

# The Standard Bearer

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

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## 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.

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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.

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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.

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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

## Waiting For God's Son

Rev. M. Schipper

*"And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come."*

*I Thessalonians 1:10*

And to wait for his Son . . . !

This expression, with what follows in the text, suggests that it is not a complete sentence. It all belongs to what the apostle had been speaking of in the immediately preceding context.

And in that context the apostle speaks of a living hope and a sanctified walk.

These two always go together. Without the one, the other cannot be. Reciprocally they motivate one another. Each is the other's stimulant. Where the one fades, the other pines. Where the one flourishes, the other is strong. Inseparably they are knit together.

They are intertwined. Always they accompany one another.

This is true whether you are a friend of God or not. If you are His friend, you will always keep your garments clean, fight the good fight of faith in the midst of the world, and deny yourself. Believing on Him, you will deny yourself, suffering with Him. And your attitude will be one of a living hope, by which you look for the Son of God Who must come from heaven. And the opposite is also true. Looking for the Saviour from heaven with steadfast longing and patient waiting, you will feel the urge to be like Him at His



coming, and will have a strong incentive to keep yourself pure, striving to keep His commandments.

If, on the other hand, you are a friend of the world, you will in much of your life seek the things which are below. You will refuse to suffer with Christ, and carefully avoid the cross. Your attitude will be such that your hope will pine away. You will experience no Christian joy in your heart. And there will be no song of expectation on your lips. Your hope will be weak and wavering. The flame of hope's yearning will be quenched. The strong assurance of hope will be lacking in your soul. And gone will be the power to be patient in tribulation, so that you will not be able to endure unto the end.

Not the latter, but the former was the case with the saints in the church to whom the epistle is directed. What a beautiful testimony the apostle gives to this church! The children of God there had received the gospel in much affliction and joy of the Holy Ghost. They had become followers of the Lord and the apostle. They had become an example to all believers. Their faith to Godward was spread abroad. By the power of grace they had been called and had turned away from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, who had delivered them from the wrath to come.

O, yes, always these two: serving the living and true God, and waiting for His Son from heaven, go together!

A sanctified walk, and a living hope!

And the latter is described as a constant waiting for Jesus!

Waiting for God's Son!

How rich in meaning is this expression!

The object of the Christian's hope, God's Son, is not called such by virtue of any honor, power, or title which may be conferred upon Him, whether that be by God or by man. He is God's Son in Himself! Eternally and in co-equality with the Father and the Holy Ghost. Essentially He is God, full of infinite virtues. He is the Almighty, All-Wise, Sovereign God, Who is Lord of all, and over all. Not to adore Him as He is, is to serve the idol; for there is no true God beside Him.

Here the very heart of the gospel is touched!

Deny it, and there is no gospel of salvation possible! Confess it, and you have eternal life!

For the gospel is God's message concerning His Son!

God's Son Who is become Jesus! The historical Jesus of Nazareth! Whose incarnation, His coming into the flesh, we lately celebrated!

For the Son of God became man, who came in our likeness of sinful flesh, though personally without sin; and He tabernacled among us. The Creator became creature. The Eternal became temporal. The Lord became servant.

Yet the Immutable did not change! He is and ever abides, God! Should you have seen Him in the flesh, all

you could say of Him was what His disciples declared of Him: "My Lord and my God!" The Immortal, Creator, Infinite, Eternal Lord of all!

But the gospel concerning God's Son also declares: Whom God raised from the dead, even Jesus!

O, indeed, this presupposes what actually took place; namely, that God's Son died in human nature. He laid down His life, allowing Himself to be nailed to the tree of the cross. And He tasted death for all His own. Even voluntarily descending into the abyss of hell. There He bore our sin and guilt, and made satisfaction, brought an atonement for our sin.

Therefore, God, has highly exalted Him in His human nature, having raised Him from the dead. Because He had finished on the cross and in His death the work of our justification. Therefore God raised Him as the Head of His church from the dead, and exalted Him at His own right hand. When He had obtained righteousness and eternal life for all that are in Him.

It is He for Whom we wait!

From heaven!

With His church on earth He was only for a while. He lived our life. He spoke face to face with His own. They saw Him, heard His voice, handled Him Who was the Son of God in the flesh. And they confessed that He was the Son of God, the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

But He left us! Even His resurrection was no return to us. From the Mount of Olives He tendered His farewell, and ascended into heaven, another part of God's creation, but as close to the heart of God as the creature can be. Thither He went, the Son of God in our nature. There He was glorified with the glory which He had before the world was. Leaving us with the promise that as He had gone, so He would also return to us, to reward every one as his work shall be.

And now for Him we wait!

That is, to look for Him Whose coming is known, and foreseen, and with the added notion of patience and trust. He who waits longs for Him, and has long patience until he sees Him Whom his soul loveth.

Waiting for God's Son from heaven constitutes the hope of all God's saints!

This, of course, holds in it unmistakable implications.

It implies, first of all, that we will be striving to be found faithful at His coming. We will not be neglecting our earthly duties, as some who claimed to be waiting, have done. Asceticism and monkery are not the proper ear-marks of waiting children of God. Neglecting our calling of faithful stewardship, failing to heed our Lord's command to represent His cause in the world, — these cannot be the proper works of the church of Jesus Christ. On the contrary, those who are truly waiting for their Lord from heaven, will be fighting the good fight of faith to the day of His coming, and with



the firm conviction that theirs is the victory through Him Who loved them. This waiting implies that faithfully we will be discharging our duties which He gave us to perform, and using the talents He supplied as obedient stewards of the grace of God. As faithfully as we would be doing in His presence, so faithfully we will be doing as we wait for Him.

Secondly, to wait for His Son from heaven implies that we understand that while He tarries He is unraveling all the good counsel of God. We know that He cannot come at any moment, as the Chiliast would have us believe. Shame on them for deluding the minds of God's people into thinking that by the momentary appearance of Christ they shall escape the great tribulation. Or, the dangerous doctrine of a certain rapture that shall be initiated by a secret coming of the Lord. Not so will the Christian, who really knows his Bible, be waiting. Rather, he knows that the Son of God, even Jesus, cannot come, and will not come until all is fulfilled that is predicted in God's prophetic Word. All of the signs of the times must have been in evidence, all of the purposes of God in history must first be realized before His return. Yea, also the very place which He is now preparing in the heavens for all His own, and their preparation for that place, must all be worked out before He will come again.

In fact, all that we hope for is connected with His coming. Positively, our hope of His coming is the ushering in of a better world, in which righteousness shall dwell, and everlasting peace shall reign. It entails the hope of deliverance completely from the body of this death in which we dwell, in which we now suffer,

and in which we are still liable to sin. It implies that we look for final deliverance from those who would kill us all the day long; when our persecutors shall be put to naught, when all of Christ's enemies, and ours for His name's sake, shall be disposed of in righteous judgment.

These are the unmistakable implications of waiting for the Son of God, even Jesus!

Waiting for Jesus, Who has already delivered us from the wrath to come!

What a beautiful testimony is it which the Word of God here gives concerning the waiting church!

Not of the world!

The world does not wait for Him. Always the world mocks with the truth of His coming. They are like the beasts that die. And when He shall appear in His coming, we know already what the wicked will do. They will cry out to the mountains to fall on them that they may be hid from the face of Him with Whom they will have to do. From the fierceness of His wrath will they hope to escape through some kind of annihilation. But so it will not be! Suddenly in His coming, His wrath shall fall on them, and they shall be cast into outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. This is the testimony of all Scripture. As it was in the days of Noah, they were eating and drinking, marrying and given in marriage, until sudden destruction fell upon them; so shall it be in the day of the coming of the Son of God, even Jesus.

But for the saints of the Most High, — glory!

## Editorials

# Gambling Made Respectable--But Still Gambling

*Prof. H.C. Hoeksema*

I am referring to the fact that here in the State of Michigan we now have a state lottery. Perhaps others of our readers also reside in states which conduct such lotteries. In Michigan this thing seems to have captured the imagination of the public. The state, of course, adopted the lottery as a means of revenue for the never-satiated appetite of the state treasury — which only means, of course, that the state, not the individual, is the big winner.

But this is not my point.

My point is that this is a temptation — for all of us, but perhaps especially for youth.

True, perhaps the fact that winners will inevitably be exposed to the glare of publicity in the news media will act as a restraint upon some. The names and faces

of the winners — especially the big winners — are spread all over the state.

But this is not what should restrain a Christian.

What should restrain the Christian from participation is the plain fact that the lottery is gambling; and gambling is sinful.

Time was, of course, that gambling was rather generally looked upon as a disreputable pursuit. It was associated with the criminal, underworld element of society. When one thought of gambling, he almost automatically thought of the "Syndicate." Or he thought of Las Vegas and its slot machines and gaming tables. Or he thought of that segment of society that haunted the race tracks and/or the betting parlors associated therewith.



Now all this is changed.

For one thing, the state itself has become involved. Gambling is not an illegal pursuit. It is not limited, in its legal form, to the parimutuel booths at the race track. No, the lottery is a state function. I suppose one could even pursue the sophistry that the lottery is a good thing: for it adds to the state's coffers at a time when state governments are looking for more sources of revenue and when all of us are interested in keeping taxes down.

For another thing, you can now gamble in a most respectable way. You need not visit a bookie. You need not be seen in a locale where your very appearance would contradict your Christian confession. You need not associate with criminal elements. No, today you can go to the local supermarket, where you shop weekly for your groceries, and purchase your lottery tickets!

It has become very respectable!

And everyone is doing it!

And it costs only fifty cents per ticket!

And that fifty-cent ticket could conceivably win you a small prize, but it could also conceivably win fifty or two hundred thousand dollars!

And would that not be a relief in this day when it is sometimes very difficult to "make ends meet?" In fact, could you not do much for the cause of the kingdom, should you "happen" to win the big prize?

But nothing has changed!

Gambling is sin! Its motive is covetousness, and its nature is a violation of the Christian stewardship-demand of the eighth commandment.

Whether you are a habitue of the gaming parlor or of the race track, or whether you merely gamble where all respectable people gamble, at the neighborhood supermarket and under the aegis of the state, gambling is sin!

And principally it makes no difference whether you purchase one fifty-cent ticket or whether you squander your week's wages and your family's living on a fistful of tickets. The sin is the same.

Moreover, that the state has adopted the lottery is but one more indication that the state itself, which ought to consider itself God's minister, has become corrupt.

Beware of this sin!

Be not tempted! Flee temptation!

Walk worthy of the calling wherewith ye have been called.

## About the New Jenison Congregation

As noted in the Report of Classis East, plans are under way for the organization of a new congregation, the Lord willing, in the Jenison, Michigan area. As of this writing, I do not know when this organization will take place; I would guess it will not be before this editorial sees print. And part of my remarks is based on this guess.

First of all, congratulations to those who have taken the initiative in this matter, that is, to the consistories of Hope and Hudsonville, to the brethren who petitioned Classis East for organization, and to Classis East who approved the petition. This is something which has not happened in our churches since 1960 (when Isabel and Forbes were organized) and which has not happened in Classis East since 1944, when Southeast (then Fourth) was organized.

There is reason here for rejoicing and for thankfulness to God. For this represents growth and progress. And I would add: it represents healthy growth. For this proposed new congregation does not arise out of dissension or dissatisfaction of any kind, but simply out of the twin facts that our Hudsonville and Hope congregations are outgrowing their quarters and that a good many families of our Protestant Reformed community live in the Jenison area. This kind of growth from within is healthy growth. And this is reason for joy and gratitude. And perhaps I may

add that when an infant is born after long years of waiting, there is additional reason for joy.

Besides, the proposed congregation in the Jenison area furnishes reason for gratitude because it represents an extension of our Protestant Reformed witness, the establishment of another center of witness, in that community. It is our hope, too, that this new congregation may be zealous in church extension work, and that it may serve as a gathering-point for others who love the Reformed faith in that community.

In the second place, I would like to take this opportunity to urge others who live in that area to organize along with those who have already signified their intention. And I say intentionally: to *organize* with them, not merely to join them later. Everyone recognizes, of course, that no one can be *compelled* to do this. We do not have a boundary-system in our churches. This is a matter of free choice. But I call attention to the fact that it makes good sense for those who live in the area to support this movement. Not only do I have in mind the over-crowded conditions at Hope and Hudsonville. But I also have in mind that if you live in that area, it is, in the main, good sense to have your church-home and that of your children and young people in that community. And besides, it is well to help the infant congregation *from the start*.



This will insure a robust beginning, rather than a struggling one — both from the point of view of church life and from the financial point of view. And it will furnish greater choice of consistorial material, even though Classis East was convinced that there was sufficient consistorial material to warrant organization (and I concur).

\* \* \* \* \*

And yet the very reference to the historical statistics made above must needs remind us of another side of the picture, it seems to me.

Not a new congregation since 1960! Not a new congregation in Classis East since 1944! And not a new congregation in Classis East as a result of home mission labor since 1943 (when Randolph was added to Classis East)!

Yes, I know: our churches have gone through some stormy times in that period. Besides, we suffered from a severe shortage of ministers. And besides that, it is possible to point to instances of growth and progress. No, the picture is not all gloomy by any means.

But let this not blind us to the facts.

One of these facts is that we sorely need a home missionary to labor in behalf of our churches. Pray the Lord fervently that He will grant us one. Let us not forget this as churches. It is so easy to become wrapped up in our own congregational life and to be satisfied that we have our Protestant Reformed congregation and our minister, and even that we are through various means witnessing to those outside of our churches. And we must not ever become smug! Nor must we be afraid of a minister shortage. Not only has the Lord always provided well for our churches even when there was more of a shortage than today; but the Lord has also graciously alleviated the severity

of that shortage already, as all our churches know; and the outlook for a future supply of ministers is at the moment very bright! Moreover, let us not only pray for a home missionary. Let us concentrate as churches upon practical measures to make it more feasible and possible for one of our ministers to accept a call to this work. This is no easy task; and it is no simple matter, especially for a minister with a family of young children, to accept such a call. Let us do what is possible in order that the way may be open.

And, it seems to me, that another fact is this, that — whether with or without a home missionary — our churches must concentrate more of their attention and their labor on this aspect of the Lord's work. Perhaps it is not too much to say that the very lack of new organizations is evidence of this. Think about it!

And think on this, too, that this calling is all the more urgent because of the rapid apostasy of our day, especially in the Reformed community, and because of the crying need for church reformation.

Meanwhile, if these lines fall under the eyes of any outside of our Protestant Reformed Churches who are genuinely concerned about church reformation and who through our *Standard Bearer* recognize in our churches a bastion of the Reformed faith in these troubled times, I am confident to say: our churches stand ready to answer any call for help, whether we have a home missionary or not. Moreover, we do not despise a small beginning, as our history in the organization of churches will plainly show. Nor, if a congregation is organized, will our churches leave it an orphan; but we are ready to help and support financially, and, above all, to provide a congregation with faithful, thoroughly Reformed preachers of the Word!

## Implications of the Kuitert Decision

Thus far we have not noticed much comment — either critical or favorable — about the Kuitert Decision in the religious press on this side of the Atlantic. It would seem to us, however, that not only comment but also decisions will have to be forthcoming sooner or later. This is due to the fact that the *Gereformeerde Kerken* of the Netherlands occupy a place among Reformed churches and stand in some kind of relationship to many other denominations of the Reformed community. For one thing, they are members of the RES, along with many other Reformed churches. Besides, there is a relation of correspondence, and in some cases a full sister-church relationship, between the GKN and other denominations.

Sooner or later, therefore these churches will have

to take a stand as to the decision in the Kuitert Case and consequently as to their attitude toward the GKN. And in taking such a stand such churches will necessarily have to reveal, it seems to us, their own attitude toward the doctrinal issues at stake in the Kuitert Case. And not only is this true for various denominations; it is also true for the RES, which at its recent meeting in Sydney, Australia avoided a showdown on the matter of the *Gereformeerde Kerken* and their membership in the RES.

### THE RES AND THE KUITERT DECISION

In our October 15, 1972 issue we reported and editorialized on the question of the membership of the GKN in the Reformed Ecumenical Synod and on the decision of the RES on this matter.

Permit me to refresh your memory.



First of all, the decision of the RES itself was a very bland one. It really decided nothing. It was a neat way of declaring that it would not take a stand on matters concerning the GKN while, in effect, it declined overtures of member churches requesting it to take a stand. It welcomed concern on the part of member churches. It declared that it was the business of the RES to be concerned about the spiritual welfare and the Scriptural government of the churches. And, as far as the subject under discussion is concerned, it expressed its "deep concern about the theological views of Dr. H. M. Kuitert and some other theologians." And while the decision did not in so many words state this, apparently the reason for the RES's failure to take action lay in the statement that the RES "accepts the assurance of the delegates of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands that their churches are giving their serious and continuing attention to these views."

For the sake of argument, let us accept that last statement of the RES for a moment, although, of course, even that statement represents a bad decision from every viewpoint. If it is a good faith statement, then it only bespeaks the fact that the RES was tremendously naive as to the true nature of that "serious and continuing attention" of the GKN to the views of Kuitert and others. How, in the light of all that happened and all that was decided even prior to the latest Kuitert Decision of the GKN, could anyone accept such assurances as are mentioned? Mind you, Kuitert's views had already been under discussion for a long time! Nor had there been any indication that the GKN, in spite of all its "serious and continuing attention," intended to censure either Kuitert or his views. On the contrary, there was every indication that room would be made officially for Kuitert's views. I fail to understand how anyone could put any stock in the assurances of the Dutch delegates. One would have to be as naive as was Chamberlain at Munich.

But this is not the worst. The very decision of the RES to accept these assurances was itself a bad decision: for it accepted the failure of the GKN to exercise doctrinal discipline instead of engaging in "serious and continuing attention." This was exactly part of the problem brought up in overtures by member churches of the RES.

But for the sake of argument, let us accept the statement.

Then the question is: what now?

The die is cast. The GKN has officially terminated its "serious and continuing attention" to the Kuitert matter. And the termination has left Kuitert, in spite of his admittedly anti-confessional views, in good standing in the GKN.

And the GKN remain members in good standing in the RES!

In the interim before the next meeting of the RES

some years hence, the GKN can continue as members, continue to participate in RES activities, continue to have a place in the Interim Committee and in various study committees, and continue to exercise what can only be a bad influence. And nothing can be done, I fear, to prevent this.

Yet — although this is looking far into the future — it would seem that eventually the RES is going to be forced to face the issue which it failed to face in 1972. This time, it would seem, there will have to be a showdown — unless the powers that be are again adroit enough to steer clear of it.

However, even before the next RES is convened, various member churches will have to face the issue.

And the latest decision of the GKN on the Kuitert matter only serves to underscore this necessity, it would seem.

You will recall that there were some specific overtures from member churches concerning the *Gereformeerde Kerken*.

From the Orthodox Presbyterian Church there were two communications. One had to do with the dual membership of the GKN in the World Council of Churches and in the Reformed Ecumenical Synod. But the second had to do specifically with the Kuitert case. It raised the question whether the GKN were not in conflict with the confessional Basis of the RES. And it stated specifically: "It is difficult for us to understand how the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands can on the one hand declare that Dr. H. M. Kuitert's 'negation of the historicity of the fall of man' is not in agreement with the confessional statement of the Scriptural truth which 'must also be maintained as authoritative by the church as having importance for the proclamation of the Gospel' and then on the other hand proceed to resolve that 'the unity of the confession of the church is not so much threatened that special decisions would be necessary.'" And in an attached letter this OPC overture, adopted by the Thirty-eighth General Assembly, refers directly to the declaration of the Synod of Sneek-1970 concerning the letters of protest against Dr. Kuitert's views.

Also, you will recall, the Reformed Churches of New Zealand asked for action on this matter at the 1972 meeting of the RES. Specifically the resolution of the New Zealand churches was as follows: "That the Reformed Ecumenical Synod consider whether the resolutions adopted by the Synod of the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, in its meeting of 5 November 1970, regarding the teachings of Dr. H. M. Kuitert and others, who share his convictions, do not conflict with the requirements for membership as set out in Art. IV of the Rules and Standing Orders of the R.E.S. . . ., and b. that the Synod should it find that there is conflict, request the Gereformeerde Kerken to withdraw from the R.E.S. or alternately make provisions for the exclusion of these Churches from



the membership of the R.E.S. in order that a situation in which the basis of the R.E.S. becomes ambiguous be avoided."

Both of these member churches of the RES, therefore, are now confronted by this set of facts:

1. The R.E.S. utterly failed to take the action requested in their overtures. Presumably this failure was based in part on the assurance by the Dutch delegates that the GKN were still dealing with this matter and were doing so seriously.

2. The *Gereformeerde Kerken* have now terminated the discussion of the Kuitert Case, have maintained the position of the Synod of Sneek, have refused to find any grounds for further action against Kuitert and thus justified him, and therefore remain in conflict with the confessional basis of the RES.

If, as I wrote earlier, these churches were faced by the necessity of taking a stand as to their own continuing membership in the RES, this is certainly doubly true now. The GKN have taken their stand. There is no longer the excuse that they are giving "continuing and serious attention" to this matter: they themselves have declared the case to be terminated. But the conflict with the confessional basis of the RES remains. At best, these two member churches can make their continued membership in the RES contingent upon RES condemnation of the stand of the GKN.

They would do better, in our opinion, however, to follow the example of the Hapdong Presbyterian Church of Korea. This denomination was not represented at the 1972 session of the RES; and the General Assembly of the Hapdong Church, we are reliably informed, took a decision in September, 1972 to withdraw from the RES. As yet we do not have the details of this decision. But undoubtedly the decision was influenced in part by a published *Critique of the RES* by Rev. Sang Chan Lee, a critique which, among other things, exposed the sad situation in the *Gereformeerde Kerken*.

In our opinion, the RES has not shown itself to be worthy of consideration as an ecumenical option for Reformed churches.

#### THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH AND THE GKN

The Christian Reformed Church has shown great reluctance to take any definitive action with respect to the GKN thus far.

Their delegates to the RES went to Australia in 1972 with synodical instructions "to oppose any definitive action by the RES re termination of the membership of the *Gereformeerde Kerken* at RES Australia 1972." And the grounds were that "The situation is still in flux in the churches of the *Gereformeerde Kerken*, and the matter is being dealt with by the Synod of Dordrecht (1971-1972)," and

that "An evaluation of trends cannot be completed until it is clear which trends will prevail and which positions will finally be adopted."

However, there is more involved.

In 1970 the Christian Reformed Synod addressed a letter of admonition to the GKN concerning these matters. And although, in our opinion, the letter was extremely mild and not sufficiently specific in view of the serious situation in the GKN, nevertheless it did serve to call these matters to the attention of the *Gereformeerde Kerken*. Besides, over the years there have been various overtures before the Christian Reformed Synod concerning doctrinal developments in the GKN.

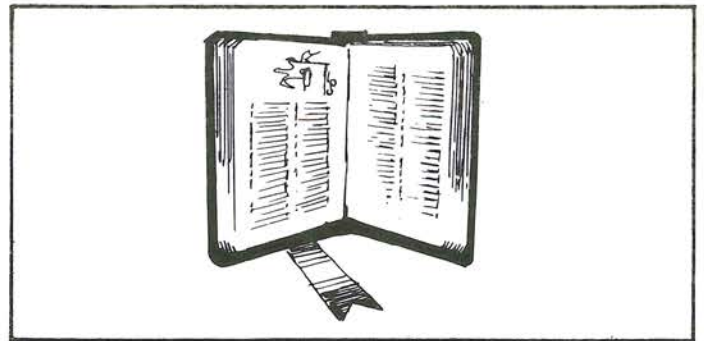
Moreover, in the debate about Report 36/44 (The Nature and Extent of the Authority of Scripture), it was claimed — as one of the arguments in favor of adoption of this Report — that although the report did not mention the views of Kuitert by name, nevertheless it excluded the possibility of Kuitert's views and of his approach to Scripture.

But now the GKN have taken their stand.

What will the CRC do about this?

It is to be hoped that the CRC will now be moved to take "definitive action" concerning their sister-church relationship with the GKN. Failure to take resolute action will certainly mean that the doors of the CRC are officially wide open to the same errors and the same doctrinal liberty which plague the GKN. Personally, however, I have little expectation of such a resolute stand. My reasons? They are several. But here are some: 1. The Christian Reformed Church has shown no inclination in recent years to take a resolute stand on doctrinal matters. 2. Already when Dr. Kuitert spoke in this country a few years ago, there were not a few among the Christian Reformed clergy who agreed with him and who were ready to defend him. 3. The Christian Reformed Church has refused to take action with regard to Dr. Willis de Boer, whose views of Genesis are at least in some respects — if not altogether — in harmony with those of Dr. Kuitert. 4. To take a clear stand on this matter would involve the CRC in a doctrinal controversy within the denomination, the kind of controversy which it wants to avoid.

But time will tell.





## *The Day of Shadows*

# Mixed Seed And A Fixed Crop

*Rev. John A. Heys*

There are no female angels.

Neither are there baby angels.

The mind of man under the power of sin likes to run wild in its imagination, and refuses to listen to the Word of God. And then men speak of "cherubs" or baby angels, and draw pictures of them to try to express what these creatures look like, while admitting that they never saw one.

The word of Jesus in Matthew 22:23 ff. in answer to the fault-finding Sadducees, who tried to trap Him, should suffice. For to them He said, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven." There is no marriage in the angel world. The word angel in Scripture is always a masculine noun. And there are then no angel fathers and mothers, and certainly no baby angels. All were created in the beginning, and not one angel has been born.

The fact, then, that they neither marry nor are given in marriage takes away any ground for the contention that, when we read in Genesis 6:1, 2 that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, and that they took them wives of them, angels had intercourse with women and produced some super race. It may be granted, however, that angels are called sons of God, and that verse 4 indicates that when the sons of God did take them wives, and went in unto them, the result was that giants were born, and mighty men, men of renown.

The angels are spiritual beings and no such intercourse is possible. Nor is such an interpretation necessary to explain giants and mighty men, which were of old, men of renown. Goliath and his brother were giants, and that from a conception that occurred without any angel's efforts, and without anything that such an angel supplied. David was a mighty man, born of two very ordinary human parents. And Nimrod was a man of renown whose earthly, human father is mentioned by name.

It is true that in Job 1:6 we read of the angels coming before God and of being called the sons of God. It is also true that Satan was there. And the theory is that these sons of God were fallen, corrupt angels who were no longer in heaven but on the earth. However, the believers also are, both in the Old and New Testament, called the sons of God. As a point of connection we have in Luke 3:38 the genealogy of

Christ traced down to Adam, who is then literally called the son of God. Israel is called God's son in Exodus 4:23. Christ, according to His human nature, is called God's Son in Psalm 2:7. It is implied in Isaiah 64:8 when Isaiah cries, "But now, O Lord, thou art our Father."

The idea, then, in Genesis 6:1-4 is that the descendants of Adam and Shem, the seed of the woman, coming more and more in contact with the descendants of Cain, the seed of the serpent, began to seek their wives from Cain's unbelieving daughters and looked for a pretty face, rather than for a pure heart, for a nice figure instead of a vibrant faith. The seed of those born in the covenant community, that had stayed by the entrance to paradise, began to mix with the seed of those born outside that sphere in Cain's city of Enoch. A mixed seed appeared, that at once meant that a fixed crop of sin would soon be brought forth and reveal itself.

It is not so strange that such a mixed marriage of believer and unbeliever took place already at that early stage of the history of God's Church. All are conceived and born in sin. All are the "corrupt offspring" which the "corrupt stock" (of which the Canons of Dordrecht speak in Heads Three and Four, article 2) brings forth. The sons of God, the children in the covenant sphere also had their flesh. And a rebirth does not take away the old nature. It adds a new nature which fights against the old. The rebirth is not the death of the old man of sin.

The trouble is that the sons of God did not fight that old nature but instead let it rule them in the selection of their wives. This does not simply happen in the world. David was afflicted with it. It became the downfall of such a wise man as Solomon. And rather than to be surprised that this happened so quickly after the fall of man, and in spite of the presence of Enoch and his fiery preaching, we could be surprised that it did not happen sooner. That old nature is so wicked! And that power of sin within us is so strong! But for the grace of God we, too, would mix more rapidly than we do with the false church and with the world. We mix enough, or rather far too much, because no mixture ought to be there at all. We ought to be a separate people, and come out from among the wicked world. And the outcome for us likewise, when there is mixed seed, will only be the fixed crop of sin. The children of such an union, except for the grace of God,



are going to follow the example of the parent of unbelief, and go the way of the line of least resistance.

Let our young people, our covenant young people, understand that a pretty face can hide a very evil heart. A fair complexion can distract from a heart filled with contempt for and hatred against God. A fair countenance, and nothing more, means to the serious, believing child of God that to marry such means anything but fair weather ahead.

Marry simply for looks, and you will have plenty of time to look the other way and elsewhere when the beauty, which is often not even skin deep and comes out of a bottle, can no longer be produced, when the wrinkles cannot be covered, and the inner hatred against God and His cause come so clearly to the surface. Adding a drop of ink to the water does not improve the ink, but it does spoil the water. Introducing an unbeliever into one's life as life's companion will not benefit that unbeliever, but it will do havoc to the life of the believer, except in those rare cases where God is pleased to work His grace, and to bring that unbeliever to the faith. But when we *deliberately* mix in our marriages with the unbelievers, we cannot expect, and have no promise from God, that He will come with His grace to realize a conversion. We can instead heed the Word of God which says that what a man sows, that will he reap. And a mixed marriage with an unbeliever sets us on the course of a fixed crop, a crop of sin that is inevitable, when our children are the result of *our* fleshly choice of a husband or wife, and the flesh of that unbeliever. Even when believer and believer marry, they bring forth nothing but enemies of God. How then can we expect that, when a believer marries an unbeliever, he is in God's way and can expect Him to perform the work of His grace to give him children that have the new life from above?

Let it be clearly understood, and let it be borne in mind that no matter how sweet the world may behave before us, no matter how lovely they may talk in our presence, no matter how beautiful they may be according to the standards of the judgment of our flesh, **THEY ARE ENEMIES OF GOD!** And being a child of God he or she is your enemy too. He or she may love you with a fleshly love, but he or she hates you as a child of God. And it inevitably will be that your new man in Christ will be assaulted day by day by the evils that the unbelieving partner delights in and seeks.

How different are the words of the psalmist when in Psalm 119:63 he writes, "I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts." Is that really true in our lives? Is that true of our covenant seed? Or are the giants of the world, the men of renown, those the world praises, whose exploits are extolled by the ungodly? How wonderful it would be if our children would look to the giants of

faith that God raises up from time to time in the Church, and would covet their zeal and spirituality. How encouraging and comforting it would be to see them seek companions only of those that fear God and keep His precepts.

Instead, as history repeats itself, the sons of God today are looking to the world — and striving to make themselves look like the world. The men of renown of the world they know. The men of faith are strangers to them. They would find it difficult to list even half of Jesus' disciples, tell you the names of the books of the Bible — or even of only the New Testament books. The giants of sports, the "big" men and women of Hollywood, of the whole world of entertainment on radio, television and eight-track cassette players in their cars they know, and are thrilled by them! The revolutionists of our day they know; the Reformers of days gone by are strangers to them. The sinners they know by name, the saints they recall with a sense of shame. The fellowship of the worldly they seek, of the saints and their spiritual victories by God's grace they find it hard to speak.

And history repeats itself because spiritually mankind is not changed. Surely he is not changed for the better in spite of theories of "common grace" — which in this day certainly is shown to fail utterly to improve mankind and restrain sin "in the life of the individual and in the community . . . by the general operation of His Spirit, without renewing the heart of man" and so "restrains the unimpeded breaking out of sin, by which human life in society remains possible" — and in spite of all the efforts of men to curb the constant rise of crime. Law enforcement agencies just cannot change the nature of man. And the seed of sin sown in Paradise, transmitted and transferred into every descendant of Adam and Eve, brings forth a continuous and fixed crop of sin. As man, without a change in his nature from a spiritual, ethical point of view, grows in knowledge and natural wisdom, he develops in sin, and not in righteousness. Under the power of the lie he "learns" only how to seek more effectively to escape the curse without the cross. And his wisdom is shown to be folly.

With the advent of the printing press, the camera, radio and television, the ungodly are able to show their ungodly deed which they have ungodly committed to a wider and ever widening audience of eager watchers, readers and observers. Time marches on, the saying is. But sin marches on with it. And when the covenant community, the church sphere, joins with the world to march along with that world and keep in step with it, we are rushing to another visitation like that of the flood. Only this time it will be a visitation by fire!

The plain teaching of these first four verses of Genesis 6 is that the sons of God and the daughters of men — and that means also, the daughters of God and the sons of men — must not mix in marriage. There



must be an antithetical life exercised in the church. Mix and you will get into an awful fix! Mix and you set out on a way of sin against the living God; you begin to sow the seeds of an evil crop to follow. And it is only, as we said before, the mercy of God that rights the wrong we do, and brings a Ruth to Canaan, and a Timothy to the side of Paul.

It is only because THE Son of God set His face steadfastly in God's way, separated Himself completely from the sinful pleasures of the world and refused to seek the friendship of the sons of man, that we have the harvest of righteousness and good works, and that we now in God's grace are virgins for Christ's sake and presently enjoy the wonder of being His royal bride.

## *Contending For The Faith*

# **The Doctrine of Atonement (Reformation Period)**

*H. Veldman*

We were busy, in our preceding article, with a discussion of Art. V of the Rejection of Errors of Head II of the Canons. Let us quote this article again:

Who teach: That all men have been accepted unto the state of reconciliation and unto the grace of the covenant, so that no one is worthy of condemnation on account of original sin, and that no one shall be condemned because of it, but that all are free from the guilt of original sin. For this opinion is repugnant to Scripture which teaches that we are by nature children of wrath. Eph. 2:3.

We concluded our preceding article by calling attention to two statements in this fifth article, namely, that all men have been accepted unto the grace of the covenant, and that no one is worthy of condemnation on account of original sin. No one shall be condemned because of it, but all are free from the guilt of original sin. These views of the Arminians follow inexorably from their teachings, and they are also very prevalent today. And we promised to call attention to this in this article.

Now we must understand that when the Arminians speak of all men as having been accepted unto the state of reconciliation and of being accepted unto the grace of the covenant, they mean something which is completely contrary to what the Reformed faith means and that which is set forth in the divine and infallible Scriptures. Indeed, the Remonstrants also speak of the sinner that he has been accepted into the state of reconciliation and into the grace of God's covenant. But notice, if you please, what the Arminians believe as set forth here in these articles in this Rejection of Errors of Head II of our Canons. They believe that God the Father has ordained His Son to the death of the cross without a certain and definite decree to save any, so that the necessity, profitableness, and worth of what Christ has merited by His death might have existed, and might remain in

all its parts complete, perfect and intact, even if the merited redemption had never in fact been applied to any person. Then, they taught that it was not the purpose of the death of Christ that He should confirm the new covenant of grace through His blood, but only that He should acquire for the Father the mere right to establish with man such a covenant as He might please, whether of grace or of works. This means that Christ merely merited for the Father the right to enter into whatever negotiations with the sinner He would desire. In Article III we read that, according to the Arminians, Christ by His satisfaction did not merit either salvation itself for anyone, or faith whereby this satisfaction of Christ unto salvation is effectually appropriated. In other words, the salvation of the sinner is separated, divorced from the cross. Christ merely merited for the Father the authority or the perfect will to deal again with man, and to prescribe new conditions as He might desire, obedience to which, however, depended upon the free will of man, so that it therefore might have come to pass that either none or all should fulfill these conditions. And what these new conditions are is set forth in Article IV. This new covenant of grace, into which the sinner has been accepted by God through the death of Christ, does not consist herein that we by faith, in as much as it accepts the merits of Christ, are justified before God and are saved, but in the fact that God having revoked the demand of perfect obedience of the law, regards faith itself and the obedience of faith, although imperfect, as the perfect obedience of the law, and does esteem it worthy of the reward of eternal life through grace. O, yes, the Arminians speak of this covenant as the new covenant of grace. But they are merely playing with words. It is not really a covenant of grace, but another covenant of works. The sinner is not saved because Christ died for him, but only because he believes. God regards a sinner's faith, although very imperfect, as worthy of everlasting life



and glory. Faith is the new condition which the Lord now prescribes as the way of salvation.

And, according to the Arminians, all men have been accepted unto the grace of the covenant. How strikingly similar this view is to that which is being taught and proclaimed today! All men are equally in the covenant of the Lord. All men are heirs of everlasting life and glory. All children receive this divine assurance at their baptism. Every child receives at baptism the assurance from the Lord that the Lord loves him and desires to save him. All men have been accepted into the grace of the covenant. There is now salvation for all. The Lord would have all men be saved and come to the knowledge of salvation. And we do well to understand that this is Arminian heresy and condemned by our fathers of Dordt. How important it is that we understand our confessions and that we put forth every effort to familiarize ourselves with these confessions!

To this must be added that the Arminians, according to this fifth article, also taught that no one is worthy of condemnation on account of original sin, and that no one shall be condemned because of it, but that all are free from the guilt of original sin. This, too, the Remonstrants were compelled to believe. Also this is currently taught and proclaimed today. Years ago, in the Christian Reformed Church, they spoke of a special baptismal grace, a grace which was not regenerating, but it enables the recipient of it to be able to accept the offer of salvation when later in his life that offer of salvation was presented to him in the preaching of the gospel. They were compelled to teach this. You see, they taught that all the children were in the covenant of the Lord, heirs of the promise, objects of divine love and favour, and that the offer of salvation would be extended to him in the preaching of the gospel. But they were aware of the fact that the Scriptures taught that all are born dead in sins and in trespasses, and that a dead sinner was in no position to accept this offer that was extended to him. So they taught this special baptismal grace. This grace did not regenerate him, but it did enable him to accept this offer of salvation. This, we understand, was nothing else than Pelagianism, the teaching that the sinner is not dead in sins and in misery. A sinner that is able to accept salvation, without the renewal of the heart, is certainly not dead in sin and in misery.

The Remonstrant was compelled to teach what is held before us in this fifth article. After all, this new covenant, as we have already observed, is nothing else than a covenant of works. The new condition which the Lord now prescribes is the condition of faith. The Arminian was forced to teach this. Notice, please, that they taught that no one is worthy of condemnation on account of original sin. So, they denied the Scriptural truth of original guilt. The truth of original guilt means that the sin of Adam is imputed to the entire human

race and that all men are held accountable for the sin of Adam. But this also implies the denial of original pollution. Of course! The truths of original guilt and original pollution are inseparably connected. The sinner is born in original pollution, is born dead in sins and in trespasses because of his original guilt. If he be not guilty when born, he cannot be born in pollution and corruption. And, of course, the Arminian was compelled to deny original pollution. The new covenant of grace into which all sinners have now entered through the death of Christ demands this. This is really another covenant of works. But then it follows that the sinner must also be able to fulfill this new condition. So, the sinner is not worthy of condemnation on account of original sin, and neither is he born in original pollution and corruption. This, we understand, is Pelagianism, the heresy that denies the Scriptural truth of original sin. How true it is that the denial of one truth must inexorably lead to the denial of all other fundamental truths of the Word of God. The denial of man's corruption, also taught today, is not Reformed, but Arminian and Pelagian. Let us always bear this in mind.

This heresy of the Arminians the Reformed fathers declare to be contrary to the Word of God. On the one hand, the fathers quote Eph. 2:3: "Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of our flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." One might ask the question: but why do the fathers quote this particular passage of the Word of God? And it is not difficult to understand the reasoning of the fathers. According to the Arminians, there are no children of wrath. All men have been accepted into the state of reconciliation. No one is held condemnable on account of his original sin. And this also implies, as we have seen, that no one is held condemnable on account of his original pollution. This means that, according to the Arminians, there are no children of wrath by nature. But this is surely directly in conflict with the teaching of the Word of God here in Eph. 2:3. And may I add that this is directly in conflict with all that is taught in the Word of God? Does not verse 1 in Eph. 2 teach us that we have been quickened who were dead in trespasses and in sins? Does not verse 3 speak of those who were by nature the children of wrath, even as the others? And do we not read in this third verse: "Among whom also we *all* had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh," etc? So, there is no exception. The truth of original guilt and pollution is clearly held before us in the inspired Word of God. And in Rom. 5:12 we read: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

However, the Arminians also deny, in this connection, another fundamental truth of the Word of



God. Mind you, they say that all men have been accepted into the state of reconciliation. And then they teach that no one is worthy of condemnation on account of original sin, and they also taught that no one is born in original pollution and corruption. According to the Remonstrant, therefore, the sinner is held accountable only for his actual sins. He is not charged with the sin of Adam. That sin of Adam is not charged against him. That he perishes is only because of the actual sins he himself commits. But this is surely contrary to the Word of God. The Word of God teaches us that the blood of Christ has washed us of all sins and iniquity. The Arminian teaches that all men have been accepted into the state of reconciliation. Of

course, we now understand that this expression, "accepted into the state of reconciliation," has a meaning completely foreign to the Reformed faith and the Divine Scriptures. But the Word of God teaches us that the state of reconciliation implies the washing away of all sin. In the state of reconciliation, based upon the perfect work of Christ upon the cross of Calvary, we are free from all guilt, not only from our original guilt, but also from all the actual sins which we commit in the midst of our earthly tabernacle. The Arminians, therefore, make an unscriptural distinction between our original sin and our actual sins. It stands condemned, therefore, also upon the basis of this Scriptural truth.

## *From Holy Writ*

# Pure And Undeified Religion (7)

*Rev. Robert D. Decker*

*chapter 1:13-17, cont.*

No one may say when he succumbs to temptation, "I am tempted of God." The reason no one may say that is: "for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man." Literally the text reads: "for God is untemptable of evil." That is contrary to His very Being and Nature as God. God is pure and holy, righteous and good; He is the light in whom is no darkness at all (cf. vs. 17, I John 1:5). Because God is untemptable of evil, it follows that He never tempts a man. God never entices anyone to sin. The source of our sinning must never be sought in God. That would be to shift the blame of our sins from ourselves to God and make Him the author of sin. That is blasphemy.

This, however, does not change the fact that God is sovereign over evil. Evil is not some kind of eternal force alongside of God. It, too, according to the eternal counsel of God and under His sovereign power serves His purpose in Jesus Christ. God says in Isaiah 45:7; "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." The inspired Apostle Paul in the famous ninth chapter of his Letter to the Romans speaks of God's raising up of Pharaoh to show His power and concludes: "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." (vs. 18) In answer to the objection of unbelief to God's sovereignty the Apostle quotes from Isaiah 45: "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power

over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" (vss. 20, 21)

God, therefore, the Bible teaches with unmistakable clarity, is sovereign over evil; it must serve His purpose. At the same time we may never say that sin has its origin in God. Ultimately this is beyond our puny, human, and sinful comprehension. And there we leave the question. God is sovereign, and we may not question that! We may not ask, "Why doth he yet find fault?" And at the same time we must insist with the Scriptures that God is untemptable of evil and tempts no man. Man always sins willingly and because he wants to sin. He never sins because God forces him to sin.

James explains the whole terrible process in verses 14 and 15. "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." This is the first step. The sinner is drawn away by his own lusts. Lust is that terrible, powerful craving for that which is forbidden by the Word of God. By that man is enticed. That term is really "to bait, catch by bait." The idea then is that the sinner's own lusts are the bait by which he is caught in the trap of sin and drawn away from God.

"Then," (vs. 15); this is now the second step. Having been drawn away and enticed by his own lust; "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin." When lust has conceived or seized hold on us, it brings forth or produces sin. That sin is the willful missing of the mark of the glory of God. And that sin, that missing of the mark is the product of our own lust, our craving



for that which God's Word forbids. Lust produces the sin. The original fall into sin illustrates the truth of this exactly. Having heard the lie of Satan and conversed with him, . . . the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, . . ." Notice the lust here. "She saw that the tree was good for food"; that's the lust of the flesh. "It was pleasant to the eyes"; that's the lust of the eyes; and "a tree to be desired to make one wise"; that's the pride of life. Therefore "she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat." (Gen. 3:6, I John 2:15-17). Lust took hold of Eve and produced her missing of the mark. God said, "Thou shalt not eat of it," but she ate and gave to Adam, and he ate.

The third and concluding step in the process is stated in the last part of verse 15: "and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." "When it is finished," that is, when sin has come to full maturity; when it has fully developed and reached its full potential, it brings forth death. Sin may be compared to a cancerous growth in the human body. It grows and spreads and pervades our entire system, finally killing us. Sin, when it is finished, gives birth to death. And death is the expression of the wrath of God. Death is banishment from the favor and fellowship of God. Death is to be expelled from the paradise of communion with God. And that death is experienced now by the sinner. He is like the troubled sea; he finds no peace, no rest, no lasting satisfaction or happiness. Rather, his life is characterized by a frantic search for meaning and comfort, unrest, turmoil, discontent, anxiety, and fear. Death is the punishment of the sinner, his final alienation from God. The process is complete: the child of lust is sin, and the child of sin is death.

"Do not err, my beloved brethren" (vs. 16). Do not be deceived or led astray or fooled, my beloved brothers. This is the origin and the working out of sin and death. Do not say then, when you fall into sin, "I am tempted of God." Say rather, "God be merciful to me, the sinner." Confess your sins, pray for grace to resist temptations, fight the good fight. But, whatever you do, never say that your sin is the fault of God. That is a one-way street to hell. Lust is the cause of our being drawn away and enticed; and that lust produces the sin, and the sin gives birth to death. Do not err! Sin does not come from God.

The inspired James expresses that positively in verse 17: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." God gifts and perfect gifts come from God, the Father of lights! Every good gift comes from Him. Every gift which is beneficial to us, which serves to prepare us for glory. In a word, every saving gift comes from God. And every perfect gift. That word "perfect"

means complete in all its parts. Every gift then which serves to make the child of God complete, fully mature, in the service of his Lord comes from God.

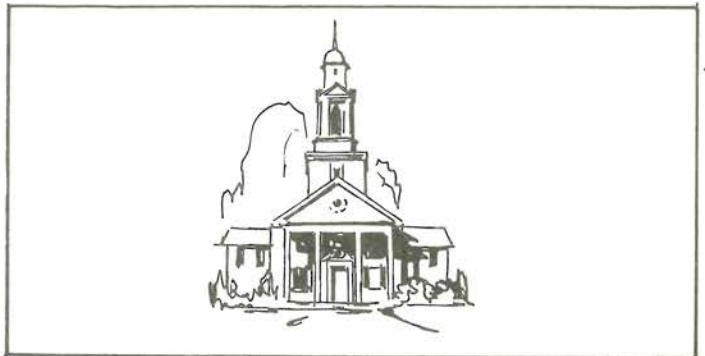
Those gifts come from above James writes. That means they come from heaven. They are heavenly gifts. The contrast is all too obvious. Lust comes from within us, and sin comes from that lust. But from above, descending from the Father of lights come only good and perfect gifts!

That is always, invariably the case. The source of these good and perfect gifts is the Father of "the lights." The Lights here must mean the sun, moon, and stars. God is the Father of them in the sense that He is the Creator of them. Light as such is always the symbol of moral, ethical perfection in the Scriptures. That is the idea in the text, too. The sun, reflected by the moon, and the stars are the lights of creation. But as the earth turns in relation to the sun, shadows of darkness are cast. That is never true of God. He, as the Father-Creator of the lights, is infinitely greater than these. With God, the Father of the lights there is no variableness. That is, with God there is no variation. He is always the same, always the giver of every good and perfect gift.

Still more, with God the Father of the lights there is no "shadow cast by turning." What a blessed comfort that affords the child of God who finds himself in divers temptations! His God is the Father of the lights, with Whom is no variation, neither shadow cast by turning. His God never changes! He is Jehovah, the I Am That I Am. The never-changing, always faithful God of His children.

Blessed, then, is the man that endures temptations. Blessed is he who does not say when he is tempted, "I am tempted of God." Blessed is that man who confesses his sin and goes to His heavenly Father, with Whom is no variation or shadow cast by turning. From Him he receives the good and perfect gifts of salvation in Jesus Christ; the faith, the wisdom, the grace, the hope, the love, the strength to endure. Blessed, supremely blessed, is that man. "For when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."

Endure, soldier of the cross. Find your strength in the Father of lights.





## The Strength of Youth

# Divorce and Remarriage (4)

Rev. J. Kortering

One of the beautiful Reformed principles for determining truth is *sola Scriptura*, only the Scriptures. This must be our guiding light as we now explore the Biblical principles concerning the duration of marriage, how to handle difficulties if they arise within marriage, and what to do if a marriage breaks down. Is divorce a Scriptural option for the believer? And if so, is remarriage proper in any circumstances? We may not be guided by our emotions, even though they inevitably run very high in dealing with such a sensitive subject. We may not be guided by what others are doing, as if majority opinion will determine for us Christian conduct. With Luther, our "conscience is bound to the Word of God."

We propose to study Scriptural teaching on this subject by following the historical order. We must examine somewhat, marriage as created, marriage and divorce in the Old Testament times, Christ's teaching on marriage and divorce, and finally Paul's instruction given in his epistles. We shall see that the Bible teaches from beginning to end that marriage is for the life of both partners, that this marriage bond is never dissolved by any action on the part of husband or wife, but only by death, and that true love seeks reconciliation in *all* things.

### MARRIAGE IN THE BEGINNING

Divorce is the break-down of marriage. It is the result of sin as it affects marriage. We must be reminded of this, else we may be influenced by the frequency of it and develop a calloused or nonchalant attitude toward it. If we are exposed to evil frequently enough, we may even accept it as a way of life, and our sensitivity to sin becomes dull. As covenant young people we must guard against this, also as it relates to divorce. True, it is so common that it hardly shocks us anymore; yet that does not make it any less wicked. We must preserve our spiritual balance and remind ourselves that divorce is the result of sin, and therefore to be abhorred. It is to be included in the "wages of sin" which is death.

All of this is impressed upon our minds when we examine the "first marriage" which was "from the beginning." If we do this, we will see God's purpose for marriage, see that God has instituted marriage for His glory, and that therefore to live in the bond of marriage requires of us obedience to God. To be sure, sin has come between the original creation and the present world. This explains for us why divorce is so

common and why marriages fail so often. Yet, we must also remind ourselves that in Christ, the original purpose of marriage is restored. We believe that we are covenant young people, ingrafted into Christ by a true and living faith. This reality enables us to approach marriage, not from the point of view of sin, but sanctification. We may study with such sanctified eyes what God created and learn what God requires of us, now that we are renewed in His image through salvation in Jesus Christ. Looking back will help us get the proper perspective for marriage.

Our Lord taught this very clearly. In the context of Matt. 19:1-9, which we will examine later, the Pharisees came to Christ asking about divorce and even divorce as "suffered by Moses." In answering this, Christ exhorted, "Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives, but from the beginning it was not so," Matt. 19:8. Reckoning that sin came between the beginning and the present, Christ insists that the principles of marriage, as created by God, take precedence over other seeming variances from them. Hence, Christ also said, "Have ye not read that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother and shall cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder," Matt. 19:4-6.

What principles of marriage can we learn from the original creation.

### SIX PRINCIPLES

The first one is that marriage is a *divine institution*. Adam and Eve did not discover marriage for themselves. The origin of marriage is not in man; it is in God. God created them for marriage, it was all part of His perfect plan. If we believe in evolution, we lose this: for then marriage is simply a refinement of the sex-drive of the animal, a social bond that the enlightened animal found necessary for a time, and that possibly with the passing of time may be discarded if "enlightened" man thinks life will be better without it. Emphatically, marriage is of God, a divine calling that we as covenant young people must view as being within the will of God. Paul did not reject this in I Cor. 7:7; he was speaking about the advantages of serving God if one has the gift of continency. Yet he wholeheartedly acknowledges, "But every man hath



his proper gift of God, one after this manner and another after that," I Cor. 7:7.

Secondly, *God* is the one who joins in marriage. This is a principle from the beginning. Here too, it isn't a question of who happens to "fall in love." To be sure, God uses means of physical attraction, personality, ability to love, etc. to bring two people together. Yet, God is the one who joins in marriage. God created Adam for Eve, and Eve for Adam. After their creation He brought Eve to Adam, Gen. 2:22. God brought the marriage partners together within the institution that He had ordained. The Marriage Form in our Psalter emphasizes this, "Therefore, ye are not to doubt, but that the marriage state is pleasing to the Lord, since he made unto Adam his wife, brought and gave her himself to him to be his wife, witnessing thereby that he doth yet as with his hand bring unto every man his wife." God over-rules our romance and sovereignly realizes each marriage. Hence, Christ said, "What *God* hath joined together, let not man put asunder," Matt. 19:6.

Thirdly, God joins *one* husband and *one* wife in marriage. This was different for the animals: the sea brought forth many birds, and the earth brought forth many animals. There were many males and females of each species, yet for man there was only one. This is a creation principle. God by virtue of His creative work, intended and still intends, that marriage be the exclusive relationship of one husband and one wife. We see this clearly "from the beginning." This is true both according to God's purpose: He willed this relationship to be carried out in this manner and He so created man that the intimate relationship of love requires this: "love is strong as death, jealousy is cruel as the grave," Song of Sol. 8:6.

Fourth, the exclusive relationship of marriage is rooted in the *nature of man's creation*. After God created Eve, He did not bring her to Adam and have to explain to Adam what marriage was all about. He didn't have to give Adam a course in marital counselling. Adam's response is recorded in Gen. 2:23, "And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man." You sense the excitement? This is still true today.

Why was this? Two things have to be pointed out in this connection. Adam and Eve were very much alike. They were both created human beings. They both walked erect in the Garden of Eden. They both possessed the gift of intelligence, reasoning, memory, intuition, etc. Both had desires that they longed to have fulfilled. Both were created able to love and to respond to love. This could never have been true for any other animal in all the creation. Adam and Eve were made for each other. Yet, they were different. Physically, psychologically, spiritually, they were male and female, man and woman. Their differences

complemented each other perfectly. What the man needed the woman could provide, and what the woman needed the man could provide. God created them with a nature that would find fulfillment in marriage.

One other thing we should mention in this connection. By virtue of God's creation, the distinctive roles within marriage were also determined. God did not create Eve first, something which cannot in any way be harmonized with the error of evolution; God created man first. This fact requires that man assume the position of responsible "head" of the wife and home, and the woman be helpmeet to him. These are creation principles for all time, I Tim. 2:13.

Fifth, God also determined through creation what the purpose of marriage would be. In catechism we learn that Adam's relationship was three-fold: before God he was covenant friend; before the creation he was servant-king; and as far as the human race was concerned he was both first father and representative head. How then does marriage fit into this? With just a casual consideration, we will notice that it touches all three.

How did marriage serve Adam's relationship of friend-servant before God? This way: Adam and Eve possessed in their marriage a daily expression of the covenant friendship which they had with their God. This covenant friendship which they both enjoyed was motivated by divine love. God loved Adam and Eve; and by creating them in His own image, He gave them not only the capacity to receive divine love, but also to express it both to God and to one another. This is the abiding principle for marriage rooted in creation; "marry in the Lord," I Cor. 7:39. Just as Adam and Eve could not reach fulfillment with one another without God, no more can this be done today. Both Adam and Eve loved the Lord their Creator, and this love enabled them to reach out for one another in the bond of a perfect marriage. Through this love-life, they enjoyed a visible and sensuous expression of God's love and friendship for them. This is what God intended through His creation and institution of marriage. This purpose can only be realized today when young people love one another in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The marriage of Adam and Eve also served Adam's rule as king. How long this lasted we don't know; one gets the impression that it didn't last very long. Yet, the purpose that God had in this connection was that Eve would be the helpmeet of Adam. This did not simply apply to Adam's personal needs; it had implication for His work. The principle is this: a wife assists her husband in everything, and she can make or break a man in his *work*. By the loving bond of husband and wife, a contented husband can work better. We sometimes refer to it this way, "Behind every successful man is a great woman"; and there is a lot of truth to that. Through the mutual bond of love



in marriage, a man is better able to serve God in His daily calling. This was true for Adam, and all who would be "kings under God."

Obviously marriage had much to do with the third relationship, first father and representative head of the human race. It was also God's purpose that through marriage the human race would be born. Marriage is the divine institution by which this is accomplished. Today we add, more particularly, that it is through marriage that the covenant seed are brought forth, Gen. 3:15.

Finally, the original creation sets forth the principle of the duration of marriage, as long as both husband and wife live. This can be seen in the creation ordinance, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and

mother and cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh," Gen. 2:24. Marriage is more durable than the sibling relationship, it is for life. Christ stressed this in Matt. 19:1-9 when He emphasized that the original marriage ordinance takes precedence over any human changes, "What God hath joined together, *let not man put asunder.*" This is a principle from the beginning which may not be altered by man, no matter how the times may change. Man must bow before God's command and not think that God will accommodate him in his sinful ways.

These principles have bearing upon marriage for all ages. They also help us understand marriage and divorce as it was expressed in the Old Testament times which we will consider next time, D.V.

## Studies in Election

# 16. It's Proclamation (cont.)

*Rev. Robt. C. Harbach*

This truth is not a part of modern-day evangelism and its methods. In the last two generations, the revivalistic evangelists never referred to it, except, perhaps, to deal it a backhand slap. Modern mass evangelism, mainly, preaches a humanistic religion, based, as it is, on free will. Modern evangelists regard those as naive and narrow who think of their cause as a compromise. Their "co-operative" evangelism is no compromise. They can co-operate with Romanists, Modernists, Jews, Unitarians, ecumenists, atheists and existentialists "without any compromise of my message." That may be so, especially underscoring the word *my*. But what of *the* message? For *the* gospel is so badly compromised and so poorly presented, if not sorely misrepresented, that the present generation hardly knows what it is. Years ago, the popular evangelists thought the primary object of the calling of the church was the salvation of souls. Everything had to conform to that man-centered end. But today converts from the Roman, Jewish, Christian Scientist or Modernist circles are not instructed to follow Christ out of the false church into the true church, but to remain where they are as witnesses to Christ there. Not to do this is taken to imply a great lack of faith in the Holy Spirit. Actually, it is anti-predestinarian and anti-Reformation, in that it ignores the leading of the Spirit who directed the saints in the past to re-formation, according to the pattern of holy Scripture. It also by-passes the church with its indispensable, identifying mark, the pure preaching of the Word of God, and drives the sheep out of the oasis

into the desert. Consequently, the churches are becoming an ecumenical, one-world church with a membership of mere natural men. Preaching is not even of the devotional type. It comes with a pious, religious veil and verbiage, which sounds very much like language familiar in Reformed circles, but it is all a conveyance to take us down the road to humanism in the form of social democracy or "Christian" socialism. Nothing of it is according to the historic, doctrinal standards of the church. It gets to the flattery of man, not the misery of man; the love of God, not the law of God. It is little above "only-believeism" and "decisionism," and as much as the latter, if not more, denies the mortal effects of the fall of man and his total depravity. The latter proffers a weak and helpless Christ to a people never prepared to see their helpless impotence to come to any savior. The neo-orthodox have a Christ whose kingdom is of this world, and whose servants will fight, whose kingdom is from this world and for this world.

Listen to Jesus as He preaches in the synagogue of Nazareth, or as He delivers His Bread of Life discourse, or hear Paul, as in Romans Nine. Compare this to the sensationalism of modern preaching. Rev. By-Ends always has one finger in the air, one ear to the ground, and one eye on the cat. This keeps him so posted that he never preaches anything that makes his hearers uneasy in their sins. Such people, he believes, must not be driven from the churches, but must be catered to, and given that which will inflate their ego, flatter their flesh and tickle their ears.



Men who advise, "preach Christ and never mind theology," do not preach Him as God's Elect (Isa. 42:1) with whom God has made the covenant (Ps. 89:3). They preach an effeminate, sentimental, reactionary Christ, who never takes the initiative, who is not found in Scripture, but only in their own imaginings. But the Christ of Holy Writ is Jehovah's Elect Servant, the Lamb foreordained before the foundation of the world (Rev. 13:8), the One set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel (Luke 2:34), the Stone of stumbling and Rock of offence (1 Pet. 2:8), as the crucified, risen and ascended Lord in whom all His people died to sin, have been raised together with Him and made to sit together in the heavenly realm in Christ. They preach not Christ according to the eternal counsel of God, but a caricature of Him.

With doctrinal preaching so extremely unpopular, there is a strong aversion to the doctrine of election. Sermons on election are not only not understood by the average church-goer, and way over his head, but are often vehemently denounced and bitterly resented. Back in September 2, 1855, Charles H. Spurgeon said, "... there seems to be an *inveterate prejudice* in the human mind against this doctrine, and although most other doctrines will be received by professing Christians, some with caution, others with pleasure, yet this one seems to be most frequently disregarded and discarded. In many of our pulpits, it would be reckoned a *high sin and treason* to preach a sermon upon *election*, because they could not make it what they call a 'practical' discourse. I believe they have erred from the truth ... There is nothing in Scripture which may not, under the influence of God's Spirit, be turned into a practical discourse; and free-grace practice is the best practice..." (*Sermons on Sovereignty, Election*, p. 51, underscoring, CHS). This is the way it was over a hundred years ago. It is much more extreme today. In many Reformed and Calvinistic churches, where Predestination is found in the doctrinal standards, the bare mention of this heart-line of the gospel makes many see red. Ministers who still preach it are either regarded as disturbers of the peace (bulls in a China shop), or untactful menaces long out of touch with reality. Self-righteous hypocrites still think they have every right to the pew while they deny this truth to the pulpit. Faithful men contending for this truth are few.

So deeply embedded is this doctrine that to subtract it from Scripture would mean to tear and destroy the fabric and organism of Scripture, root and branch, to cut out the very heart of the gospel from the bosom of the church. More than once we have heard this truth denied by Arminians in coast-to-coast radio broadcasts. Also it has been contended that even if it has biblical support, it ought not to be preached, since it only creates division and schism. This is much like the

Romish argument against putting the Bible in the hands of the people in their own language, and against putting the Word of God in the pulpit and in the study class. It sounds more plausible to argue that these mysteries are the secret things which belong to the Lord, and that therefore we are not to meddle with them. But this truth, everywhere and plainly revealed in Scripture, is, surely, no secret. It is, indeed, one of the mysteries of the faith. But so are the doctrines of the trinity, the incarnation, the virgin birth, the creation and the resurrection of the dead. It does, too, have its origin in the secret counsel of God. But much of that counsel is revealed in the gospel. Christ is "our chief prophet and teacher, who has fully revealed to us the secret counsel and will of God concerning our redemption." (Heid. Cat., Q. 31). When it is objected that election preaching kills missionary endeavor, then the patriarchs, prophets, apostles and the Lord Himself were all useless servants of God, for they preached it continually and fully. When it is objected that the doctrine has the effect of driving to despair any who attempt to grasp its teaching, we have a sophism which could as warrantably be brought against the doctrine of regeneration, for it is no easier to determine whether truly born of God than to make personal calling and election sure. These are some of the difficulties encountered in the proclamation of this glorious truth.

A further difficulty in the proclamation of this truth, which its faithful teacher will encounter, is the insistence of some that it is of such a nature, emphasizing God's sovereignty as it does, that it tends to blind us to man's responsibility. They hide behind the former as a cover to excuse themselves from the latter. They excuse their sin by hiding behind "total depravity." They excuse their total depravity by hiding behind God's sovereign ordination of sin. ("Out of the mouth of the Most High proceedeth not evil and good?"— Lam. 3:38). Their contention is that it makes no difference whether men live in carelessness, idleness, wantonness or lawlessness, for if they are reprobates, they will go to hell, anyway; and if they are elect, they may live as they please, enjoy sin to the full, and still be converted to walk in righteousness and salvation. To this we answer, first, that such reasoning is not that of a Christian. The elect would still prefer a life holy and without blame, even if it could be proved to them "there is no God." In the second place, this is childish thinking. What truth is there that corrupt men will not pervert? Recently, some hold-up men robbed an entire church while at worship. They took the contents of the offering plates and of individual wallets and pocket-books. With the congregation held at gun-point, the minister childishly called out to the bandits, "God loves you!" One of them, collecting the loot, answered, "I hope so!" Men will easily go on living in sin, on the assumption that God loves all men.



The truth is, God is love. Error comes in when men assume that that is *all* He is! So it is rather strange, yet Arminian, to contend that the doctrine of election either does, or has the tendency to, make men careless and profane. For the doctrine itself, as it stands pure and uncorrupted in Scripture, teaches that the elect were chosen before the creation of the universe in order that they might be holy and blameless before God (Eph. 1:4). While any continue in a life of ungodliness, they may conclude, not that God loves them, for the wrath of God abides on them, but only that they are in the way the end of which is the way of death.

Bad men will not only use the counsel of God as a cover for their indolence and perversity, but, when it suits them, they will also object to it in the most hateful spirit. It was said of all the elder sons of Jesse, "neither hath the Lord chosen these" (I Sam. 16:10), which was, finally, too much for the eldest, whose "anger was kindled against David" (17:28). When Jesus preached that God made sovereign choice of Gentile widow in preference to the widows of Israel, and of a Syrian leper in preference to the lepers in Israel, the people in the synagogue of Nazareth were so incensed that they attempted to do away with Him (Luke 4:25-29). When Jesus taught that all given to Him in the decree of God shall come to Him (John 6:37), and that no man can come to Him except the Father draw him (6:44), many of His former adherents went back and walked no more with Him. They either wrested the Scriptures to their own destruction, or they

rejected the counsel of God against themselves.

For those who have within them the firstfruits of the Spirit, who have been already delivered from the wrath of God, and who long for the perfection of their deliverance in the day of Christ, — the waiting for the Son of God, even Jesus, can bring them only fullness of joy, and everlasting bliss.

This is what the saints at Thessalonica expected, and longed for; that they might see Jesus, in Whom is bound up all their glory.

And this is also your and my expectation, children of our Father Which is in heaven!

You and I who know we have already been delivered from the wrath to come, because the Son of God, even Jesus, bore for us that awful wrath, so as to remove it from us forever. You and I who believe the Word of God's Son, even Jesus, Who told us in no uncertain terms that as He left us so He would return to take us unto Himself. You and I who, therefore, walk in the midst of the world, not as children of darkness, but as the children of light, who also fight the good warfare of faith daily, joyfully bearing His cross, but always following after Him, we wait, always expecting, never growing weary, but in patience trusting that God's Son, even Jesus, shall come from heaven, — we wait, and shall never be brought to shame.

No, never idly waiting!

But waiting in hope that always is characterized by a godly, sanctified walk!

Such is the beautiful testimony of all God's saints!

## *All Around Us*

# Modern Views Of Marriage

*Prof. H. Hanko*

In many different ways and from many different sources, the home is under attack today. A concerted and devilish effort is being made to destroy utterly this fundamental institution of society which was ordained by God at the very dawn of history. Included in the quote below is a modern sociologist's views on the need for radical change in family life. It gives some idea as to the thinking of all too many people in this country. We are indebted to *Christian News* for the quote.

It is marriage that has been changing profoundly in recent decades, not just what married people do. There is now perhaps a universal awareness that the basic rules of the family game are being challenged, rather than individuals cheating in terms of rules that

themselves are dependable. The relationship between husband and wife, and in different ways between parents and child, is being looked at critically by people who are aware that neither the law nor any other institution of society has, in reality, the power to compel within the home behavior that people do not believe in.

For couples who do not intend to engage in parenthood, and therefore have a right to exercise their own freedom as private persons, we can expect that today's yes-or-no marriage choice will be replaced by a much more individualized freedom of contract, in which couples will enter that kind of marriage which suits them. This could be done either by offering different kinds of marriage from which each couple will select one (at a time), to which they



are then bound, or by engaging the services of a marrying counselor (likely a lawyer) who would assist couples in drawing up their own internally consistent contracts.

Neither monogamy nor indefinite permanence are important in this respect, so they will not be required. However, the agreed-upon choice will be explicit and recorded so there's no question of deception or misunderstanding, as well as to provide statistical information, and official registration of this choice is an element of marriage which will remain a matter of public concern.

Explicit choice of the kind of marriage one enters into is, of course, an effect not only of the emancipation of women, but of men as well. What will some of the major options be? With the insurance functions that were formerly secured by having children (who would provide during one's old age) being completely taken over by the government (assisted by unions, pension funds and the like), there will be little reason to warn those who choose childlessness against this course.

With celibacy no bar to sexual satisfaction (because of the acceptance of nonmarital sex with contraceptions), society will accept the idea that some segments of the population can obtain whatever intimate satisfactions they require in a series of casual, short-term 'affairs' (as we call them today), and will never enter any publicly registered marriage.

Another not-unfamiliar option in this regard will be the renewable trial marriage, in which people explicitly contract for a childless union which is to be comprehensively evaluated after three years or five years, at which point either a completely new decision can be reached or the same arrangement can be renewed for another term of three or five years.

This would not be, then, a question of divorce; it is simply a matter of a definite arrangement having expired. The contract having been for a limited term, both parties are perfectly free to decide not to renew it when that term is over. This would be a normal, perhaps minor, part of one's 'marital career.'

A third option, which introduces very few complications is the permanent childless marriage; the arrangements between the two adults are of indefinite duration, but they have agreed in advance that there will be no off-spring, and of course, there is no question but that medical technology will make it possible for them to live up to that part of the arrangement. Some will choose sterilization, others will use contraceptive methods which can be abandoned if one changes his mind and is authorized to procreate.

Compound marriages will also be allowed, whether they be polygamous, polyandrous or group marriages. However, these communes will not be free of the

same obligations that any marriage entails, such as formally registering the terms of the agreement among the members; any significant change in the arrangements among members of such a familial commune will have to be recorded in the appropriate public place in the same way as marriages and divorces which involve only one husband and one wife.

There will be great freedom with regard to the number of people in the commune, but internal consistency concerning the give-and-take among the members, their privileges and obligations, will be required. The functional, pragmatic ethic emerging in today's youth culture will be strictly adhered to, some years hence, not as moral absolutes, not because people have come to the belief that these represent the true right and wrong, but in order to prevent serious conflict.

The great misery of many families today makes it evident enough that radical change is needed. The law will have to catch up with most of society — educated youth, the affluent classes, liberated women, and the culture of poverty. All these are starting to experience new family norms of which the law gives no hint.

There is a lot of food for thought in the above essay. What strikes one especially is the calm assurance that these things are indeed in store for us in the future. They are not the wild-eyed dreams of a radical. They are not the far-out speculations of one mildly mad. They are the calm reasonings of one who sees that these very things are already happening. The big question for the author is: when will what is already common among us in our society be made legal? Nor will it do to answer this with an emphatic: Never. It is too clear that society most generally follows this same pattern. Gambling, long illegal, is practiced anyway. So the solution is to make it legal. Abortion is contrary to the law; but there are innumerable abortions being performed every day. So . . . make it legal. There is little reason to doubt then that some such thing will also happen in the institution of marriage.

It is also beyond doubt that these current practices influence the people of God. I think it is not so much that any child of God would ever give any thought to the whole principle presented above or to the options to marriage suggested there; the danger is more subtle. It is a kind of evil influence which creeps into marriages which are made in the Lord. There are the ideas, for example, that sex is the be-all and end-all of life in general, and of the marriage state in particular. There is the whole notion that one of the chief purposes of marriage is not the bringing forth of children. There is the silly idea that a marriage which is successful and happy just happens; romantic love is sufficient to hold it together and make it blissful. And if romantic love does not do the job, well, then the



marriage was a mistake to begin with. If any of these ideas or others creep into our thinking, the result will be indeed unhappy marriages not only, but marriages which no longer are pictures here upon this troubled earth of the relation between Christ and His elect bride, the Church. Here is where the danger lies.

And this requires of us that we set forth very succinctly in the Church and home, to our children

and young people, what Scripture has to say about the marriage bond. This is increasingly a solemn obligation. Only then will we all be tied so tightly to Scripture and its only rule of faith and life that all the corruptions of the world will not be able to tug us away from our only immovable rock and from the only way to happiness and peace. God's Word is still the only lamp to our feet and light upon our path — also in marriage.

## Creationism In California's Schools

We have discussed before in these columns the controversy which is presently going on in California over the question of whether creationism is to be taught in the public school system. You will recall that, chiefly through the efforts of the Creation Research Society, the State school authorities were considering a plan to order the schools to teach creationism along with evolutionism as being a possible explanation for the origin of the world and the universe. This whole question stirred up a storm of controversy — as one can well imagine.

The Curriculum Commission, after an open hearing on the debate, decided to follow this policy. That is, they decided to recommend this policy to the State School Board.

Recently the School Board considered the matter. It was hoped that the Board would merely "rubber-stamp" the recommendations of the Curriculum Commission; but this is not what happened. While the Board's decision is not entirely clear, and while it still remains to be seen precisely how the Board will carry out its decision, apparently the Board decided only to revise the textbooks in such a way that, while evolutionism will still be taught and creationism excluded, nevertheless evolutionism will be taught as a theory rather than as a scientifically proved explanation of origins. In other words, evolutionism will be presented as a possible explanation, not yet proved, but one held by the majority of scientists.

Evolutionists are not at all satisfied with this and are pressing for the old position. Nor are creationists satisfied, though they see the decision as a partial victory.

The whole question is complex. On the one hand, evolutionists argue that the decision of the Board is wrong because evolutionism is scientifically verifiable or at least the only satisfactory explanation of scientific facts. They claim that creationism is

unscientific, is, in fact, religion. And therefore, the adoption of any form of creationism in the schools will violate the separation between church and school required by the Constitution. They are wrong on all counts. They are wrong when they say that evolutionism is scientifically proved, for it is not. They are wrong when they say evolutionism is science and not religion. Evolutionism is religion too, though a very evil and God-denying religion. When it is taught in public schools, religion is being taught. This is so manifestly obvious, only a fool cannot see it.

On the other hand, I cannot be in complete sympathy with the position of the creationists either. They want creationism to be presented in the public schools along with evolutionism as a "viable option." They do this on the grounds that there is as much scientific support for creationism as there is for evolutionism. They too are wrong. It is wrong to present creationism and evolutionism as viable options. It is wrong to say (or even to suggest) that we accept creationism on the basis of scientific evidence. This is wrong because the whole question is not one of "evidence," of scientific fact, of proof for either in the creation. The whole question is not an intellectual question, but a question which is spiritual in character. It is a question which arises in the arena of faith vs. unbelief. We do not believe creationism *because* there is scientific proof for it. We believe creationism because this is the teaching of the Word of God. And on that basis we are confident that there is not a shred of scientific evidence which will refute what Scripture says, — if science is true science and if all the facts are clearly known. And therefore, man has really no choice in the matter. He must not be permitted to think he has a choice. He *must* believe the Scriptures. If he believes he will be saved. If he will not believe the Scriptures, he is damned. For Faith in the Scriptures is faith in Christ. Unbelief in the Scriptures is rejection of Christ. The issue is and always must be spiritual.



## Book Reviews

### Studies In The Book Of Daniel, Vols. I, II

*Studies In The Book Of Daniel, Vols. I, II*, by Robert Dick Wilson (Baker, 1972, 688 pp., \$9.95). Reviewed by Prof. H. C. Hoeksema.

This is a very worthwhile volume in a series of publications which, on the whole, already contains several works worthy of preservation through reprinting, works which deserve a place in the libraries of preachers and theologians. I refer to Baker's "Limited Editions Library."

Dr. Robert Dick Wilson was Professor of Semitic Languages and Old Testament Criticism at Princeton Theological Seminary in "the good old days" of Princeton. He has a place among the giants of Princeton. As is stated on the dust jacket of this volume, "His writings, the result of painstaking investigations, reflect his firm belief that the whole Bible is the Word of God and therefore entirely trustworthy."

This work, which is actually two volumes in one, belongs in the field of Old Testament Isagogics, or Introduction. And, like so many works in this field, it is apologetic; that is, it is a defense of the Book of Daniel over against the higher critics, an attempt to meet, to answer, and to destroy their arguments against the authenticity and the accuracy of the Book of Daniel. An accurate summary of the nature of these two reprinted volumes is found on the dust jacket: "In his first book he tackles incisively some of the questions raised regarding the historical statements in the Book of Daniel. Each of the eighteen chapters in his first book deals with a separate allegation, and with characteristic thoroughness he defends the book

against its critics. In the second volume Dr. Wilson continues his defense of the book of Daniel, this time dealing forthrightly with the relationship of Daniel to the canon of the Old Testament, discussing the apocalypses and date of Daniel, and then scientifically measuring the influence, background, and prophecies of Daniel."

The value of the book, in this reviewer's opinion, does not lie in the fact that it meets and answers the allegations of the critics. There are many works by orthodox scholars which attempt to do this. And while we do not question their loyalty to the Scriptures and the success of many of their arguments, we have but little esteem for work of this kind. For one thing, the critics are not convinced by these arguments. For another, the child of God, whose acceptance of the Scriptures is an *a priori* of faith, has no basic need of these defenses. And besides, this entire method and practice of apologetics is not without its pitfalls.

Why, then, do we nevertheless recommend this volume? In our opinion, the value of the book lies chiefly in the many worthwhile studies and observations of a positive nature which the book contains. For in answering the allegations of the critics, the author engages necessarily in many such studies. As an illustration of what I mean, I refer the reader to the several chapters in Volume I on the question of the identity of Darius the Mede. Anyone making a thorough study of the Book of Daniel should by all means take into account the studies and the help proffered in this excellent book. The reader should perhaps be warned that this is not a book to relax with; one must expect to put on his "thinking cap."

### A New Breed Of Clergy

*A NEW BREED OF CLERGY*, by Charles Prestwood; Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Mich. (108 pp., \$1.95, paper) [Reviewed by Prof. H. C. Hoeksema]

This book is written by a Methodist preacher who became deeply involved in the civil rights movement, who is at present teaching sociology, and who still considers himself a Methodist preacher. The book is supposed to deal with the problem of a "new breed of clergy," that is, men who have graduated from

seminary, or who have entered the ministry as preachers and pastors, but who are not in the pulpit, but have found positions in the ecclesiastical bureaucracy, or in social service, or with educational institutions.

But the author has neither the correct insight into the problem nor the correct solution.

The reading value of this book is, in this reviewer's opinion, strictly negative.



## Book Reviews - cont.

### The Church And The Ecological Crisis

*THE CHURCH AND THE ECOLOGICAL CRISIS*, by H. Barnette; Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1972; 114 pp., \$2.25 (paper). [reviewed by Prof. H. Hanko]

With everybody talking about ecology these days, it is not surprising that the religious press should also take up the issue and make an effort to put the whole matter into Scriptural perspective. This could conceivably be a welcome thing.

We have in this book an attempt to define the ecological problems troubling our planet in the light of Scripture. While it is in matters of ecology and

scripture interesting reading, the writer falls short at key points. He accepts evolutionism which, quite obviously, is going to color his discussion of the problem. He strongly favors population control — even by law if necessary. He pleads for a theology of ecology and falls into the trap of pleading for a reworking of all theology to take into account ecological problems. If theologians would rework their theology to take into account every passing fad — as many do nowadays — there would be no end to the changes of theology.

### Commentaar Op Het Oude Testament—Maleachi

*COMMENTAAR OP HET OUDE TESTAMENT — MALEACHI*, by Prof. Dr. P. A. Verhoef; J. H. Kok N.V., Kampen, The Netherlands. (278 pp., f 37, 50) [Reviewed by Prof. H.C. Hoeksema]

This is another in a projected series of Old Testament commentaries being published by the well-known firm of J.H. Kok. The series is under the editorship of Prof. Dr. W.H. Gispen and Prof. Dr. Nic. H. Ridderbos. On the whole, this entire Old Testament series (for those who can handle the language) is worth adding to one's library. This particular volume is written by a South African professor, from the Theological School at Stellenbosch.

In checking the reliability of a commentary on Malachi, I always turn first to what the writer has to

say about the passage in Malachi 1:2-5. Especially the well-known words concerning God's love of Jacob and His hatred of Esau are the object of my inquiry. My judgment is that this commentary does not measure up. This is evident when the author writes: "*Toch is het ook duidelijk dat de tegenstelling tussen de haat en de liefde van God niet identiek is met verkiezing tot het eeuwige leven en verwerping tot eeuwige rampzaligheid.*"

Nevertheless, there is much helpful exposition and also reference material in this commentary. Perhaps it should be added, too, that this commentary will be useful only to those who can read Hebrew; the author works with the original throughout.

Recommended, provided it is used with discretion.



#### RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Young People's Society of Hope Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids expresses sincere sympathy to the William Kamps family in the death of their son and brother

WILLIAM KAMPS, JR.

"I was dumb with silence, I held my peace, even from good: and my sorrow was stirred." (Psalm 39:2).

Rev. R. Van Overloop, Pres.  
Kathy Koole, Sec'y.

Classis West of the Protestant Reformed Churches will meet in South Holland, Illinois on March 7, the Lord willing. Classis convenes at 8:30 AM. Material for the Agenda must be in the hands of the Stated Clerk thirty days before Classis convenes. Delegates in need of lodging should notify South Holland's clerk of their need.

Rev. David Engelsma,  
Stated Clerk



## News From Our Churches

### *Classis Report*

In the little remaining space . . . two short items, gleaned from bulletins:

Two of our congregations, apparently, are planning building projects. Hope Church in Grand Rapids has announced its intention to sell the present parsonage, with a view to building a new one. And the December 24 bulletin from Randolph indicated that, at a recent congregational meeting, "the proposed plan for the new church building was accepted."

And, from a Grand Rapids First Church bulletin, this: "An interesting bit of news comes from our Radio Committee. It reads as follows: 'The printed copies of our Radio Sermons are mailed to many people throughout the entire world. But you can imagine the surprise of the committee when a request was received recently for printed copies to be sent to a crewman aboard the U.S.S. Ticonderoga on the Pacific Ocean! Needless to say, the copies plus other Prot. Ref. literature was sent to the seaman aboard that aircraft carrier. Amazing indeed are the ways of our Lord to broadcast the truth of His Word!'" D.D.

### REPORT OF CLASSIS EAST

January 3, 1973

Hope Prot. Ref. Church

Classis East met in regular session on January 3, 1973 in our Hope Church. Rev. Harbach led in opening devotions and Rev. Schipper was the chairman of this session. Each church was represented by two delegates. Professors Hanko and Hoeksema were given advisory vote.

There was, of course, the normal, routine business of the classis but there appeared on the agenda an item of business which has not been on a Classis East agenda for years: sixteen brethren, feeling a need to relieve the overcrowded conditions of our Hope and Hudsonville congregations and, more importantly, feeling a need to establish a Protestant Reformed witness in a new area, petitioned classis to organize a new congregation in the Grandville-Jenison area. This request was received with enthusiasm by the classis and was considered to be a mark of God's favor toward us as churches. Not since the organization of Isabel and Forbes in the early '60's has a new congregation been organized in our denomination. Classis unanimously approved this request and placed the responsibility for organizing this congregation in the hands of the Hope consistory.

The normal business of a January session was also conducted. The Finance Committee, Elders W. Clason and J. Kalsbeek, Sr., reported expenses of \$56.12. Elder J. Boone relayed the appreciation of the classis for the catering service of the ladies of Hope Church.

The reports of the Stated Clerk and the Classical Committee were given.

Several elections were held. Delegates *ad examina* selected were primus delegate Rev. C. Hanko and secundi delegates Rev. M. Schipper (three-year term) and Rev. R. C. Harbach (two-year term). Synodical delegates were chosen as follows:

### MINISTERS

Primi	Secundi
C. Hanko	R.C. Harbach
J.A. Heys	G. Lubbers
G. Van Baren	M. Schipper
H. Veldman	R. Van Overloop

### ELDERS

Primi	Secundi
J.M. Faber	D. Dykstra
J. Huisken	D. Kooienga
J.B. Lubbers	H. Meulenberg
G. Pipe	H. Vander Vennen

Because of Rev. Heys' absence from his congregation for five months to co-labor with Rev. Lubbers in Jamaica, Holland requested classical appointments from January 14-May 27. This request was granted and the following schedule adopted: January 14 - G. Van Baren; January 28 - M. Schipper; February 4 - R. Van Overloop; February 25 - C. Hanko; March 11 - H. Veldman; March 18 - R. C. Harbach; April 1 - M. Schipper; April 15 - H. Veldman; April 29 - R. Van Overloop; May 6 - G. Van Baren; May 20 - C. Hanko; May 27 - R. C. Harbach.

Subsidy requests were due at this session. Kalamazoo's request for \$4300 was approved and will be forwarded to synod. Holland announced that she would not be requesting subsidy but would strive to be a self-supporting church. Classis received this information with thanks and will forward this to synod as well.

Classis met in closed session to treat one item of business. The matter raised has been placed in the hands of a committee.

The chairman, on behalf of the classis, wished Godspeed to Rev. Heys and his wife as they were to leave soon for Jamaica. The churches were urged to remember our Jamaican missionaries and their wives in their prayers and correspondence.

Classis stands adjourned until April 4, 1973, which session will be held in our Southeast Church. Rev. Veldman closed the meeting with a prayer of thanksgiving.

Respectfully submitted,  
John Huisken  
Stated Clerk