers of *Who In The World* know this, and that by "becoming human again" they mean something different. At least, I think they do. But by talking about becoming human again, and by implying that man who sinned has lost his humanity, they are corrupting the true, Scriptural, Reformed doctrine of sin; and they fail to point out what the real nature of sin is. For this reason, the entire emphasis is upon some *consequences* of sin, rather than upon the horrible nature of sin as transgression of the law of God and upon the total depravity of man's very nature.

2. In connection with this shallow perverted notion of sin, stands a perverted idea of reconciliation. Apart from the fact, now, that the whole idea of reconciliation to God is not really explained at all, the authors of the above quotation should have been warned by the very references to Scripture which they themselves made that their presentation of reconciliation is entirely incorrect. According to those quotations, reconciliation is an accomplished fact. It was accomplished nineteen hundred years ago in the cross. How, then, is it possible to speak of reconciliation in such a way that it must still be accomplished? Yet this is what is done: "What better time to bring the message of reconciliation? God's purpose is precisely this: to break down the dividing walls between men . . ." Still worse, the quotation is guilty of rank universalism of the most blatant kind. It says that God's purpose is "to make all men one in Christ." I can only say in reply to this: poor God! For all men will never be one in Christ, and therefore the purpose of the God of this quotation will never be reached. The God of this quotation is a failure. And this brings to mind another fault: statements like this ignore completely the Scriptural and Reformed truth of election and reprobation, and therefore also, of the antithesis between sin and grace, light and darkness, church and world, believer and unbeliever.

3. Also in connection with the faulty view of sin, as well as the faulty presentation of reconciliation, the above quotation presents a completely foreign idea of conversion. That, after all, is what the quotation is talking about — putting the thing now in familiar doctrinal terms. Conversion! A life of sanctification! These terms, of course, do not even occur here. But the Scriptural and Reformed idea of conversion does

not occur either. Just compare once all of this nonsense about becoming human again and all of this emphasis on breaking down the dividing walls of social and racial differences, etc., with the way in which our Heidelberg Catechism describes conversion, or the way in which our Belgic Confession describes sanctification, or the way in which the Canons of Dordt talk about conversion. Again, I can well understand that people ask themselves: "Were our parents not Christians, because what we hear now is different?"

4. The entire emphasis in the teaching of the above quotation is upon the social gospel and upon horizontalism. Erasing social differences, breaking down racial differences, eliminating the generation gap, warning against segregation — this is the emphasis in the quotation furnished above. Obviously the whole

purpose of these social gospelers is to heal a fractured world. This is the same kind of horizontalism which the social gospelers began to proclaim already at the turn of the century. It is the same horizontalism that has afflicted the *Gereformeerde Kerken* in the Netherlands. It is a denial of the gospel of sovereign grace for elect, but in themselves lost, sinners.

Would that Reformed people everywhere would think for themselves, and do so in the light of Scripture and our confessions! Then they would never be deceived by such religious trash as that of *Who In The World*.

Well, these are a few critical thoughts about the matter of "becoming human again." My questioner may write again if I have not made myself clear.

All Around Us

Christian Witnessing (2)

Prof. H. Hanko

The Calling

This brings us specifically to the question of the calling to witness.

We must reject out of hand all so-called "confrontation witness." Any kind of witness which "confronts man with the claim of Christ," no matter what specific form it may take, has no place in the life of the Church or in the calling of believers. It is man-centered in its entire approach. It is Arminian in its character with its emphasis on "accepting Christ," "soul winning," "decisions," etc. Indeed, there is an inescapable element of pride in it all because the emphasis always falls upon "what we shall do for God." There is an arrogance and a presumption in this which ought to be anathema in the life of the Christian.

If we turn to the positive calling, there are several points which we ought to make. In the first place, because the preaching of the gospel and Christian witnessing are so closely connected, we may expect that there will be an analogy between the two in certain important respects. I refer specifically to the fact that the book of *Acts* makes it very clear that God always directed the course of the gospel in the labors of the apostles. God sent Peter to Cornelius and Philip to the Ethiopian Eunuch. God directed the church at Antioch to choose Paul and Barnabas and send them out to preach the gospel. And, in fact, so closely did God direct the course of the labors of the apostle that

they "were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, (and) after they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit suffered them not." Acts 16:6, 7. It is this same truth which the Canons of Dordt emphasize when they speak of the fact that we must preach to all those "to whom God out of his good pleasure sends the gospel." (Canons II, 5.)

The principle holds true also for witnessing. It is a safe principle to follow, for in following it we follow the direction of God. The question is, of course, how do we know where God is directing us to perform the work of witnessing? The answer to this is, (and it is this idea which I have attempted to incorporate into the definition which I offered above), that we must witness to all those whom God places upon our path. The Scriptures also very strongly suggest this. I have reference, e.g., to such a passage as I Peter 3:15: "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." While witnessing is not specifically mentioned here, we may assume that this "answer we must give of our hope" is precisely the genuine character of all witnessing. But, so Peter teaches us, we must give such an answer to those who ask us. This certainly implies that our witness must be directed to those whom God places, in His providence, in one form or another, upon our path. God puts such people upon our path. God

brings us into contact with them. And then we can be sure that God wants them to hear the witness to the truth. And God will do the work He intends to be done. We must remember that witnessing is God's work. We must not try to take matters into our own hands and be wiser than God. We must expect Him to do His work even when He is pleased to use us.

The question necessarily arises in this connection whether so-called door-to-door evangelism is the proper calling of the Church. While, I am not prepared to condemn such door-to-door witnessing, there are several points which are worth making. 1) It is almost always fruitless. And this is to be expected, if what I have said above is true. 2) If such type of witnessing does meet with success, it is often at the cost of sacrificing the truth at worst, or, at best, of bringing into the church those who are not properly instructed in the truth of God — with the result that the church increases her problems with unfaithful members. 3) I have absolutely no use for making Sunday School an arm of witnessing or an aspect of evangelism. The idea seems to be that, through the Sunday School, children are brought into the Church even if not the parents. And some even suggest that one can perhaps get at the parents through the children. This is, it seems to me wholly at odds with the Reformed truth of the covenant — that God saves His people in the line of generations. I.e., that God saves *believers* and their children. And this is also the emphasis in the book of Acts throughout.

The whole question arises as to what form our witnessing must take. And there is one point here that needs the strongest possible emphasis. The Scriptures certainly point us to the fact that the strongest witness we make is the witness of our life. This sort of thing is often disparaged and even mocked in our sophisticated day. It is mocked as being a dodging of our calling. It is disparaged as being ineffective. But the Scriptures point us to this nonetheless.

We earlier quoted the passage in I Peter 3:15. In this passage the apostle points us to our calling of being ready to give an answer to those who ask of us a reason for the hope which lies within us. While surely the emphasis of this passage falls upon our readiness to give an answer, it is equally obvious that this answer presupposes a question. And that question is concerning the reason for our hope. Now it is clear that, if wicked men ask a reason for our hope, they are prompted to ask such a question because they observe the evidences of our hope in our lives. And the whole thrust of Peter's remarks here centers in the fact that we live lives which are constant expressions of our hope. That is, we live as pilgrims and strangers in all our conversation. This life will be the life of the antithesis, and this will raise, in the minds of unbelievers, startling questions concerning that hope to which we must be prepared to give answer.

The same truth is taught very clearly by Jesus Himself in Matthew 7:21-23: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name: and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

This is not to say, of course, that our witnessing must not also include *speaking* the truth. Paul writes of confessing with the mouth as well as believing with the heart. But the fact of the matter is that any verbal testifying of the truth which is not the fruit of a life of the antithesis and of a godly walk according to all the precepts of Scripture, is a sham and a hypocrisy.

In an interesting book by Michael Green entitled "*Evangelism in the Early Church*," the question is discussed concerning the personal witnessing of the saints by means of which the Church was spread to every nook and cranny of the empire of Rome. He quotes from ancient church fathers and comments himself upon the fact that the main witness of the saints was the witness of a changed life, changed by the power of grace. He sums it all up when he says: "Unless there is a transformation of contemporary church life so that once again the task of evangelism is something which is seen as incumbent on every Christian, and is backed up by a quality of living which outshines the best that unbelief can muster, we are unlikely to make much headway through techniques of evangelism."

Thus, by means of a godly life the power of grace is manifested in us; the attention of unbelievers is attracted and aroused; the opportunity for witnessing is given; and the truth of that which we believe is substantiated.

The Importance Of Witnessing

It is at this point that we must bend every effort to look at things in their proper light. We often tend to glorify door-to-door witnessing and some kind of personal confrontation. There is a certain glamor about it that appeals to us. There is a certain zip to it that makes it sound proper and exciting. I fear, however, that there is also an element of pride and self-glory in this sort of thing.

We must remember, after all, that this is not the difficult way to witness. It is the relatively easy way. The difficult way is the way of faithfulness to our covenant God in our own station and calling in life. The difficult way is the way of a faithful covenant mother in her home who goes about her daily tasks as a virtuous woman cheerfully filling her God-given assignments in the quiet fear of the Lord. The difficult way is for a husband and bread-winner to occupy his

place at the drill press in the factory or behind a desk or in a garage and to be a constant testimony of the grace of God in his day-to-day labor and in all his actions and speech. The difficult way is the way of the antithesis in a world of darkness and sin, the way of being pilgrims and strangers in the earth. And this is the God-glorifying way.

We must never weigh the importance of this in human terms. The important thing is not winning souls for Christ, extolling ourselves because of evangelical prowess, or boasting of numbers of converts and weighing success in terms of decisions. God always witnesses; also through us. And He uses that witness as He sees fit.

You see, the point is that God alone must be glorified. He must be glorified in his manifestation of His work of grace in the salvation of His Church according to His decree of election. It is a terrible thing when this does not happen. When David confessed his sins of adultery and murder to Nathan the prophet,

Nathan assured him that his sins were also forgiven. But at the same time, Nathan told David that the sword would never depart from his house because he had given occasion for the enemies of God to blaspheme. This happens sometimes in our lives. Our lives are occasions for the enemies to reproach the cause of God. That is the opposite of witnessing. That is horrible beyond description.

Always our witness must be of such a kind that it points away from ourselves to God. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Mt. 5:16.

Then the glory is God's alone. And that is all that counts.

Let us, if we would be faithful witnesses, examine our own lives in all respects; then, conforming our lives to God and His Word, we will have opportunity to be and will become faithful witnesses to God in this present world.

In His Fear

Television—A Homogenizing Influence

Rev. D. H. Kuiper

Periodic perusal of a little magazine called *T.V. Guide* provides one an acquaintance with programming in this medium, as well as with the trends that this programming is taking. It also allows the pastor to ask knowledgeable, even pointed, questions on family visitation. Most importantly, this pastor is constantly convinced that television viewing has no place in the life of the Christian individual and family. Recently we have read in our literature that a Protestant Reformed garage sale of used television sets is not the answer to the problem, but that sanctified control be exercised over this machine (*Beacon Lights*, Aug. — Sept., 1972, p. 3), and that removal of these sets need not be advocated, indeed would be virtually impossible (*Standard Bearer*, vol. 49, p. 94). Although for the rest these articles were excellent, I find this criticism too gentle and these solutions unacceptable.

In a recent *T.V. Guide* the editors were bemoaning the fact that "soft Southern accents, harsh Midwestern twangs, slow Western drawls are all vanishing, being replaced by the flat speech of network newscasters." That these unique, sectional differences are coming to an end is, of course, of little import. What strikes us as important is the fact that television can accomplish a change of this kind so unobtrusively. The editorial continues, "Leo Rosten said in these pages some years

ago that television was standardizing Americans — standardizing our speech, our dress, our attitudes, our entertainment standards. It has gone beyond mere standardization — we're becoming homogenized." I fear Rosten is right. And, therefore, I fear television viewing, with the exception of newscasts, for which no one really buys a television set anyway.

There can be no quarrel with the fact that a television receiver is an amazing invention, a miracle of wiring. If memory serves correctly, an electron gun at the rear of the picture tube peppers the inside of the screen with electrons, following 511 horizontal scanning lines, making a picture ten times each second. What a thing, to be able to see things as they happen anywhere in the world, or even in space! The problem is that this invention is in the hands of the wicked world at its worst. Corrupt unbelief so controls the industry that programming today can generally be broken down as follows:

- 1.) Mornings, Mon. through Fri. — game shows; inane contests in which avarice abounds.
- 2.) Afternoons, Mon. through Fri. — "Soap operas"; a steady diet of marital problems: infidelity, divorce, abortion, adultery.
- 3.) Evenings, Sun. through Sat. — Situation comedies, mysteries, westerns, and movies in which every

- commandment is explicitly and brazenly broken.
- 4.) Saturday mornings — one cartoon after another, which even the world calls “witless, heartless, charmless, tasteless and artless.”
 - 5.) Sat. and Sun. afternoons — sports, sports, sports. A person can, and millions do, sit for five hours in a stretch and watch their heroes (?) perform.
 - 6.) Newscasts and special news events — there is no denying that this is something T.V. can do well.
 - 7.) Late night, every night — movies until the wee hours.

There is no way in which we can discuss television viewing apart from programming. Let no one say, it's a good invention and can be used aright; it's an indifferent matter. Our subject must be considered within the framework of program contents. We are concerned with television when the switch is on.

Let us get back to Rosten's idea that through the influence of T.V. the people of this country are becoming homogenized. When something is homogenized it is of the same or uniform composition, quality, or characteristics throughout. Apply this to a large constituency of people, and the idea becomes that millions of people, throughout the land, demonstrate a sameness, a uniformity as far as their characteristics and attitudes are concerned. Homogeneity in such things as milk and peanut butter is fine. When it is applied to people, people in the midst of which are found *God's people*, it is pernicious, it is frightening, it is a great evil under the sun.

That it is so frightening lies in the fact that the Devil, through television programming, is able to work almost imperceptibly and unnoticed. He can accomplish the homogenizing of peoples who are radically and basically different, in a wide range of areas, almost without their noticing of it. That's why many who read these lines will disagree, will defend themselves in this practice. They are not even aware of what is happening to them!

That his homogenizing effect is so pernicious is found in the fact that viewers are influenced in all their attitude and outlook; there is no area of life that is not dramatized, commented upon, or in which instruction is not given. God's institution of marriage is mocked (last week a movie was shown nationally entitled “How to Save a Marriage — And Ruin Your Life” . . . a farce about marital infidelity and divorce in suburbia). Attitudes concerning authority and submission are treated in such a way that rebellion is encouraged. The language that is used in almost every program ought to vex the soul of every child of God. It is blasphemous and profane, it is filthy, it is foolish and inconvenient. When such language is used in our presence, the Bible teaches us to rebuke the person. What happens when a movie star, a comedian, a talk-show host, does so? At first we maybe flinch a little; then we get used to it,

and it doesn't bother so much; then we pretend we don't hear it. That's precisely how we get homogenized! If we hear such language and do not jump out of our easy chair and snap the program off, *we sin!* The whole matter of dress is influenced by what film performers wear; how else do you account for the fact that our young people run around like bare-footed waifs, dressed in outlandish denim costumes, and even immodest bikini bathing suits? By now we are into the second generation of this, so that parents run around this way! Entertainment and sports are forced upon us in such a way (it really doesn't take much force, does it?) that we begin to think that the fortunes of the Tigers, the White Sox, the Twins, and the Dodgers belong to our heritage. And we are told blatantly not to be content with such things that we have, but that we must have this appliance, this new auto, this tool, and this convenience! In fact the whole medium is based upon the ability of advertising to *sell*. And we buy. It isn't long and we are dissatisfied with what we have, and begin to think of reasons why we must get a new car or a camper or a new suit. And then there are the “educational” programs that will teach all the children of the nation the same things in the same way. I would be ashamed before God if my children were taught to count and to say the ABC's by the immoral performers of Sesame Street and The Electric Company. But they have their effect. Witness the fact that even in Christian schools there must be all kinds of cartoons and puppet shows, and witness the fact that certain Sunday School papers teach the Word of God through the mouth of a dog!

Every sin in the world cannot be laid at the door of television. The newspapers, books, and magazines also have this same far-reaching effect. But they do not begin to compare as a homogenizing influence simply because, on the whole, people don't read that much anymore. T.V. has won the attention of the masses. It makes a multi-sensual appeal to the mind. It's almost as if the Apostle Paul had an inkling what the church would be faced with when he wrote what is found in Romans 12:2, “And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.” It is our calling to fight this homogenation, this conforming process. God has called us out of the world of darkness into His marvelous light; and we may not be conformed to, or be entangled with, former things. How is the church the light of the world, when she looks and speaks and acts like the world? How can she show forth the glory of her covenant God when she busies herself with those things which He abhors and which He curses everyday? Our reasonable service is to present our bodies (all the life that we live in and through the body) living sacrifices, holy, acceptable unto God. When a person watches present television

programming, and when he allows his children to do so, there can only be one conclusion: he does not take the matter of sanctification of life seriously, nor does he do well for his children. These things are not said vindictively, nor are they said from some lofty perch. They are said out of a loving concern for the spiritual well-being of God's people, for the welfare of our precious little children, and in the prayer that God's glory may not be dimmed nor denied in our lives.

It is not impossible to live without television; many do. It is not unfair to your children if they do not have it; it is an advantage to family life. If a television-addicted home be purged of this terrible disease, the members of that family are going to re-discover the deep joys of family relationships, the value of reading and discussion, and that on the way of faithfulness, God commands His blessings.

From Holy Writ

Exposition of the Book of Hebrews (11: 24-26)

Rev. G. Lubbers

The writer to the Hebrews here lets a second instance of challenging and conquering faith pass in review. In the former verse we noticed the faith of Moses' parents in hiding him for three months when he was born because they saw that he was a goodly child; he was beautiful before God. This they saw and apprehended in faith, as the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Now the writer turns to the faith of Moses himself. Three things are stated of the faith of Moses. In our present passage mention is made of the faith of Moses and his resolute purpose not longer to be affiliated with the house of Pharaoh. That required faith. Next the writer will speak of the fearlessness of Moses in executing the judgments of God over the mighty Egyptian king. That, too, was faith in God, faith in the *unseen* God. And, thirdly, Moses' faith reached across the ages when he instituted the passover and the shedding of blood. He looked in faith to the Cross on Calvary, the greater Passover to be slain.

We have so much need of studying these instances of faith, lest we become weary and do not run the race with patience, a race which is often long, arduous, and full of disappointments.

A TIME FOR DECISION IN MOSES' LIFE (Hebrews 11:24)

When Moses was a little lad, he had been brought to live in the house of Pharaoh and had been adopted as a legal son, with all the Egyptian rights and privileges. However, when he was hid in his parents' house, he must have received the rite of circumcision. He was ingrafted into the commonwealth of Israel. He was not a stranger to the commonwealth of Israel, nor was he without hope and without God in the world. He had been first under the sign of the covenant and the

teaching of the Word of the promise. Later, in Pharaoh's court he was taught in all the learning of the Egyptians. Moses is a good and convincing example of the proverb, "Train up (catechise) a child in the way he shall go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6)

Now the writer to the Hebrews shows that Moses did not make this resolve to leave the rights and privileges connected with being a son of Pharaoh's daughter behind till after he had reached a ripe and matured state of mind. (Calvin) It was not a decision of adolescent and fickle youth, but he had reached maturity. He had been schooled in all the teachings of the Egyptians. He had absorbed as a great student, brilliant and precocious, all that the Egyptians' schools and teachers offered. He had studied languages, literature, history, philosophy and the religions of the nations. He knew that Jehovah-God was not in all their thoughts. And he felt that he was a stranger in a strange, kingly palace; it must have been a matter of much thought. Did he not come to the conclusion that "God was going to deliver Israel," His people, through the instrumentality of Moses. Was he not that "goodly child" which had been taken from the waters for a special divine intent? After much prayer he had resolved in humble faith and trust that there was only one course open to him.

The time has come for him to leave Egypt, leave it behind once-and-for-all! He cannot be a son of Pharaoh's daughter any longer. He has faith as the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

MOSES CROSSES HIS "RUBICON"

Irrevocably Moses decides to leave the house of Pharaoh's daughter; when Moses goes to see his brethren it is not to pay them a casual visit, an

inspection-tour to ascertain their condition. He knew all about their condition; he had seen it from the perspective of an Egyptian prince for well-nigh forty years. This time it will be a different visit.

Just how it would all turn out Moses did not know. He walked in faith, did he not? He would join them as the Lord's deliverer, he resolved. In this he was correct, although the manner and time of this deliverance was not made known to Moses. But one thing was sure: return to Egypt he would never. He *refuses* to be called a son of Pharaoh's daughter. He disdained and disowned the very thought. Forty years in Egypt had not made him an Egyptian. All the learning of the Egyptians could not alter the teaching of Jochebed, his Israelitish mother. In the house of Amram and Jochebed the seed of the Word had been sown by the Lord in his heart, and it was coming to fruition in Moses' life. The very thought of being such a son must perish.

It is time for action! He will say farewell to the Egyptian court. It meant: never to return. Just how this would work out Moses does not know. He sees an Egyptian smiting a brother of his, an Israelite. Is he not the deliverer chosen by God to deliver Israel? Well, then let the act be the expression of his sincere resolution: he kills the Egyptian. It raises his hand against the throne of Egypt. It is insurrection, to be sure, but is there not a cause? This seals Moses' determination to depart from Egypt, to be called legally a son of Pharaoh's daughter no more.

Moses has crossed the Rubicon.

Never shall he return to the former status of life. Better an outlawed son of Pharaoh than to be guilty of the blood of the people of God.

MOSES' EITHER-OR CHOICE (Hebrews 11:25)

Did not the Lord Jesus say, "He that is not against us is for us?" (Luke 9:50.) And, again, did not the Savior say "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad?" (Matt. 12:30) Moses, too, was before this either-or situation. It was either the pleasures of Egypt for a season, or choose to be afflicted with the people of God, to suffer the reproach of Christ. That was exactly the position of the Hebrew Christians in their day, even as it is thus for us in our day. We are to take up Christ's cross and follow Him. For a servant is not greater than his master. In the world we shall have tribulation, the tribulation of Christ. But we can be of good cheer. Christ has overcome the world, also the world of Sodom and Egypt!

Moses understands that his choice has far-reaching implication. He had, on the one hand, the pleasures of sin. This may mean sinful pleasure in general. It possibly refers to the sinful life of the Egyptian court, with its women, music, and wine; it debaucheries and loose living, a life of sinful and easy refinement. All

that Egypt could offer was sinful pleasures. Is Egypt not the house, too, of spiritual bondage? If Moses left Egypt, renounced his status as a son of Pharaoh's daughter, that life, too, was behind. What would await him if he joined Israel, his captive and ill-treated people? He would cast his lot with them and be ill-treated with them. That full implication of sharing the lot with Israel Moses faced in faith, and he chose it. The verb in the Greek emphasizes that he chose this *for himself*. He was not making a choice for others; he knowingly made this choice in relationship to himself.

He took up the cross of suffering evil with the people of God. He said, "Thy God is my God." He returned to his people, to the people of God for whom there remaineth a Sabbath-rest. This people is *the* people of God's choosing, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, called out of darkness into God's marvelous light. They are the people of the promise. Princes and princesses of God are they, the sons and daughters of Abraham and Sarah unto whom is the promise to go forth from Egypt with great substance, spoiling the Egyptians! (Gen. 15:13-15) What glorious faith of self-denial, leaving all in Egypt, knowing that he had a better and an enduring substance.

FAITH'S ACCOUNTING IN MOSES' DECISION (Hebrews 11:26)

Faith does a bit of accounting. It compares values. Does not the Lord Jesus say, "Seek the things above where Christ is?" And are we not often told not to have any "cares" about what we shall eat, or what we shall drink? Does not the Lord Jesus say: where your treasure is, there shall your heart be? (Matthew 6:21 f.f.) We must not seek treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust corrupt and where thieves break through and steal. One cannot serve God and Mammon, for one will either hate the one or love the other. It is an either-or situation. But here faith has its own ratiocination; it chooses unerringly. It always seeks out God, does it not?

So it was in the case of Moses. Faith was such that it made a proper evaluation concerning what constituted true riches. The affliction of Christ was the true riches for Moses' faith. This affliction is perhaps the affliction which Christ also endured. The question may be asked: how could Moses endure the sufferings of Christ when He was not yet come? Well, dear reader, Christ says to the unbelieving Jews of His day, "Before Abraham was, I am." (John 8:58) And if Christ was before Abraham, He was also before the days of Israel in Egypt's bondage. He was there with them as the "Seed" of Abraham. Because of Him, the head, Israel is called "my first-born." Does not Hosea say, "Out of Egypt have I called my son?" (Hosea 11:1; Matt. 2:15) This son was Christ, the head of His people. And for the sake of Christ Israel suffered. The same

persecution, and for the same reason, came upon Christ and upon Israel of old. And this Moses saw. He deliberately chose the affliction of Christ.

He chose it as *riches*. He chose it as being greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt. All that the world can offer, the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, Moses rejects. Thus he sallies forth in faith. He leaves Egypt; he refuses to be called a son of Pharaoh's daughter any more.

He is a son of Jochebed and Amram. Aaron is his brother, and Miriam his sister, and he is an Israelite true.

Yes, he killed an Egyptian. He pays the price and

must flee and live for forty years in Midian. And it will be a life of loneliness. But this loneliness, too, is affliction of Christ in a very acute form. He will name his son Gershom. He was a stranger in Midian, little understood by his wife, as to the basic rudiments of serving the Lord. However, he has another son whom he calls in faith Eliezer, God is my help! Such was faith in Moses as it conquered the world.

Well may the Hebrew Christians and we take notice of this Moses, the man of God. He will pray: "And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish thou the work of my hands, yea, establish thou it."

Signs of the Times

This Is 'Reformed' Evangelism?

Rev. G. Van Baren

One of the signs of the last days is the apostasy within the churches. I have reminded you of this in past articles. To my mind, this remains one of the clearest signs that the return of our Lord is at hand.

In this connection, I would call your attention once more to "Key 73" and its progress in our city of Grand Rapids. I fear the danger of overdoing opposition to a certain project as this — yet so much of what I see is so disturbing that I believe it necessary to point it out and warn against walking in this road to apostasy.

Key 73 meets the people of the neighborhood

Part of the plan of "Key 73" is to go out, two by two, to visit the homes of the neighborhood. In some cases, the "two" represent individuals from different denominations who approach a home together (practical ecumenism, I suppose this would be called). The Northeast Area of Grand Rapids was canvassed last March 11. Two pieces of literature were given out: a letter and brief pamphlet. The letter reads as follows:

Hello.

We are your neighbors.

We are glad that we can share this story of God's Love with you. This Love has meant so much to us, that we want to share it with others.

Will you please take time to read about it? We hope you will do it today.

Hundreds of Christians in the Northeast Area of Grand Rapids have promised together to share the story of God's Love. And this is the way we have chosen to do it.

Would you like to learn more about this Love?

If you do, check the list of participating groups of Christians on the opposite side of this sheet. Tele-

phone any of these groups and find out how you can join in a Bible Study group.

Then you can meet with people just like you, in a smaller home group, or in a Church or even by yourself through a free Bible Correspondence Course,

to learn more of Jesus Christ . . .

and His Salvation . . .

and His Love . . .

Just for you!

Your neighbor, through God's Love

The reverse side of the letter lists the participating churches, including Lutheran, United Methodist, Reformed, Roman Catholic, Christian Reformed, Wesleyan, Assembly of God, Free Methodist, Church of Christ, Mennonite, Episcopal, Congregational, and Salvation Army.

It's shocking! Imagine that I, Protestant Reformed, would come to a home with such a letter and invite the occupant to "telephone any of these groups and find out how (to) join in a Bible Study Group." Could I suggest that my only interest is that they go to some study group, even Roman Catholic or United Methodist, and there to learn about Christ? And not only I, as Protestant Reformed, would be unable to do this conscientiously before God, but I dare to say that no sincere Reformed man could.

Besides, the letter is openly Arminian suggesting that the salvation and love of Jesus is "just for you," that is, every neighbor to whom this letter is sent. Now I can conceive of a Methodist or Lutheran and similar churches saying this. But can any Reformed group say

that in light of the Canons of Dort to which these all subscribe?

World Home Bible League materials

The little pamphlet submitted with the letter was produced by the World Home Bible League (Box 11, South Holland, Ill. 60473). As I understand it, this League is an independent organization composed largely of Reformed and Christian Reformed men whose avowed task is to produce cheaply and in many languages Bibles for distribution throughout the world. I think such was and is a commendable effort. However, this League has expanded its "ministry" in producing "Bible Correspondence Courses" as well as publishing pamphlets and the "Living Bible" under their own title, "The Greatest is Love." (A review of this paraphrase of the Bible was given in the *Standard Bearer*, Vol. 48, pages 81 and 111.)

Now one might be inclined to rejoice that a hodge-podge of churches as represented in N.E. Grand Rapids Key 73 movement is willing to use literature produced under the auspices of an organization of men of Reformed persuasions. One would expect that the literature produced by such a group would be soundly Reformed, or at the least (if such is possible), not opposed to Reformed faith. But what a disappointment! One reads the little pamphlet, entitled: "Love," with shock and disbelief. This is the sort of thing produced by "Reformed" men, in an organization controlled by "Reformed" men, to be distributed by "Reformed" (and other) churches???

First, the pamphlet quotes from the "Living New Testament." This is not a translation of the Bible, but a paraphrasing of it. Why is this done? Don't they want the Bible? So very obvious it is that the reason for this is to introduce Arminianism as though it were Scripture! In several instances this is clearly seen. Some of the following texts are quoted (underscoring added):

Romans 3:22, "God says He will accept us and acquit us — declare us not guilty — if we trust Jesus to take away our sins. And we all can be saved in this same way, no matter who we are or what we have been like" (Cf. K.J.V.: "Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference.")

John 11:25-26, "Jesus told her, I am the One who raises the dead and gives them life again. Anyone who believes in me, even though he dies like anyone else, shall live again. *He is given eternal life for believing in Me* and shall never perish. Do you believe this?" (Cf. K.J.V.: "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?")

This same Arminianism sticks out like a sore thumb throughout the entire brief pamphlet. It's so obvious, that even a child (with any sort of Reformed training)

can see it. It's that sort of Arminianism for which the Synod of Dort met in 1618-19 in the Netherlands and which cast out from the church those who refused to renounce that vicious error. Here are a few of the things written:

God's love in Jesus Christ is so strong that if we accept it and return our love to Him, we will live forever . . .

God is offering you His transforming love right now. The most tragic thing you could do is to refuse it and not return love to Him. Accept His transforming love!

Pray this prayer: Jesus, I have sinned. I ask you to forgive me. I accept your love for me, and I believe that you will love me forever. Send your Holy Spirit into my life to make me love you. For your sake, Amen.

But what do our Reformed creeds declare? I point to but two articles of the Canons of Dort, the Third and Fourth Heads of Doctrine (articles 12 and 14):

And this is the regeneration so highly celebrated in Scriptures, and denominated a new creation: a resurrection from the dead, a making alive, which God works in us without our aid. But this is in no wise effected merely by the external preaching of the gospel, by moral suasion, or such a mode of operation, that after God has performed his part, it still remains in the power of man to be regenerated or not, to be converted, or to continue unconverted; but it is evidently a supernatural work, most powerful, and at the same time most delightful, astonishing, mysterious, and ineffable; not inferior in efficacy to creation, or the resurrection from the dead, as the Scripture inspired by the author of this work declares; so that all in whose heart God works in this marvelous manner, are certainly, infallibly, and effectually regenerated, and do actually believe. —Whereupon the will thus renewed, is not only actuated and influenced by God, but in consequence of this influence, becomes itself active. Wherefore also, man is himself rightly said to believe and repent, by virtue of that grace received.

Faith is therefore to be considered as the gift of God, not on account of its being offered by God to man, to be accepted or rejected at his pleasure; but because it is in reality conferred, breathed, and infused into him; or even because God bestows the power or ability to believe, and then expects that man should by the exercise of his own free will, consent to the terms of salvation, and actually believe in Christ; but because he who works in man both to will and to do, and indeed all things in all, produces both the will to believe, and the act of believing also.

There was a time, years ago, that ministers and leaders in the church would be suspended and deposed if they repented not of their error of Arminianism. But today this is being produced by men of "Reformed" persuasion, approved by synods of Reformed churches, and distributed ecumenically by all sorts of denominations. None (or at best: very few) object. The

difference is no longer discerned. Many seek to “serve Christ” by spreading such spiritual poison throughout the land.

Shame on those yet known as Reformed!

That this sort of thing finds such wide-spread approval in Reformed circles can only indicate how very far the churches of Reformed persuasion have departed from their confessions. Is there no more opposition to this sort of “evangelism” within the Reformed circles anymore? Has ecumenism so taken over that churches no longer recognize what is their proper calling in the light of Scripture? Has

Arminianism so pervaded Reformed churches that Jesus can be openly “hawked” in this way? Is there no more a Reformed sensitivity? How are the mighty fallen and the strong ones turned from the proper field of battle!

I can only encourage our own people: Protestant Reformed people, hold fast by grace to your Reformed moorings — even though before long you stand alone as those who still love the truths of Scripture as maintained by John Calvin and taught in the Reformed confessions!

With all the evidence of rapid apostasy, how very clear it is that “the Lord is at hand” (Phil. 4:5).

The Day of Shadows

Righteous In This Generation

Rev. John A. Heys

The Hebrew has a short verb, no longer than our verb “go,” that can be translated either as come or go. In fact in Genesis 7:1 it is translated as come, for there we read, “And the Lord said unto Noah, *Come* thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.” Then in verse 7 it is translated as go, for we read, “And Noah *went* in, and his sons, and his wife, and his son’s wives with him into the ark, because of the waters of the flood.”

There is, however, quite a different point of view from the “go” expressed in the “come.” To come always suggests motion toward an individual or object. “Go” makes one think of departure from a person or object. And we ought to appreciate the translator’s choice here in Genesis 7:1. God calls Noah to *come* into the ark, and He does not order him to *go* into the ark. God calls Noah to approach Himself, for He has first come into that ark, sanctified it, and established it as the place where for one year and ten days He would dwell with Noah and his family, and as the place from whence He would dispense His mercy and grace. In that sense the ark served in the same capacity that the tabernacle and temple served in later years. This ark was also God’s house, a forerunner of the tabernacle and temple, a picture of things to come. Thus the words, “Come thou . . . into the ark” are prophetic of the words of Jesus in Matthew 25:21, “. . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

The phrase, “Come thou,” then, is not merely a command, an order given to Noah (and God’s commands to His people are never mere commands, but directives of love) but it is also a testimony to

Noah that he has been given the right to enter into that sacred court where God has chosen to reveal Himself as our covenant God. Noah had no such right. The fact that he built the ark did not give him such a right. The Roman soldiers nailed Jesus to the cross on which He blotted out the sin of the world, but this did not give them the right to that pardon. And even though Noah built that ark in humble submission to God and by faith, that still did not give him the right to come into the place of God’s blessing. Noah did not enter either, until, in the words of Genesis 7:1, God, in effect, said, “Noah, you may now come into MY ark.” After all is said and done, it is God’s ark, not Noah’s.

Thus it always is, for salvation also includes the *right* to be saved. We need to be saved from our lack of right to be saved. This is the first prerequisite — and then one which only God can and does fulfill — of our salvation. Never must we forget that before man lost all the joy and glory and bliss of paradise, he lost his right to remain there. And did God not drive him away and place angels with a flaming sword to testify in no uncertain terms that man had no right anymore to come and live where God communes in love with man? And does not Revelation 22:14 exactly teach that we must receive the right again, when John writes, “Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city?” The right must be given us. We do not have it. We cannot buy it, and have not even the right to buy it, if it were for sale.

What folly, really, to tell every man you meet that God loves him, and that he may be saved. How

contrary to the word of God from Genesis 3 onward to preach to all who hear as though they have a right to have salvation "offered" to them, and as though one may extend an "invitation" to come and be saved to all the descendants of Adam. According to Romans 5:12-19 all men have, by the offense of one, namely, Adam, come under condemnation. By one man's disobedience many, in fact all men, were made sinners. By one man sin entered the world, and death by sin. And to say that all men have the right to be given a "chance to be saved" is to deny that condemnation, to deny that death came upon all men, and then spiritual death as well as physical. It is to deny that all men have become sinners. For sinners have only one right: to go to hell! Sinners have the right only to death and have forfeited every right to life and salvation. The condemned criminal may receive a pardon from the governor, but he has actually no right to ask for it. He who killed has no right to ask that his own life be spared. Much less with God does the rebel have a right to be given a "chance" to escape the wages of sin.

Notice, then, that God calls Noah to come into His ark and into His covenant fellowship, because He has seen Noah to be righteous before Himself in this generation. The righteous God will not give the right to enter His house and kingdom to an unrighteous person. The narrow way and the strait gate into the kingdom is righteousness.

Let it also be noted that Moses speaks here of Noah being righteous before God. That a man appears righteous before other men means little. We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, not of men. And though all men judge us to be righteous and God judges us to be unrighteous, we still go to hell; and instead of hearing God say "Come dwell with Me in heavenly glory," we will hear Him say, "Go away from Me into everlasting perdition." Men may laud us and our works to the sky as "civic righteousness." We may be praised of men and still be damned of God. The all-important question here is not what men say and think of us. Instead it is whether God calls our works righteousness. And that means not simply that they conform outwardly to the law, nor simply that men are benefited either materially or even spiritually by these deeds, but whether they were performed by a love toward God that wants His name to be glorified.

That God saw to be in Noah's deeds. And this God saw to be in Noah because He put it there Himself. God never finds anything out. That would mean that for a time He did not know it. It would also mean that there is from time to time an increase in the knowledge of God. It would mean that for a moment at least He was ignorant, lacked certain knowledge. And the man that talks that way is himself ignorant of God's unchangeable, infinite glory. No, God saw in the works of Noah the righteousness which He gave Noah to exercise, and which eternally He decreed to manifest

through Noah's deeds. Do we not read in Ephesians 2:10 we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus UNTO good works, which God hath before ordained (prepared, or made ready is a better translation) that we should walk in them?

Noah was a sinner. Noah had no right to be changed into a saint. He, too, became a sinner in Adam. On him also condemnation fell. Death passed also upon him, so that as a spiritually dead man he could not do anything that God would call righteous. But the righteousness of Christ was imputed to him because he was chosen in Christ. And because he was created in Christ Jesus as God's workmanship — not his own — unto good works, the life of Christ was given him to enable him to do the works of righteousness. For Christ's sake Noah had been given the right to become righteous, and being born again as the fruit of that right, he did walk in righteousness. Redemption by the cross and regeneration by the Spirit explain that Noah was righteous in this generation.

The text does not state that only Noah was righteous in this generation. And yet that is certainly the idea. Only Noah and his family did God see to be righteous in Christ in the days wherein Noah was building the ark and preaching righteousness. However, the expression "this generation" means more than the men of Noah's age. It does mean that. But it also means that in the line of fallen Adam and his descendants God has seen Noah to be righteous. The distinction, then, is not simply between Noah and those born from fifteen years before or after the year that he was born. Then Moses would have written "in your generation." But the distinction is between Noah and the fallen human race, the generation of fallen men. At the time of the flood God saw Noah to be righteous, although the whole generation (the whole circle we may also translate) from Adam onward had fallen into sin and unrighteousness. This does not rule out righteous Adam, Abel, Seth and Methusaleh, but it declares that although man fell from his righteousness, and the corrupt stock brought forth nothing but a corrupt offspring, here by God's grace is a man that is righteous in Christ. God sees that, and therefore He calls him to come and enjoy the blessings of His covenant.

That gives us comfort today.

We are still in that corrupt generation whose seed was planted in paradise in the fall of man. God created man good and planted a good seed from which a good tree would have grown. But that seed died spiritually, and Satan planted a corrupt seed which thrives and produced a vigorous, productive plant that brings forth its fruit in rich abundance, a very prolific plant that fills the earth. The particular generation to which we belong — and without a doubt our readers belong to different generations of grandparents, parents and young adult children of these — is certainly

unrighteous. It always is and always has been, since the fall of man. No righteous generation has sprung up since that day that man ate of the forbidden fruit. Well could John the Baptist call them a "generation of vipers" in Luke 3:7. For spiritually they are the offspring of the Viper himself, Satan, the evil one.

What hope is there for us that God will see us as righteous in this generation? Is there really any hope? Indeed, for Noah had nothing that we do not have. That is the beauty of the Word of God when we read it correctly. Noah had no righteousness in himself. He, as we pointed out, belonged to that corrupt generation that came into being the moment man sinned. We who are branches on that same tree, and he who was an earlier branch upon it, have the same common root, namely, fallen, corrupt Adam. God therefore cannot see righteousness in Noah, because God Himself is a righteous Judge. And He can see it in Noah only as He

sees Noah a branch in Christ, the Righteous Vine. And that is also our hope. Engrafted into Christ both Noah and we are seen to be righteous.

And in the moment of the threat of imminent destruction of the whole world by fire, we have the same peace and assurance that Noah had. We shall be safe, and we are safe. When the fire falls, we will have been called into the ark of God's love. And through His Word as applied by His Spirit God calls to us every day, and particularly in the preaching, "Come thou out of the destruction and condemnation of the world into My covenant fellowship, and live with Me in glory."

How true it is that there is no condemnation to those that are in Christ Jesus. Noah was, and he escaped the punishment the world suffered. We are also in Him by God's grace and will escape the judgment fire.

Contending For The Faith

Eschatology—In The Old Testament

Rev. H. Veldman

In our preceding article we began to call attention to the doctrines known as Eschatology. And we began this series of articles by calling attention to this doctrine as set before us in the Old Testament. We concluded this article by quoting from the Old Testament Scriptures in connection with the return of our Lord Jesus Christ upon the clouds of heaven and as occurring at the end of the ages.

The doctrine of Eschatology also calls attention to what is known as the Intermediate State, the state of the soul between the death of the body and its resurrection in the last day. Now it is certainly true that the Word of God does not lay emphasis upon this phase of the believer's salvation. The Scriptures emphasize our state of final glory in the new heavens and upon the new earth. It is true, however, that the Word of God does teach this intermediate state in very clear language. This is true of the New Testament. In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus the rich man opens his eyes in torment and Lazarus is translated, immediately upon death, into Abraham's bosom. To the murderer upon the cross Jesus addresses the comforting word that he would be with Christ that very day in Paradise. And in II Cor. 5:1 we read: "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." And the striking thing about this passage, in connection with the question whether our souls are translated immediately upon death into glory, is the truth that we *have* this building of God as soon as the earthly

house of our tabernacle is dissolved. The Old Testament Scriptures, however, also teach this truth. We read in Proverbs 14:32: "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his death." We may note that the righteous has hope in his death. And in Ps. 73:24 we read: "Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." The psalmist does not teach us in this passage that the Lord will guide us with His counsel, and afterward, much later, receive us into glory. But it is clearly the thought of the inspired writer that as soon as the Lord shall have finished guiding us with His counsel He at that very moment will receive us into glory. The Scriptures surely teach the doctrine of the Intermediate State, does not teach a doctrine known as "Soul-Sleep."

On the doctrine of the antichrist, as held before us in the Old Testament, we read in Daniel 8:5-12 and 11:40 ff.:

And as I was considering, behold, an he goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes. And he came to the ram that had two horns, which I had seen standing before the river, and ran unto him in a fury of his power. And I saw him come close unto the ram, and he was moved with choler against him, and smote the ram, and brake his two horns: and there was not power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground, and stamped upon him: and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand. Therefore the he goat waxed very great: and when he was

strong, the great horn was broken; and for it came up four notable ones toward the four winds of heaven. And out of one of them came forth a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the pleasant land. And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them. Yea, he magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practised, and prospered . . . And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over. He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries: and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps. But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to take away many. And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him.

We will not call attention to these passages in any detail. A vivid description of the antichrist in the New Testament is recorded for us in Revelation 13. In these passages of Daniel, however, the Old Testament prophet speaks of him. Daniel surely refers to the Old Testament type of the antichrist in chapter 8, verse 9, where we read of the little horn which waxed exceedingly great. This is Antiochus Epiphanes, that Old Dispensational monster of iniquity, who ravaged the holy land, the land of Palestine, desecrated the temple and the holy place, offered swine's flesh upon the altar of the Lord, during whose reign many of the people of the Lord fled into distant lands. He is the Old Testament type of the antichrist.

The "millenium," too, is held before us in the Old Testament Scriptures. Notice, please, that we place the word, millenium, in quotation marks. The premillenarians view this peace reign as occurring upon this earth, before Christ's final coming upon the clouds of heaven. We believe that this reign of peace shall occur in the new heavens and upon the new earth. Now, however, we do not intend to call attention to this in detail. We merely wish to show that the Old Testament Scriptures speak of it. We could call attention to what we read in Isaiah 11:1-9. This passage is familiar to us. We do well to read it. But now

we quote Isaiah 25:5-9:

Thou shalt bring down the noise of strangers, as the heat in a dry place; even the heat with the shadow of a cloud: the branch of the terrible ones shall be brought low. And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.

In addition to this, the coming of Christ is also held before us upon the pages of Holy Writ in the Old Testament. Of course! He, Christ, is the Hope of the people of God throughout the ages. It lies in the nature of the case that His coming into our flesh and blood should be held before the people of the Lord from the beginning of history. Many passages can be quoted in support of this coming of our Lord. We could refer to Psalms 22, 69, 89 and 110. Then, there are passages such as Isaiah 53, Numbers 24:17-19 and Malachi 3:1-6. The passages, however, which we wish to quote are Isaiah 7:14, 9:6 and 59:15-21:

Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel . . . For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace . . . Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the Lord saw it, and it displeased Him that there was no judgment. And He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore His arm brought salvation unto Him; and His righteousness, it sustained Him. For He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon His head; and He put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloke. According to their deeds, accordingly He will repay, fury to His adversaries, recompence to His enemies; to the islands He will repay recompence. So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and His glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against Him. And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord. As for Me, this is My covenant with them, saith the Lord; My Spirit that is upon thee, and My words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.

Then, there is also this beautiful passage from the prophecy of Isaiah, chapter 61, the verses 1-3:

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me; because the Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified.

The precursory signs, the signs that accompany and symbolize the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, are also held before us in the Old Testament. We have already called attention to Antiochus Epiphanes, that Old Testament type of antichrist. Besides this

precursory sign, wars and rumours of wars characterize the entire Old Dispensation. We are surely acquainted with the wars that were fought throughout the Old Dispensation between the Israel of God and the nations of the world. The enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent marks the ages of the dispensation of the shadows as preceding the coming of our Lord into our flesh and blood. David was forbidden to build the Lord an house because he had shed much blood. How the nations of the world and of darkness fumed and raved against the people of the living God! And these wars and rumours of war continue throughout the New Dispensation. Of course! The coming of Christ can spell only disaster for the wicked world. And it is for this reason that His coming throughout the ages is marked by these wars and rumours of war. But, we will continue with this in our following article.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On June 11, 1973 our parents,

MR. & MRS. PETER KOOLE

celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary.

We thank our faithful God for having kept them for each other and us that together they might share in our covenant upbringing.

May God continue to bless them together as they walk their journey here below.

Their children

Lawrence
Kenneth
Kathleen
James
Ronald
Timothy

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On June 8, 1973 the Lord willing, our beloved parents,

REV. AND MRS. MARINUS SCHIPPER

will celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary.

We thank our Heavenly Father for preserving them for each other and for their covenant love and guidance they have given us. Our prayer is that God will continue to bless them in their remaining pilgrimage together.

Mr. and Mrs. James Schipper
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Schipper
Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Schipper
Mr. and Mrs. Edward Langerak
12 grandchildren.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On June 8, 1973 the Lord willing, our beloved parents,

MR. AND MRS. HENRY MEULENBERG

will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary.

We are thankful to our covenant God for having spared them for each other and for us, and we pray that God may bless them further in the way that lies ahead. As the days approach when their earthly pilgrimage shall end, may they enjoy the peace which alone can be found in Him.

Their grateful children,

Mr. and Mrs. Gerrit Bol
Mr. and Mrs. David Meulenberg
Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Meulenberg
Mr. and Mrs. John Bos
Mr. and Mrs. Henry P. Meulenberg
Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Meulenberg
Mr. and Mrs. Jack Feenstra
25 grandchildren
2 great-grandchildren

NOTICE

Classis East of the Prot. Ref. Churches will meet in regular session on Wednesday, June 27th (the first Wednesday in July is July 4th), at the First Prot. Ref. Church, Grand Rapids, Mich. Material to be treated in this session must be in the hands of the Stated Clerk at least ten days prior to the convening of this session.

Jon Huiskens
Stated Clerk
Classis East

News From Our Churches

Mr. Vander Wal, our business manager, has submitted a couple of contributions for use in this column "when space allows." We enjoy those contributions, but . . . space didn't allow, in the last several issues; so to make certain I don't neglect them any longer, I'll place one at the *beginning* this time.

"Some months ago the Board of our *Standard Bearer* began a '10 for 2' subscription drive. This means that any NEW subscriber can obtain ten forthcoming issues for only two dollars. What a success this campaign has proved to be! Almost 250 interested persons have responded to this offer! Of course, not all of these people have become permanent subscribers, but over 50 respondents to the offer have taken out yearly subscriptions to our magazine! Indeed an amazing outcome! Response to this offer has been received from 21 states, and also from several countries, including Canada, Australia and even Korea. We thank all those cooperating, and responsible for making this effort a success."

The covers of Randolph's Sunday bulletins have recently been including a "Sketch of Our Proposed New Church Building."

And, in further building news, the Consistory of Faith Church in Jenison reports having rented a parsonage. Members of the congregation have been working with the Building Committee to prepare the house for occupancy. "The bedrooms upstairs have been paneled, and work has started on installing tiled ceilings. Downstairs the walls have been prepared for painting and work has begun on the difficult job of refinishing some of the woodwork."

And, for still another building project, we turn to Southeast's April 29 bulletin. "We are informed that the deed to the Seminary property has been signed by the proper parties — the plans for the building will be checked out by the architect — and that possible ground opening may take place the first of June. It behooves everyone of us to give thanks to God that, after some 49 years of existence, our Seminary will have a building of its own."

Something rather unusual happened at First Church the other day — folding chairs had to be brought out to accommodate an overflow crowd. Bulletin announcements had encouraged our people in the Grand Rapids' area to come out for the Mass Choral Program, featuring the combined voices of the choirs from First, Hope, Hudsonville, and Southwest Churches. "You won't," the announcements read, "find a better way to spend Easter Sunday evening with your family and friends." Many agreed, apparently, for First's large auditorium was filled from stem to stern.

It's not often that those 800 seats are filled, but it happened again a couple of weeks later, when, on May 10, Rev. Engelsma presented a lecture entitled, "Key 73 — What Must We Say About It?" The start of the program was delayed for about ten minutes, while the ushers tried valiantly to find places for everyone — first in the 800 seats, then on 175 folding chairs which were set up as the church was filling, and finally, when those were filled, on the floor and in the coat racks. Rev. Van Baren, the chairman of the meeting, in his introductory remarks noted that, "the fact that you are here, and in such goodly numbers is evidence that the subject is of interest and concern to Reformed people. We trust," he continued, "that you will be instructed, blessed, and guided by God's Word with respect to this topic."

Tape and cassette recordings were made of that "instructive and powerful message," and by week's end, more than forty requests were received from individuals desiring to obtain a copy. That's another evidence, it would seem, of that "interest and concern." Copies of the recordings can still be obtained, incidentally, from Mr. Henry Vander Wal, whose address appears under "Business Office," on the first page of this magazine.

A couple of additional items from bulletins will probably run this column off the back page, but we'll risk it. The first comes from Southeast's April 29 bulletin: "The Lord willing, Rev. & Mrs. Schipper plan to leave Wednesday morning for Skowhegan, Me. There is a small Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Cornville, a short distance from Skowhegan, where Rev. Schipper will be preaching the four Sundays of May, and lecturing and visiting during the week."

The second is from South Holland (May 6): "Rev. R. Decker arrived in Patterson, New Jersey, Wednesday. He spent two evenings studying the Canons with fifteen adults from the Patterson area. Today, he plans to preach in the morning and in the evening and to conduct a Bible class in the afternoon. He also plans to begin Catechism class there studying the Heidelberg Catechism and Essentials of Reformed Doctrine. As he proclaims the truth of God's Word in New Jersey, the Pastor covets the prayers of the congregation here in South Holland."

After a May 4 Congregational Meeting in Hope Church of Grand Rapids, a call to serve as home missionary to labor in the Philadelphia area was extended to Rev. Decker.

I was right. This news is a little long. The Editor-in-Chief will please take note and adjust the length of his editorials accordingly.

D.D.