

# The **STANDARD BEARER**

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

Satan brings TV into the homes of the world, and that is understandable. But he also brings TV into the homes of the church, and that is reprehensible! We ought to recognize from a cursory viewing that TV is geared for the destruction of the godly home and family. . . . What better characterizes the content of the programs of TV than what we read in Galatians 5 concerning the works of the flesh?

See "In His Fear" — page 348

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## THE STANDARD BEARER

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## MEDITATION

## Isaac's Faith

Rev. H. Veldman

*"By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come."*

Heb. 11:20

The struggle of faith is particularly twofold. There is, first of all, the struggle between faith and reason. Of this, Abraham is a clear example. His reason could have told him, when sacrificing Isaac, that the death of Isaac would mean the end of the promise. But Abraham did some reckoning, some reasoning; he reckoned that God would raise his son from the dead.

Only, this reckoning of Abraham was by faith. Then, there is also the struggle between faith and the flesh. This aspect of the struggle is more pronounced and general in our lives. The way of faith and the way of our flesh are so often in conflict. What we believe and what we desire according to the flesh are often such violent contrasts.



It is the latter aspect of this struggle which stands upon the foreground here with Isaac. For Isaac to bless Jacob involved him in a severe struggle, a struggle with the flesh. We read that Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau by faith. First, did he also bless Esau? Secondly, did Isaac do what he did by faith? Does Isaac strike us in the entire narrative as prompted by faith?

### *AN APPARENT UNTRUTH*

First, let us look at Isaac prior to this text. Does Isaac strike us as a man of faith? Is he not the least spiritual of the patriarchs? When we look at the incident to which this text refers (Gen. 27), who makes the worst impression, and which character appeals the most?

First, he is a son of Abraham and Sarah in their old age. His mother died when he was thirty-seven years old, and he was not comforted until Rebecca came into his life. During all these years, from his birth on, he must have been severely spoiled. He was surely petted, all his needs were fulfilled immediately, and he knew little if anything of the difficulties and hardships of life. He did not have to make any decisions; everything was decided for him, and this even included the choice of a wife.

Secondly, the Word of God speaks of his marriage. In this he had no choice. Abraham probably did not care to entrust this decision to his son. His eldest servant must fetch for him a wife. However, although comforted in Rebecca's arms, Rebecca cannot cure him of his weaknesses. He liked good meals, preferred his mother's cooking. It was only after Esau grew up that he enjoyed a good meal.

Thirdly, we read of his lack of aggressiveness. We read of the time that his servants digged wells. But, when a controversy developed about them, instead of defending them he simply moves on. At Gerar he imitates the example of his father and told the lie that Rebecca was his sister. When he is one hundred thirty years old he feels exhausted, would bless his son before he dies, although he continued to live fifty years after this.

Does Isaac strike us in all this as a man of faith, as one who deserves a place among the heroes of faith in Hebrews 11?

And now, secondly, we look at Isaac in the light of this text. The text refers to Genesis 27. It is this incident that must indicate that Isaac really ranks among the heroes of faith. We read that it was by faith that Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. But, is this incident of Genesis 27 really a true picture of what we read in Hebrews 11, that Isaac did what he did by faith?

First, Isaac resolves to bless Esau. This was surely

his desire. O, he knew how Rebecca felt about Esau and Jacob, who her choice was. He also must have known who would have the birthright blessing. And he also knew Esau's profanity, his selling of the birthright. He deliberately conceives of and executes a policy whereby Esau would receive the blessing and tells him to prepare venison to his liking.

Secondly, Rebecca intervenes. Shrewd and constantly alert and aggressive, Rebecca is equal to the occasion. She certainly knew the mind of her husband, knew his desire, and was determined to frustrate it if at all possible. The story we know.

One may well ask: where is the faith whereof the writer to the Hebrews speaks? Does Isaac not strike us as stumbling, hesitating, vacillating throughout the entire procedure? Is it not really true that he is guilty of a big blunder, that he blesses Jacob only because he thinks that this "Jacob" is Esau? Is Jacob not the deceiver who bears his name, "supplanter," with honour? In fact, is it not true that the only character who appeals to us from a natural point of view is Esau, and he gets the worst of it?

### *A SEVERE STRUGGLE*

The birthright blessing.

The birthright blessing was, after all, nothing else than an expression of what God had decreed to bestow upon the sons that were blessed. The patriarchs were informed by God of His counsel unto that end, and this blessing was the patriarchal announcement of this blessing of Jehovah.

Generally speaking, there was no difficulty here, because usually the firstborn received it. But here something extraordinary had happened: the Lord had revealed to Rebecca that the younger should receive this birthright blessing in order that God's absolute sovereignty might be revealed. In fact, this is surely the reason why Esau was born first. God had sovereignly arranged this. Would Esau have received the birthright blessing had Isaac blessed him? Indeed not! Isaac's blessing was of power only as in harmony with God's counsel and will.

Now we read that Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau. Does this mean that Isaac blessed Esau? Some believe this. However, the account in Genesis 27 shows clearly that Esau was not blessed. Literally we read in verse 39: "Away from the fatness of the earth." That Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau simply refers to the entire incident, and it is of the utmost significance that Jacob is blessed first. After all, also Esau came to Isaac to be blessed. But what he received was not a blessing, not as far as its content was concerned.

What a severe struggle on the part of Isaac!

First, Isaac loved and was drawn to Esau. On the one hand, there was Esau's personality. He was,



naturally, a far more pleasant man than Jacob. Jacob was cunning, shrewd, deceitful; Esau was a "happy-go-lucky," frank, liberal, and cordial. Besides, Esau and Isaac were opposites. Isaac was weak, had little courage; Esau was strong and bold, a hunter and a mighty man of the woods. Isaac felt drawn to Esau, as opposites, it is said, usually attract. This explains Isaac's desire to bless Esau. He did not love Esau spiritually. How could he? Esau was a fornicator. He felt drawn to him naturally. It would be a struggle for him, a severe struggle, to bless Jacob rather than Esau, to bypass his elder son. He would be compelled to set aside all his natural love and affection.

Secondly there is the spiritual, invisible point of view. Esau was a fornicator, sovereignly rejected of God. He was a godless, profane man. Spiritually, there was nothing attractive in him. And Isaac knew this! First, he surely knew what God had revealed to Rebecca before the twins were born. And, secondly, Esau had also revealed himself as the rejected of the Lord. He married the daughters of the land, which, we read, was a grief to both Isaac and Rebecca. And he had also revealed his spiritual carelessness and indifference when he had sold his birthright for a mess of pottage.

Now this explains Isaac's struggle. What shall he do? A fierce struggle goes on in the soul of Isaac. For years, undoubtedly, the only son of Sarah had struggled with this problem. Shall he believe, defy the natural order, and bypass the elder and bless Jacob? Or, shall he follow his natural desire and bless Esau? And when, after years of struggle, he sends Esau for venison and tells him that he will bless him, it seems that the carnal Isaac has triumphed over the spiritual Isaac. This, however, is not the end. We read: by faith Isaac blessed Jacob. And so we notice finally how Isaac's faith has gained the victory.

#### *A GLORIOUS VICTORY*

First, Isaac blesses Jacob. Was Isaac really deceived? Was not the voice the voice of Jacob? Is it possible, as Jacob stood before him, that he realized that, in spite of his desire to bless Esau, it is Jacob who stands before and must be blessed? Be this as it may, Isaac blesses him. If Isaac were in doubt, why,

then, did he not wait? But he does not wait. After considerable hesitation, much struggling, he blesses his younger son.

Secondly, Isaac maintains the blessing. Presently Esau enters his father's tent. And of Isaac we read that he trembles. Again that battle rages in his soul. Again the voice of Esau melts his heart — he is drawn to his elder son. But faith has the victory because Isaac maintains the blessing. O, had he wished, he could have changed it. He could have declared the blessing upon Jacob of none effect; he could have nullified it, declaring that it had been obtained by fraud and deception. He could have called Jacob and Rebecca and rebuked them and then have blessed Esau. But he does nothing of the kind. He maintains the blessing upon Jacob. Esau, we read, found no place of repentance although he sought it with tears. This can only mean that he sought this place of repentance, this change in the heart of Isaac after Isaac had blessed Jacob. Esau would transfer the blessing upon Jacob to himself. Isaac, however, does not change; he maintains the blessing. Fact is, he tells Esau that he should serve his brother. Speaking thus, he uses the very words which the Lord had revealed to Rebecca, that the elder should serve the younger.

Finally, Isaac repeats the blessing in Genesis 28 when Jacob is about to leave for Padan-aram. Of this we read in Genesis 28:1-4. Indeed, Isaac's blessing of Jacob was not simply a fortunate mistake. It was an act of faith. Isaac fights against his carnal desire and overcomes. And when Jacob is about to leave, to flee to his uncle Laban, he repeats the promise. This, too, we must understand, belongs to this text, that Isaac blessed Jacob by faith.

Faith must have and does have the victory! In the case of Isaac, the patriarch must and does overcome his natural love and affection. In our case, and throughout the ages, we must also overcome our natural desires, the world, the things that are therein, and cleave unto the invisible God and the invisible things of the Kingdom of God and of heaven. This faith is never of ourselves. It is always the gift of God. To Him, to Him alone, be all the glory, now and forever.

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## Editor's Notes

**Editor's Error.** As of this writing, I have not yet seen the April 15 issue of the *Standard Bearer*. But our Business Manager has seen it, and he phoned to tell me I pulled a boo-boo in my note about the RFPA Book Club. Really, now, I didn't mean to give you a scare. The current Book Club discount is 20%, not 10%. What I should have written is that if the Book Club membership reaches 400, the discount will increase to 30%! And do you know that we need fewer than 100 new members to reach that goal? With the prices of books going up, a 30% discount sounds pretty good, doesn't it?

Here are the rules:

- 1) You must be from a *Standard Bearer* home. More than one member of a family may join.
- 2) You must agree to purchase automatically every new book published by the RFPA, with the exception of educational texts. If you are a member, these new publications will be sent to you when they come from the press, you will be billed, and as a member you promise to pay by return mail.
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Simple, isn't it?

Write in today: RFPA Book Club, P.O. Box 2006, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49501.

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Do you ever wonder how our RFPA publications are evaluated by others? Here are a few snatches from a bulletin of the Tabernacle Bookshop of Metropolitan Tabernacle, London, England.

— Hoeksema's *Behold He Cometh* remains as the most exciting flood of matter on the subject.

— Herman Hoeksema's *Behold He Cometh* is solid preaching from another amillennial preacher who equated the millennium with the Gospel age. It is said that Hoeksema loved to preach on Revelation and this Commentary is the result of his third such excursion through the book in the course of a long ministry to an enormous congregation in Grand Rapids. Needless to say his work is much more exhilarating than the usual kind of commentary and so rich with spiritual thought and application as to greatly enthuse and stimulate any preacher.

\* \* \* \* \*

According to the latest report, a new printing of *Behold, He Cometh!* is at the bindery. It should soon be available at the new price of \$12.95. Wouldn't you like a Book Club discount of 20 or 30 percent on that price?

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## EDITORIAL

# Reformed or Baptist - Either . . . Or

*Prof. H.C. Hoeksema*

In these columns we have more than once made reference to the fact that the terms *Reformed* and *Baptist* are mutually exclusive, and that therefore the

name "Reformed Baptist" is really a contradiction in terms. The same is true of the term that is sometimes used, "Calvinist Baptist." We are aware, of course, of



the reasoning behind the use of these names. Both the "Reformed" and the "Calvinist" part of these names is intended to convey the idea that Baptists who go by these names hold, or claim to hold, *some* of the truths which are professed by Reformed, or Calvinist, believers. The reference is usually especially to the so-called "doctrines of grace," sometimes designated as the "Five Points of Calvinism."

Now one can only rejoice at the fact that there are Christians outside the Reformed family who hold to and proclaim these "doctrines of grace," at the same time hoping that these Christians will see the light and will profess the full-orbed Reformed faith.

At the same time, however, we must insistently deny to them the right to the name "Reformed" or "Calvinist." We must insist that both *historically* and *confessionally* it belongs to the very genius of the Reformed faith to hold to the truth of the covenant of grace, to the truth that infants no less than adults are included in the covenant and church of God, and that infant baptism is therefore a necessity (Heidelberg Catechism, Q. and A. 74). The thought is not uncommon that profession of the doctrines of grace, or the Five Points of Calvinism, is *the* distinguishing mark of a Reformed believer, or a Calvinist. This is a mistake. There are a good many truths which it is essential for a Reformed believer to profess. But certainly, if one were called upon to mention those truths which are distinctively Reformed — I say again, both from a confessional and a historical point of view — the above-mentioned truth of the covenant of grace and all that is implied in it deserves a place next to the truth of sovereign grace. The former is as distinctively Reformed as the latter, if not more so. But it is that former truth that constitutes a stumblingblock for all Baptists. And it is the denial of this truth that also denies to them the right to the name "Reformed." Personally, I am also of the conviction that it is ultimately impossible in process of time to maintain either one of these truths separately. It certainly is impossible to maintain the truth of the covenant of grace and its inseparably related truth of infant baptism without adhering to the doctrine of sovereign grace. But although it may be possible for a time, perhaps, to maintain the doctrine of sovereign grace without teaching the doctrine of the covenant of grace, I believe that ultimately this is impossible and that the Baptist must end in some kind of Arminianistic position. But that is another story. I wish to emphasize now that Baptists have no right to the name "Reformed," and that the name "Reformed Baptist" is a contradiction in terms.

Nor do we do Baptist brethren a favor by allowing them to call themselves Reformed or by recognizing them as Reformed brethren who merely differ with

us on one matter, that of baptism. We must rather convince them that they are not Reformed as long as they are Baptist, and we must strive to convince them to become genuinely Reformed and to abandon their Baptist position.

Do not forget meanwhile that Baptists themselves are very insistent on their baptistic position. They elevate it to the *sine qua non* of ecclesiastical fellowship. To them the essential thing is not whether you are Reformed but whether you are Baptist. Accordingly, they divide people into Reformed Baptists and Reformed non-Baptists.

Of this I was reminded by an article from the pen of Pastor Erroll Hulse, Editor of *Reformation Today* and pastor of Cuckfield Baptist Church, Sussex, England, (*Reformation Today*, Number 53, pp. 3, ff.). The article is entitled "Unity, the Covenant and Baptism." The article is an abridgement of the first chapter of a forthcoming book under the above title. The book, in turn, is a reply to a discussion of Reformed Baptists and their practice by Prof. Dr. J. Douma of the Theological College of the *Gereformeerde Kerken* (Liberated) at Kampen. Prof. Douma wrote at length in *De Reformatie*, especially in reply to and criticism of a little book by David Kingdon, *Children of Abraham*. At the time he wrote, I was struck by the fact that with the Liberated position on the covenant (a general, conditional promise) there is no defense against Kingdon's position. Incidentally, Prof. Hanks is writing an extended critique of Kingdon's position in our *Prot. Ref. Theological Journal*. But all this is not my point at present.

My point is that Pastor Hulse in the course of this article repeatedly refers to "Reformed Baptists" and "Reformed Non-Baptists."

Editor Hulse finds seven factors which, according to him, unite "Reformed Baptists" and "Reformed Non-Baptists." It is not my purpose at this time to debate the accuracy of these alleged points of agreement, though I have grave doubts as to the accuracy and truth of some of them as far as Mr. Hulse is concerned, as our readers well know. Permit me simply to list these points:

- "1. A shared thankfulness for the Reformation.
- "2. A common belief in the infallible Word of God as the only authority for faith and practice.
- "3. The sovereignty of God and predestination.
- "4. The sovereign grace of God in salvation.
- "5. A joint desire for true Christian worship.
- "6. The recovery of powerful, evangelical preaching.
- "7. A shared belief in the importance of biblical Theology and the covenant."

But now take note of the fact that Pastor Hulse is



insistent on his baptistic position. When it comes down to the hard issue, he very definitely wants to divide not into Reformed and non-Reformed, but into Baptist and non-Baptist. He writes (*italics mine*):

Now it is my purpose to prove that Reformed Baptists give proper credence to the place, development and importance of the covenant. *Not only do they do this in common with Reformed non-Baptists but they go further. Reformed Baptists alone* do justice to the diversity of the administration of the covenant. *Reformed Baptists alone are consistent* in heeding the tremendous stress expressed in Hebrews chapters 8-10. *They and they alone* heed the double imperative to observe that the New Covenant has entirely replaced the Old, and that the Old as a way of practice or administration is now totally and completely revoked. . . .

*Reformed Baptists in this way are consistent in their practice. They alone are true and faithful* to covenant theology as it respects the New Testament and baptism.

Notice, further, that in spite of the alleged unity on certain matters, Hulse finds a most significant separation. Notice, too, that the very essence of this significant separation, according to him, lies not in the question of being Reformed or non-Reformed, but in the matter of being Baptist or non-Baptist:

We have so much in common by which our unity is strengthened and our fellowship enriched yet when it comes to our churches there is a gulf. The difference between churches in which the membership is confined to those who maintain a credible and consistent confession of faith in lip and life (Baptist, in Hulse's view, HCH), and churches where memberships are infiltrated by nominal believers, sometimes in large numbers (non-Baptist, in Hulse's view, HCH), cannot be exaggerated.

It is not surprising, therefore, that also Pastor Hulse's alleged thankfulness for the Reformation is greatly tempered, as is plain from the following statement, a statement which again comes down to the difference between Baptist and non-Baptist, to use Hulse's terminology:

The reformation of the sixteenth century has never been completed because the doctrine of Rome with respect to infant baptism was accommodated. (I challenge Hulse to prove this statement from John Calvin. HCH) Reasoning from the covenant was utilised for this accommodation.

Now all of these matters are of crucial importance to Editor Hulse. His real concern is not about being Reformed or non-Reformed, but about being what he chooses to call Baptist or non-Baptist. This is plain from his "practical conclusions" at the end of his article. He writes in conclusion "5" as follows: "If unity is to be feasible at the practical level a Church

must take a definite position on baptism. This is because the practical implications are so far reaching." And again, in conclusion "6" he states: "The maintenance of two basically contradictory practices on Christian initiation is confusing to converts."

Now I am quite willing to recognize the crucial difference between the Baptist and the Reformed position. In fact, I would find the difference to be even more significant than does Mr. Hulse. The difference is emphatically one of *principle*, not merely of far reaching practical implications.

But I do not want to be classified as a non-Baptist! Not even as a Reformed non-Baptist! In the first place, that name is *negative*; and it is negative by way of reference to the baptistic position. That is historically incorrect. It is also factually incorrect. The Reformed believer does not occupy a negative position. No more than you can define a man by saying he is a non-horse, or a non-stone, or a non-tree, or a non-cabbage, no more can you define a Reformed Christian by naming him a non-Baptist. In the second place, I am not a Baptist, nor a non-Baptist, nor a Reformed non-Baptist, nor a paedobaptist, nor even a Reformed paedobaptist, nor any other kind of "ist" or "non-ist." I am Reformed — period.

Nor is that a matter of mere semantics.

It is a fundamental matter, and one which concerns the well-known three marks of the church.

This is very plain. Pastor Hulse maintains that the Reformation was not complete, and that, too, in a crucial aspect. But this means really that it was not genuine reformation. I maintain that the Reformation, particularly in its Reformed manifestation, was indeed principally complete and true with respect to all facets of the truth.

Pastor Hulse wants to divide into Baptists and non-Baptists. In turn, then, there are Reformed Baptists and non-Reformed Baptists; and there are also Reformed non-Baptists and non-Reformed non-Baptists. I know but two fundamental categories: Reformed and non-Reformed. Reformed are those who adhere to Scripture and the historic Reformed creeds and manifest, accordingly, the marks of the church. Non-Reformed are all others, including not only Baptists of various kinds but also many who adhere to paedobaptism, who do not adhere to Scripture and the Reformed creeds and who to one degree or another do not manifest the marks of the church.

But a Reformed church cannot be Baptist; and a Baptist church cannot be Reformed. The names — and the positions they represent — are mutually exclusive. To be Baptist is to be non-Reformed.



## THE LORD GAVE THE WORD

# Missions and Preaching

*Prof. Robert D. Decker*

In the previous article we discussed the first principle of missions, viz., that missions is emphatically and exclusively the work of God in Christ by the Holy Spirit of Christ. This is plainly taught in Scripture and by our Reformed Confessions. The Heidelberg Catechism perhaps sums it best when it says: "The Son of God gathers, defends, and preserves unto himself a church chosen to everlasting life . . ." (L.D. XXI, q. 54). That missions is the work of God is also obvious from the fact that it is God Who saves and not man. Scripture teaches that it is God in Christ Who directs the course of the gospel throughout the world. It is also clear from Scripture that Christ calls (summons and qualifies) the preachers of the gospel. Finally, preaching, apart from the operation of the Holy Spirit, cannot be effective. Hence, even though He gathers His Church through His Spirit and Word, and even though that Word through which He gathers His Church must be preached, and even though that preaching is done by men, it is God Himself Who gathers His Church. Missions is the work of God. This fundamental principle undergirds all mission work. From a practical point of view this principle is the encouragement for the church and its missionaries in the often very difficult work.

This leads directly to the second principle of missions. What God does He does through the use of means, and the means by which God gathers His elect out of the nations is the preaching of the Word by the institute of the Church of Jesus Christ in the world. It is sad that so much of the church has lost sight of this. In the hundreds of books, articles, pamphlets, and tracts on the subject one finds all kinds of methods advocated. Little or nothing is said about preaching. Sometimes these authors are even critical of preaching. The fact is, however, that if one wishes

to speak of proper mission methods he is going to have to do so in terms of the preaching of the Word by the Church. Ernest C. Reisinger, in his address entitled, "The Doctrines of Grace and Missionary Methods," given at the ministers' conference in Atlanta last fall, sponsored by the Banner of Truth Trust, summed the teaching of Scripture on Missionary Methods in these words: "Prayer, Preaching and no gimmicks!" He is so right. The matter is really very simple. God never told the church to do anything else in its mission work than preach the Word!

This principle of Missions follows from the first, that missions is the work of God in Christ. While this can never be stressed too much, especially in our day, we must not either lose sight of the necessity of preaching. It is indeed true that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself; and we cannot add to nor detract from this great work of reconciliation. Nevertheless God has entrusted to the church the ministry (*diaconia*) of this reconciliation. So important is this principle that to neglect it means we will lose all sense of responsibility and will fail to realize that what God will do He will do through His church. In that event the mission work of the church will stagnate. The point is, and this must never be forgotten, God accomplishes the gathering of His people out of the nations through the instrumentality of His Church. God does that no other way.

This means negatively that the work of missions is not the work of individuals within the church. These have a calling, to be sure. We have seen that believers have a crucial and indispensable calling with respect to missions. Believers must pray for the missionaries and their work. They must support and assist the church and its missionaries in the carrying out of the task. This calling is certainly important and very



significant. But the work itself is not done except through the preaching of the Gospel by the Church.

Neither is the work of missions the task of "mission societies" or "evangelistic associations." These arose out of two historical situations: Pietism and later Fundamentalism; and they arose out of lands with state-controlled churches. J.H. Bavinck points out that this was true especially in Lutheran lands. (Cf. *Introduction To The Science Of Missions*) Because the Church itself was indifferent to the mission task, groups within the church attempted to carry out the mission mandate. This latter was an attempt to escape the political (colonial) influences of the state churches and an attempt to remain faithful to the commission of Christ to preach the Gospel in all the world.

Therefore, no institution other than the Church of Jesus Christ may assume the responsibility to preach the Gospel. The Church ordains those called by Christ to preach the Gospel. These are the ambassadors of the Lord Jesus Christ through Whom the word of reconciliation goes out (II Cor. 5:20). Their task is to preach (*keerussein*) and to witness (*marturein*) to the ends of the earth, as Jesus said just moments before His ascension (Acts 1:6-8). Christ personally called His Apostles to preach. Through those Apostles, inasmuch as they make up part of the foundation of the Church (Ephesians 2:20), Christ calls His Church to this great enterprise.

This means that missions belongs to the very essence of the task of the Church. One cannot conceive of the Church apart from missions. A Church that does not engage in missions fails in its Christ-assigned task, and is, therefore, disobedient to its Lord and is not worthy of the name Church. Christ commissioned the Church to go into all the world preaching the Gospel for "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (I Cor. 1:21).

Missions has as its *immediate* goal the gathering of the Church (elect in Christ), both Jew and Gentile out of the nations. This principle is easily understood. God has His elect in every nation, and these must be gathered into the Church. These elect can be gathered into the Church only by the means of the preaching of the Gospel. Missions is that task. In its mission the Church is thrust out into the world to gather the lost sheep. Thus Christ commissioned the Church through the Apostles: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:15,16). This is both the inspiration and the motivation for the church in its mission task. God has His people in every nation. God promises to gather them into the Church by the preaching of the Gospel. The Church may send out its

missionary preachers in the confidence that there will be positive fruit upon their labors. The fruit does not depend upon men but only upon the grace of the Almighty God.

Missions has as its *ultimate* goal (*telos*, purposeful end) the full manifestation of God's glory in Jesus Christ at His appearance at the end of the ages. The preaching of the Gospel to the ends of the earth does two things, or has a twofold effect: it saves them that believe and it destroys the wisdom and power of this world (Cf. I Cor. 1:18-31). Wherever the Word is preached faithfully according to the Scriptures it has that double effect. By means of the preaching of the Gospel the Son of God gathers the elect and hardens the reprobate. The preaching of the Word changes stony hearts into hearts of flesh and effects repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus while it exposes the unrepentant in all of their sin and rebellion. The preaching of the Word never fails to accomplish that purpose. This is precisely why preaching always involves a crisis! Preaching is judgmental. No one who comes under the preaching of the Word by the Church of Jesus Christ remains unaffected by it. He either believes and is saved or he rejects the Gospel and is damned. Once more, neither the Church nor the missionaries who are sent by the Church need be concerned about the fruit. All the Church must do is preach, and God will give the increase.

By that preaching of the Word to the nations, the end or goal of all things according to God's sovereign counsel in Christ Jesus is brought about. When the first seal of the scroll of God's decree concerning "the things which must shortly come to pass" is opened by the Lamb (Christ) John sees a white horse and rider going forth "conquering and to conquer" (Rev. 6:2). That white horse with its rider represents the victorious progress of the Gospel in the New Dispensation. Jesus told us that "this gospel shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matthew 24:14). The end of all things comes through the preaching of the Gospel.

In no less a work is the Church involved when it preaches the Gospel. This is what happens every time the Word is preached from the pulpits of the churches at home or from the pulpits of the missionary churches abroad. What an incentive for the Church to preach and to send out missionaries! Why should the Church fear or doubt? Why should the Church ever be discouraged in its mission work? God Himself in Jesus Christ accomplishes the great purpose of all that He has decreed in Christ before the foundations of the world through the "foolishness of preaching."

In that awareness let the Church be busy diligently and faithfully with the task of missions in order that God's glory in Christ may be revealed in the Church.



## FROM THE HOLY WRIT

# Exposition of Galatians

by Rev. G. Lubbers

*EVERY MAN SHALL BEAR HIS OWN BURDEN* — continued Galatians 6:4, 5.

In the day of judgment we must boast in our own work and not in that of another. The preening Pharisee boasted in his own work by a false comparison with that of "all the rest" and, in particular, of this publican (Luke 18:11 ff.). For only those who truly have the fruits of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, etc. shall inherit the kingdom of God! (Gal. 5:19-24)

### *KEEPING THE NEW TESTAMENT SABBATH DAY IN DOING GOOD*

It might seem strange to caption Gal. 6:6-10 by speaking of the Sabbath day; however, a little thought and reflection will shew that recompensing the teachers (catechetes) of the Word and relieving the poor is the very quintessence of Sabbath-keeping in the love of God, which is the very fulfilment of the whole law, and, therefore, also of the fourth commandment as given in Exodus 20:9-11, as well as in Deuteronomy 5:14,15. As much as Paul militates against the keeping of mere days, months, times, and years, as being so much weak and beggarly principles of this world (Gal. 4:8-11; Col. 2:8, 20) — the scrupulous and minutely measuring off of days — so much he insists on the spiritual keeping of the Sabbath by the Bride of Christ, as she awaits the coming of the Bridegroom in the eternal Sabbath, as her resurrected Lord over death and hell. The Lord is the Lord of the Sabbath day (Matt. 12:7,8). What is Sabbath-keeping without shewing of mercy, and giving of our tithes to the Levites, who must be remembered forever? (Hosea 6:5-7; Mal. 3:8-12; Deut. 12:12,19) Presently, in the eternal Sabbath, the tabernacle of God shall be with men! That is the

eternal Rest into which we now strive to enter! (Heb. 4:7-11)

Of this keeping of the Sabbath rest Paul is speaking in these verses. For here in this New Testament Sabbath rest we are active as a *fellowship* of saints. For notice, that, in verses 6-8, Paul is exhorting him, who is catechized (*ho katechumenon*) to communicate unto him that teaches (*too katechounti*) in all good things. It is to be observed that the text does not say "give" or "repay," or some such verb, but Paul uses the verb "communicate." There are expositors who interpret this to mean that there should be spiritual fellowship between the teacher and the pupil in the church. Now this is true enough in itself; this should always be the case. But we believe that the phrase in question says more. For it speaks of "all good things" which must be communicated. This must refer to temporal goods (Luke 12:18,19; 16:25). Paul is suggesting here that a "laborer is worthy of his hire" (I Tim. 5:18; I Cor. 9:9-11). Meanwhile, such "communicating" is, indeed, a voluntary and liberal sharing of goods to those who labor in the Word. It is a faith which is energized by love. It is love in action! It is basically an operation within the fellowship of the saints, in the midst of those who are some firstfruits of God's creation (James 1:18). For are we not now living within the spiritual fulfilment of the year of Jubilee, where each man shares again in his allotted inheritance in Israel? Here we seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness, believing that all things are added unto us (Matt. 6:33).

Now this is very serious business. God is not mocked. Thus speaks Paul in Gal. 6:7. We cannot with impunity turn our nose up to God. Such is the



meaning of the Greek verb *mukteerizetai*. In effect, that is what the Galatians were doing. The evil preachers, who corrupted the Gospel, were deceiving them. And Paul says "stop being deceived." Do not continue to be led astray by these "wandering stars" (Gal. 6:7; Jude 13). In the matter of giving for the kingdom we are dealing with God, before Whom all things are naked and opened (Heb. 4:13). God has a special care for His laboring servants (Mal. 3:8-10). Those who withheld the tithes from the priests and Levites were robbing God, they commit sacrilege, they rob temples! ("*hierosuleis*" Rom. 2:22) And the wrath and curse of God comes upon those who care not for His holy temple. But those who bring their tithes willing to support the ministry in the temple, both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament, to them God opens the windows of heaven in a spiritual harvest. (Mal. 3:10; Ps. 112:9,10; I Cor. 9:9)

The text teaches that we are now in the seed-time of our life; life is a time of sowing. Always we are sowing to enter into the final rest, the eternal Sabbath. Our sowing is really Sabbath-keeping. Our fathers caught the genius of this in explaining the fourth Commandment concerning the hallowing of the Sabbath. In Question 103 the answer is "First, that the ministry of the Gospel and the schools be maintained." That is what Paul teaches here in Gal. 6:6,7. This is not miles remote from the commandment of God in Exodus 20:9-11. It zeroes in on the very heart of the keeping of the Sabbath. Surely, surely, Paul taught these Galatians that the *first day* of the week was the day of the resurrection (I Cor. 16:1). Also these Galatian churches must "lay by him in store, as God has prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." These "day-minded" saints in Galatia did not need to have that admonition at this stage of their life, but needed to be told what to do on this *first day* of the week particularly, and no less on other days of the week. This last matter of communicating to the ministry is a perennial problem. It is the real problem for those, who, even now, scrupulously keep the first day of the week in a most Puritanical manner! Let there be no doubt about that!

There is also the matter of the two kinds of sowing and harvesting which is here underscored. There is a sowing to the flesh, the sinful lusts, and there is a sowing to the Spirit, the new life in Christ.

Let us try to understand!

Yes, what any man sows, that shall he reap. A simple farmer knows that principle very well. On this score he is not deceived in sowing his grain. Nor is any man, for that matter. However, there is also a moral sowing and a moral reaping. And here we are dealing with the morally evil sowing and reaping and the morally good sowing and reaping. And in this

matter of moral sowing and reaping the Christian must in this life begin the eternal Sabbath; he "must all the days of his (my) life cease from his (my) evil works, and yield himself (myself) to the Lord, to work by his Holy Spirit in him (me), and thus begin the eternal sabbath in this life." (Heid. Cat. Question 103)

First of all, sowing unto the flesh corruption should be noticed. This is a sowing to fulfill the desires of the flesh, the old evil nature. It means that we give unto the causes of God's kingdom only for our own sinful, selfish purposes, our own honor and advantage, to have glory of men (Matt. 6:1-4). Then one has his reward: it is the reward of corruption. It is moral corruption, which gives no joy, peace, in the knowledge that we have served God. Only more evil proceeds from such "communicating." We see how this ended in a Judas, that he went out and hanged himself. God was not mocked in the case of Judas, who pretended to care for the poor (John 12:1-6; Matt. 27:3-10; Acts 1:16-20). This truth Paul binds upon the consciences of the Galatians concerning the proper keeping of the New Testament Sabbath. Well may we take this to heart!

Secondly, there is the sowing unto the Spirit. It is a sowing more and more into (*eis*) the Spirit. This is a progressive sanctification in this regard. And this means that we sow more and more in the crucifixion of the flesh and in the renewal by the Spirit with a view to tasting eternal life, joy, peace, hope; it means that we experience that God opens the windows of heaven upon us in showers of blessings of life and peace. And our communicating to the teachers and the ministry of the Gospel has such great reward. That is the positive reward of keeping the Sabbath! No, these are then not merits which we receive, but they are good works which God rewards in this life and in the life to come (Psalm 112:4-9). Yea, even the wicked shall in this life and in the life to come see the reward of the righteous. Is not Abel a tangible evidence in this day? (Heb. 11:4,5) See also II Cor. 9:9-15.

There is still another side to this coin of giving to those who teach in the Gospel. It is that ministers must not teach for the sake of filthy lucre. They are "men of God" and should conduct themselves as such, as men who labor in the temple of God. They must flee from the love of money (Heb. 13:5,6). Because they definitely are ordained to work in God's temple, the church (Eph. 2:19-22), they must follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness (I Tim. 6:10-11). Also ministers must heed the tender assurance of Jesus, that, in their seeking the kingdom of God, all their earthly necessities will be added (thrown to them) unto them (Matt. 6:33). There is one thing which is far worse than a poor



Elijah at the brook Cherith, fed by the ravens, and that is a covetous minister and elder. For a covetous minister has no power of trust in God, and does not sow unto the Spirit to eternal life! A minister must say: I do not seek yours, but I seek you, to present you a perfect bride in the day of Christ. May that boasting never be taken from his lips in the house of God!

*DO GOOD AND FAINT NOT* – (Galatians 6:9,10)

There must be an unflagging doing of “the good.” The “good” are the “kalos,” the beautiful works which reflect that we are children of God, partakers of the divine nature (II Peter 1:3,4; Matt. 5:4-16). They are beautiful before men; they are the grace of God magnified and manifested in us. In this doing good we must persevere. We do such good works as thankofferings through (*dia*—*Ieesous*) Jesus, Who suffered outside of the gate (Heb. 13:15,16). Such are the spiritual which are acceptable by (*dia*) Jesus Christ (I Peter 2:4,5). This “the good” stands diametrically opposed to all “the evil,” the loveless!

No, we must not become fainthearted. Paul mentions such faintheartedness of saints more than once, applying this to himself (Eph. 3:13; II Cor. 4:1). We must run the race with patience, also in doing the good and beautiful works of maintaining the ministry of the Word and of the schools. How fainthearted do not parents, School Boards often become! The price is so high. We pay to ministers’ salaries, support retired ministers, underwrite and pay for the mission efforts of our churches. And this must even remain “communicating.” It is the hard and upward road of faith, where we look for the Lord to open the windows of heaven for us. When this becomes an awesome burden because we are impeded by the world, we must press on to the gates of heaven. It all belongs to our sabbath-keeping as pilgrims and strangers, born from Sarah; yea, as we are persecuted by the children of Hagar. Yes, we shall reap if we faint not. We shall reap in due time (*kaipoo idioo*) according to the sure promise of God! (Rev. 2:5,16; 3:11; 22:7,12,20) That will be the final harvest. (Matt 13:30,39; Rev. 14:15)

## IN HIS FEAR

# The Assault on the Foundation of the Home - Marriage

*Rev. Wayne Bekkering*

Satan is bent on destroying marriage, because in doing so he thinks he can work great destruction upon God’s church. The devil is trying to destroy God first of all. Knowing that he cannot, he now turns his fury upon the church of God. It is his purpose to destroy the church by working confusion and disorder in the church in order to turn her out of the way of faith and into the way disobedience.

Satan attacked marriage from the beginning. Adam and Eve were his first target. Their destruction was his goal. The destruction of their relationship with God, their marriage, and their blissful life in paradise. Satan worked very subtly. He did not attack directly. He did not approach Adam and Eve as a unit in their

strength as God had joined them together, but he approached Eve separately and through her attacked Adam. A very subtle attack that was, and yet it was very effective. A shrewd strategist is Satan. Divide and conquer is his plan. It appeared that he won a major victory, and yet he knew that the war was not over.

Throughout the ages the devil has continued to rage in his assault against marriage, while using various approaches and means as the circumstances permitted.

In time past the devil had to work more subtly than he does in our day. Now he is able to come out forthrightly and boldly against marriage.



Satan has inspired wicked men and women to join the assault. The "women's lib movement," the International Women's Year and the International Year of the Child form an effective crusade against the foundation of the home: marriage.

Satan recognizes that there are two types of marriage. Marriage in the world and marriage in the church. He understands that both are valid before God since marriage is a creational ordinance. Yet these two types of marriage are very different. The fundamental difference is that one is in the Lord and the other is outside the Lord.

The chief goal of the devil is to destroy God's church and to do that by destroying marriage in the church. Satan is not first of all concerned with the destruction of the marriage of the world. But he understands that if he is going to destroy marriage in the church he must first of all destroy marriage in the world. With the results that he gains in the world he turns his attack upon the marriage of the church.

We recognize that there are difficulties in marriage. That is true for both the marriage of the world and the marriage of the church. The devil uses these difficulties as a lever to divide and conquer.

Many weapons does the devil use in his assault. The first weapon that he uses is the old man of sin, i.e., the evil nature that is in every man, woman, and child that is born. Our evil nature constitutes for the devil an enemy within the gate.

The chief sin that the devil stirs up in men is the sin of pride. Pride is the root sin; in fact, it was the sin of the devil from the beginning. The sin of pride is manifest chiefly in selfishness. It seeks and considers self above all. Satan urges man to declare himself the supreme authority in his life. He urges upon every man the lie that he shall be as God if only he will assert himself and take control in his own life.

This sin of pride is one of the best weapons that Satan has in his assault on the foundation of the home — marriage. In pride every man says, "Everything must serve me. Every person who comes in contact with me must somehow serve me. Everything that exists within my reach and in my control must serve me."

You can imagine then what this sin does to that most intimate union between one man and one woman. You can see that, if these two who are closely joined together are each inspired by the sin of pride, the devil has a very effective weapon to divide and conquer.

The husband says, "The wife, the home, the children all must serve me." The wife says the same thing. She says it in a different way and from a different perspective, but she says basically the same thing. If this sin of pride continues to its logical conclusion it destroys marriage. Life in the home

becomes intolerable. A dissolution of the marriage will appear to be a very desirable thing, and thus Satan introduces divorce.

We must recognize this attack of the devil upon our own marriages. We must defend ourselves in godly fear, in humility and in repentance before God and before one another, day by day, lest we fall into the snare and temptation of the devil.

Many other weapons are at the disposal of the devil. Following out of pride are all of the works of the flesh. In Galatians 5 we have a partial listing of the works of the flesh. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness; lasciviousness; idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like." Notice that adultery heads the list. Adultery has mightily served the purpose of the devil in his frontal attack upon marriage, and all the others serve as well. The flesh with its lusts yearns after these things and desires these things above all, even above marriage. That ought to be clear for us to see today. A man will have his adultery above his marriage. When a fleshly man is confronted with that sin he will not forsake it in favor of marriage, but rather he forsakes his marriage in favor of that sin.

Another very effective weapon that the devil uses in his assault on the foundation of the home is the TV. With TV he is able to bring the enemy within the gate. If the devil is able to bring his most effective medium of communication right into the center of the home, what a powerful weapon he has. Notice I said that the devil brings *his* most effective weapon into the home. Who can question that this is true? That does not mean that the TV is in and of itself a devilish invention. Yet the TV has so fallen under the power and influence of the devil that now, for all practical purposes, the TV is *the* most effective tool of the devil.

Satan brings TV into the homes of the world, and that is understandable. But he also brings TV into the homes of the church, and that is reprehensible! We ought to recognize from a cursory viewing that TV is geared for the destruction of the godly home and family. What is TV but a manifestation of the works of the flesh? What better characterizes the content of the programs of TV than what we read in Galatians 5 concerning the works of the flesh?

All of us have to admit that there is a correspondence between what comes into our home via TV, and the old man of sin within us. According to the lust of the flesh and lust of the eyes we love that stuff, but according to the new man in Christ Jesus we hate it.

We must be beware that we do not invite the enemy into the gate and then complain that we are



not able to withstand the assault of the devil.

How foolish it would be for an army being set in array for battle to invite an effective "special operations unit" of the enemy right into the center of their camp — then to wage war against the enemy without, while they must also fight the enemy that they invited in. Is it any wonder that the devil has so effectively attacked the home and marriage of the world? Is it any wonder that the devil has used TV to corrupt and disrupt the Christian home and marriage?

Our calling is to fight against the enemy — to push the enemy back. What does that mean then for us on this very important front, but to take the TV set and push it right out the door and leave it there. And then by God's grace renew our efforts to fight against the enemy without, for the battle is not over yet.

The devil has so effectively assaulted marriage in the world that it is virtually destroyed. Now on every hand a note of despair and finality is written upon marriage in the world. It does not work they say. Proof of that is the frequency of divorce. And divorce brings in its wake unspeakable misery. The conclusion that the devil has brought the world to embrace is that marriage has to go. Marriage may have served in another age, but no longer is it useful. Alternatives are presented; but still new modes must be examined in order to find a replacement for marriage.

Men and women of the world have accepted that conclusion and now the devil tries to force it upon the church. But the church cannot and must not accept that wicked conclusion of the devil. That is not the necessary conclusion and the alternative to the difficulties that beset marriages in the church. Rather we must look at the sure foundation upon which marriage is based. The Scripture says, "Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Matt. 19:6).

Marriage is God-ordained. It is God who joins man and wife together. From the beginning that was so. After God had made Adam and Eve He brought them together and performed the first marriage ceremony. Now God Himself continues to protect and defend marriage. God assures those who marry in the Lord of

His help to fight against and overcome the difficulties that come in the marriage relationship.

Matthew 19:6 is a statement of fact. In the first place it states the fact that God joins man and wife together. Secondly it teaches that man may not and cannot put marriage asunder.

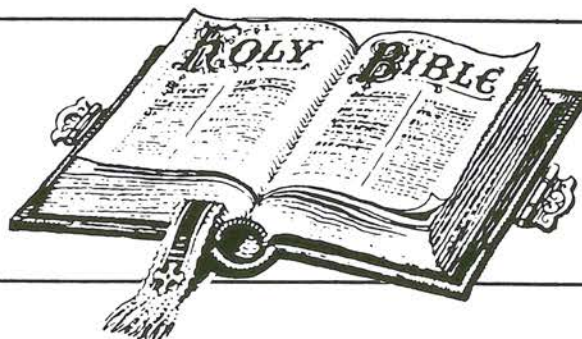
One may try to draw from that text the conclusion that the marriage bond is breakable, and that men can break it, though they ought not to. The truth of the matter is that man cannot break the bond of marriage. God has ordained marriage. He defends and preserves it, and who is able to resist His mighty power.

A word of warning is expressed in this text that we walk not in the way of divorce, because the end of that way is misery and destruction for ourselves. When this word is set before the world they scoff in rebellion. Wicked men believe that they can change this ordinance of God if they wish. Man says that he is not going to be bound in a marriage relationship that does not please him. Man therefore steps over the boundary of the Word of God. In doing so man does not succeed in his attempt to overthrow the foundation of marriage. He only succeeds in destroying himself in the attempt. God is not mocked!

We only have to look at the marriage of the world to have that truth impressed upon us. One might expect to find in the homes of the world a wonderful freedom and fulfillment, a high bliss of joy because men have gotten their own way. But what is it that characterizes the homes and marriages of the world? Do you find in them a higher degree of peace and joy than you find in the homes of God's people? The answer is obvious. The homes and marriages of the world are beset with every conceivable problem and misery because they refuse to recognize that marriage belongs to God and not to man.

The church of Christ must not be cowed by the conclusion that the devil holds before her. Marriage is going to stand because God is for it. Let us as God's people consider His truth concerning marriage, believe it, obey it, and enjoy the benefits of His blessings upon us as we walk in His fear.

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## THE DAY OF SHADOWS

# Correspondence and Reply (Questions Concerning Rachel)

*Rev. J. Heys*

Dear Rev. Heys:

I have read with interest your series of articles pertaining to the life and times of Jacob and his family during his stay with his Uncle Laban.

One reason is that we as Men's Society of Hope (G.R.) are studying and discussing that particular history. I appreciate your well written and descriptive account of that involved history.

Regarding your conclusion re Rachel, I desire that you know I have different thoughts on that matter.

On page 137 of the Dec. 15/79 issue of the Standard Bearer, in your article entitled "Love at First Sight," you state that both Esau and Jacob marry unbelieving women. Esau marries the unbelieving Canaanitish woman and Jacob marries the unbeliever Rachel. You write, "As far as Jacob's love is concerned he is marrying an unbeliever — Rachel." I beg to differ with you on that matter. By unbeliever in the context of the article I understand it to mean a person not a child of God. Believer (elect of God), unbeliever (child of the devil — reprobate). She is either or — there is no neutral area.

As far as your facts and description concerning Rachel you are correct.

1. Her life did reveal anything but a life of faith.
2. She was beautiful and well favored.
3. She did possess her father's idols and no doubt served them to some degree and in some manner:

As for fact number 1.

The same could be said of any of the other three involved in this troublesome and sinful triangle (Jacob, Leah, Rachel), and let us add Uncle Laban. Deceit and being deceived was the common denominator.

As for fact number 2.

She was beautiful and well favored. Apparently it was a natural born condition with her. But don't blame her for that. If that is all Jacob fell for, he is the transgressor, not her. No doubt her beauty appealed to Jacob's carnality (old man). In my opinion, the common appearance of Leah is contrasted over against the beauty of Rachel to show, not that Leah is so much more spiritual because of her unattractiveness, but rather to expose Jacob's humanism in their relationships. Sarah also was beautiful and fair to look upon as was Rebekah.

As for fact number 3.

Sure she had idols and wanted to keep them — no doubt an example of her spiritual weakness. Idols, charms and the like seem to be a common item in the household of both Laban and Jacob. Later on we read in Genesis 35 that he, Jacob, said unto his household to put away the strange gods that are among you and be clean and let us arise and go to Bethel to worship and pay our vows before the Lord Jehovah. After the dedication and purification of themselves, they continue their journey to Mamre. It



is at Ramah that Rachel dies giving birth to Benjamin. So it indicates, and that before she dies, Rachel is purged from idolatry.

I for one can hardly believe that after Issac blesses Jacob with the spiritual blessing and sends him away to find himself a wife from his mother's household, that he, Jacob, would still corrupt himself as did his brother Esau by marrying an unbeliever. If that be the case, then the very purpose he was sent away for is defeated.

In verse 22 of Genesis 30 we read, And God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her. At this point in her life, Rachel finally conceded that it is only God Who gives children and that in His own good time and pleasure.

Does God answer the prayers and intercessions of an unbeliever?

I cannot believe that Rachel, in her situation of being barren, only went through the motions of prayer and that God "liked" what she said so He answers her.

As far as the use of the mandrakes are concerned, I am under the strong impression that not only did Rachel "use" them but likewise Leah. Why would Leah's son Reuben bring them to his mother? Just for a nice bouquet?

One other related matter concerning Rachel comes to mind. I believe this has a bearing on the entire question. In Matthew 2:16-18 we read the account of Herod murdering the children of Bethlehem. "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not." In brief, this is spiritual Rachel (Jacob's wife) weeping for her covenant spiritual seed or/and generations.

What do you think?

One final remark. In your March 1, 1980 article entitled "Homeward Bound" page 258, you seem to have second thoughts concerning Rachel's status before God. Does that mean that what you concluded in your Dec. 15/79 article concern Rachel (unbeliever) falls away, or do you now contend she was an "unbeliever" temporarily, say like King Saul was a "believer" temporarily?

Respectfully submitted,  
P. Koole

#### REPLY

One sometimes wonders whether that which one has written is read, and how carefully it is read. Therefore, rather than to resent the fact that brother Koole raises questions about what was written, I wish

to thank him for the time and effort expended, and the opportunity which it gives me to write further on the subject.

In his last paragraph brother Koole suggests that I might have had a change of mind in March, and that I no longer hold the position which I took in December in regard to Rachel. I would like to begin there and assure him that I have not changed my mind, and that I certainly did not mean that Rachel was a temporary "unbeliever," as he presents King Saul as a temporary "believer." I made no judgment in March as to whether Rachel was a believer or unbeliever, but wrote, "We will not judge Rachel as to whether the reference to God and the use of His name means that she was a child of God." What I wrote in December was likewise no judgment as to whether Rachel was a believer. I did not, by the way, write, "As far as Jacob's love is concerned, he was marrying an unbeliever — Rachel." That "—Rachel" is not in my sentence. Rachel is the first word of the next sentence. But I was writing of what Jacob's love did, and not what Rachel was. But let me quote the whole paragraph again.

"Let the truth be faced once again that apart from God's grace, Jacob is like Esau, and Esau is like Jacob. Esau married unbelieving Canaanitish women — and no doubt because of their beauty — and then later on an unbelieving daughter of Ishmael. As far as Jacob's love is concerned he is marrying an unbeliever. Rachel in fact reveals anything but a life of faith. And, the Lord willing, we will come to these evidences such as stealing her father's idols, and speaking anything but the language of faith when her second and last son was born. That is not the point here. The point is that Jacob loved Rachel for her beauty of face and well-favoured body. Indeed, he knew that she was Laban's daughter, and thus the daughter of a believer. He knew that she was in the sphere of the covenant. But this is not the reason for his love for her. Nowhere in the book of Genesis, or elsewhere in Scripture, do we find one word that would even suggest that he loved her for her faith in God and love for Him. What we read is this, 'Rachel was beautiful and well favoured. And Jacob loved Rachel.' Genesis 29:17,18. Not one word appears between these statements; they must be connected together to teach us the reason for Jacob's love for Rachel."

What the reader will note, I trust, is that one sentence is lifted up and out of a paragraph, is treated apart from the rest of the paragraph, and even that one sentence has the focus fixed on one part to such an extent that the other part falls away, as though it had not been written. The qualifying phrase that explains in what sense I was speaking of unbelief is dropped, erased, removed so that it is as though I had



written nothing more than, "Jacob is marrying an unbeliever."

But if our readers will look at my sentence in its entirety in the setting of the paragraph, they will see that I was not dealing with Rachel, but with Jacob's actions. What I did in that paragraph was to compare Esau's method of choosing wives with Jacob's, when he fell in love at first sight. Esau chose by outward appearance and by what appealed to his flesh. Jacob did the same thing. Esau did not ask whether these women were believers or unbelievers, and Jacob did not either, as far as his love for Rachel was concerned. In fact I began the paragraph with the observation that, except for the grace of God, we always do exactly like the unbelievers. Jacob's faith was a gift of God. And if God did not give him the grace to behave differently from his reprobate brother, Jacob would always do Esau's deeds. The old man of sin of the believer does exactly what the man of the unbeliever does. Only the believer has a new man, and therefore an old man of sin. The unbeliever has only a man of sin. It must be borne in mind that I was approaching the matter from that point of view, and was not going to answer the question as to whether Rachel was a believer or not. I leave that to God, and do not want to do her injustice, if God did give her faith.

Now, I will concede that under pressure of the work in the congregation, being forced often to ask just how much time may be taken from the work in the congregation to write an article every fifteen days, and have copy ready a month before publication, and being limited as to how many pages are allotted for this department of the magazine, one does not always develop a thought as fully as one would like, and hurries on to other matters to be sure to get other points in the article. But I believe my paragraph does show my viewpoint. In fact I state what the point is and what it is not. I stated that whether deeds of Rachel show that she is a child of God or not is not the point now. The point in this paragraph is that Jacob loved Rachel, not for her faith, but for her beauty. I stated that literally.

What is more, to come back to that qualifying statement in the sentence, brother Koole writes as though I had written, "as far as the marks of a true child of God are concerned, as far as God's judgment is concerned, as far as the rule of faith is concerned, as far as the principles of Christianity are concerned, Jacob is marrying an unbeliever." I did not do that. I will not do that today. I wrote that as far as his love for Rachel is concerned he is marrying an unbeliever. I conceded that she was born in the covenant sphere, as a daughter of a believer. Yes, with all his evils, I called Laban a believer.

It may be noted that all that which brother Koole presents as his reason for believing that she was a believer took place much later than the period of time of which I was writing. If he can show one word in Scripture that shows faith on Rachel's part *before* Jacob married her, my statement can be subjected to further study and consideration. Otherwise the statement stands that Jacob loved her for her outward beauty and not for her faith in God. His love for her did not ask, "Is she a believer?" It asked, "Is she beautiful?"

And let me add, and be appreciative to brother Koole for the opportunity to emphasize this by repeating it, this tragedy happens so often in the church today. Even in the church young men will assume that, because this young woman belongs to his church, she is a believer. What attracted him was her beauty, not her faith and pious life. And then after marriage he finds out that she opposes him in trying to bring the children up in the fear of God's name. He, blinded by his fleshly love for her earthly beauty, saw her walk of life as just an evidence of weak faith rather than unbelief. That love of the flesh, as with Jacob, is willing to marry that face, even when clear evidences of faith are not to be found.

If, with the understanding now that some might stumble over what I wrote, I were to rewrite the paragraph, I would write, "As far as Jacob's love is concerned, it did not matter that Rachel showed no faith in God. He was content to say that he got a wife out of a covenant family. And is it not true that unbelievers, who also fall in love at first sight, do fall in love with those who do believe? And why do they fall in love with the daughters of Zion? Because they see unbelief in them. They see the works of their old man of sin. Be sure of it that a young woman showing Christ in her life will not be pleasing to an unbeliever, no matter how beautiful of face she may be. What attracts the unbeliever to the believer always is that he sees something he likes; and he *cannot* like faith and the life of Christ. Young women, be sure that Christ shines in your life — especially if God gave you beauty of face — lest you be attractive to the world, and be caught up in a temptation to marry an unbeliever. Is it not because Esther hid her religion, when she hid her people, that it was possible for such a godless king as Ahasuerus to choose her to be queen and find delight in her?"

And since I did not judge Rachel, I need not answer brother Koole's reasons for insisting that she is a believer *in later life*. I do, however, like to point out that ten lepers prayed to Jesus that they might be healed; and it pleased Him to heal all ten. But only one showed faith, in that he came back to thank Christ for the healing. And in I Kings 21:27-29 we read that God was pleased to spare Ahab, that wicked



king, and to bring the calamities, which He had predicted upon him through Elijah, upon his children instead of on him personally, when Ahab humbled himself, fasted, and lay in sackcloth. He reacted to God's word, even though he was an unbeliever. And it is not always grace to that individual when God gives him what he likes to have. We must not quickly call one an unbeliever. Nor must we, as I wrote in March, take the position that all use of God's name indicates faith in Him.

I did not write that Rachel was to blame for her beauty. Nor did I even suggest that Leah's lesser beauty meant that she was spiritual. But what puzzles me is that brother Koole writes that I am "correct" in stating that Rachel's "life did reveal anything but a life of faith," and that he still wants to maintain that when Jacob married her, she was a believer. Scripture paints such a beautiful picture of Rebekah, Jacob's mother, in her faith. Willing she was to go with Abraham's servant to be a covenant mother in Israel, not even having seen her husband-to-be — the opposite of Jacob who has seen Rachel's beauty. Instead of Rachel, we read of that incident, on which I wrote in the January 1, 1980 issue of the Standard Bearer, when not one word of opposition is found on Rachel's part to her father's intent to give Leah to Jacob. There was in Rachel no such interest in being a

covenant mother in Israel that Rebekah showed, nor even a love for the man who loved her so deeply and openly. And even if we are to take the position that Rachel was an unbeliever, it does not follow that "the very purpose he (Jacob) was sent away for is defeated." God takes care of His Church and saw to it that Jacob did get a believing wife in Leah.

And is it strange that Jacob would corrupt himself? Do we all not do that time and again? Did Solomon not corrupt himself and marrying even a daughter of Pharaoh? We may be sure that Jacob, according to the new principle of life in him, would say with a man like Paul, "The evil that I would not, that I do."

But let me close with the opening words of that disputed paragraph, "Let the truth be faced once again that apart from God's grace, Jacob is like Esau, and Esau is like Jacob." Jacob had his old man of sin with which to struggle until the day of his death. We must not be surprised then to find that the natural love of his flesh, even while he is seeking a Godfearing wife in the covenant sphere, drives him to look away from that which is of faith and fixes itself on outward, fleshly beauty. As far as the love of his flesh is concerned, he is willing to marry an unbeliever. Love that is moved by earthly, physical beauty marries for that which is not of faith.

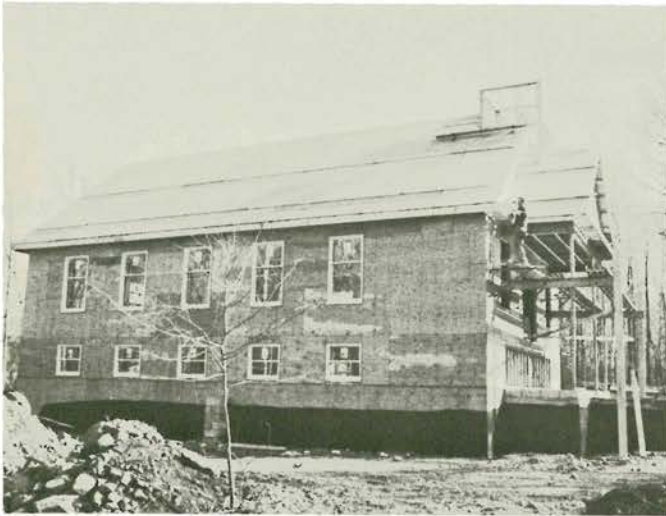
## COVENANT PROTESTANT REFORMED CHURCH OF WYCKOFF, NEW JERSEY

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## Letter From Covenant Prot. Ref. Church



To our Sister Churches of the  
Protestant Reformed Churches

Greetings to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the King of the Church:

We come to you by way of the Standard Bearer with this letter for especially two reasons. In the first place, we desire to keep you informed with regard to the progress that we have made with our building project, and, in the second place, we wish to explain the fact that we are offering our sanctuary bonds for sale once again.

With regard to the building itself, we have made considerable progress, as you can see from the pictures which accompany this letter. By the time this letter is published we hope to have the roof and siding on the building and also some of the plumbing and electrical work finished. All this has been done for the most part with money that has been raised from our congregation in addition to a sizable gift which we received from our sister congregation of Hope in Walker, Michigan.

The rest of the project, therefore, consists of finishing and furnishing the interior of the building and in grading and paving the parking lot and

driveway, all of which must be done before we may use the building. We are thankful to our God for providing us with the means necessary to carry the project this far; but it is also at this point that we urge you to consider prayerfully our continued need.

In order to finish the work that remains we are still in need of nearly \$100,000 and therefore are once again offering our sanctuary bonds. We do not seek to hide the fact that the interest on these bonds is very low and the maturity very long, but because of our limited means it would make the whole project impossible were we to offer higher interest or shorter maturity. We are asking a considerable sacrifice of you, therefore, when we ask that you consider the purchase of these bonds.

The bonds are advertised once again in this issue of the Standard Bearer. There is a prospectus available which gives the details concerning these bonds. We humbly ask you to consider helping us.

In Christ's Name,  
The Consistory and congregation of  
Covenant Protestant Reformed Church  
Wyckoff, New Jersey



*ALL AROUND US*

## Are You Troubled by Current Events ?

*Rev. G. Van Baren*

My attention has been called to various disturbing developments that are taking place in the country today. And one cannot help but observe from news reports that many things are not done in harmony with God's Word in our country and communities. I have before me a copy of "The Midwest Regional Reporter," published by the Midwest Association for the Education of Young Children. It is a small bulletin giving information concerning the training of young children of the community. The paper advocates earlier and earlier training of the child by the state. It presents in glowing terms the practices of Red China in training children within the communes. It encourages support for the ERA and the International Year of the Child. In short, it advocates much which would tend to break down the family and enhance the position of the state in the instruction of children.

I have another document, "The Christian Voice," which points out the attempt of the IRS to take away the tax exempt status of private schools — which was, for the time, defeated by congressional action.

Disturbing too are the reports of continuing and growing abortion. More than a million unborn are destroyed annually in this country alone. We regard this, as we believe Scripture teaches, as outright murder. Nor can the just and righteous God look down upon such activities with favor but must rather punish in wrath now and eternally.

One reads, especially in Michigan where we live, of gambling — openly promoted and encouraged by state government. It is an evil which is legal, condoned, but which destroys the integrity and fabric of society.

There is the push for the ERA amendment. Threats and boycotts are used to try to force legislators to

approve this constitutional amendment. Those who most strongly advocate the amendment make claims for it and suggest their opinions on what it will do — in terms which ought to shock every Christian. The amendment appears not merely to be a simple means to right a wrong within society, but to destroy the very core of the family life.

The International Year of the Child has been promoted in the past. It is suggested that the child also has "rights": the right to choose for himself how and if he will serve God; the right to choose for himself whether or not he will engage in sexual activities; the right to decide for himself what entertainment he will seek, or where he will go. One almost becomes discouraged at the trends — and wonders where it will all lead.

There is the fact that government makes it increasingly difficult to provide the Christian instruction we promised before God to give our children. The regulations and restrictions increase. The financial sacrifice grows. Those who support public education openly declare their desire and intent to close down Christian Schools.

So — what is the Christian to do? That question is often raised. Within our own churches, too, the question is asked: Is there anything we can do about this?

First, there is the real danger that we do nothing. We realize that Scripture testifies not only that these things will be — but that, as the end approaches, the evils will grow. And all this is a sign and reminder of the return of Christ. Yet one might incorrectly be inclined to say: since Scripture teaches that evil shall abound, we ought not even to testify against it. We've often fallen into that error — but it is wrong.



Secondly, there might be an opposite danger of adopting tactics of the wicked about us by being abusive, even violent, in support of what we believe to be right. Often that has been done. But adopting the tactics of the enemy is inexcusable — it is sin.

What ought we to do? We can, and should, inform those who represent us in government what our opinions are. We can express what we believe and why we are convinced that a certain activity is wrong.

Whom do we write? We can write national leaders — especially our representative in the U.S. House and our two senators. We can write the chairman of the committees which consider the objectionable proposals. We can write our representatives in the state legislature. We ought to do this far more often than we have done in the past.

But how do we find out whom we must write? Information is usually available at the library within a community or from the schools. A telephone call will normally provide the information we need.

What ought we to write? Do we believe ourselves incapable? Long letters are not necessary — or even

advisable. A few simple rules can guide us in this. First: address the individual with respect. Secondly, state simply and briefly the subject about which you are writing. Thirdly, express briefly and without abuse your objections to the activity or proposed legislation. Give your reasons for objecting. Finally, sign your letter. Unsigned letters are usually ignored and surely carry no weight.

One who does this faithfully does give to those who represent us an idea of where we stand. If we say nothing, how can such representatives ever know?

Will our writing change things? Sometimes, as in the case of the proposal of the I.R.S. to remove the tax-exempt status from Christian Schools, this kind of writing does result in favorable action. It is true, we can not, and do not desire to, prevent the coming of antichrist. His coming is one of the final signs that show that Christ's return is at hand. Nevertheless, we may not hide our convictions. Diligently we must let others know what we believe. God uses even such activity to serve His purpose and to allow for His church here a place until Jesus returns. Write today.

## To be a minister

To become a minister in many of the main-line denominations of our day, one can believe almost anything — or believe nothing. *Clarion*, March 8, 1980, presents an incident which reminds of this fact:

The Permanent Judicial Commission of the United Presbyterian Church has ordered a presbytery to conduct a new examination of a minister who gave a negative answer when asked if he believed Jesus Christ is God.

It remanded the case of the Rev. Mansfield Kaseman to the National Capital Union Presbytery with the direction that it "exercise its constitutional responsibilities in conducting a proper examination of Mr. Kaseman's doctrinal and theological beliefs."

Following the examination, the presbytery voted to accept Mr. Kaseman as a member. An appeal by a

dissenting minority of the presbytery was filed with the Synod of the Piedmont, which turned it down and the minister's critics then took the matter to the Permanent Judicial Commission of the UPC. . . .

Mr. Kaseman, who was ordained by the United Church of Christ, said later that he believes that Jesus is divine but wanted to "hold God as supreme" in answering the question. He indicated that the problem was partly one of semantics, in that Presbyterians equate Jesus with God while his UCC perspective, "that's unusual language for me."

So it appears that how one understands the statement that "Jesus Christ is God" is only a matter of "semantics"! How far, indeed, have churches and ministers departed from the Word of God when such an important truth is reduced to a matter of "semantics."

## Hans Kung

One reads with interest the action of the Roman Catholic Church in seeking to silence one of its

theologians: Hans Kung. Protestants have been intrigued by this activity — especially since Kung denies



Papal infallibility. He has been called a modern-day Luther. However, Kung is an outspoken heretic. He opposes certain heresies of Rome — but also proposes heretical teachings which the churches of the Reformation must emphatically reject. Some of this is pointed out in the *Christian News*, March 10, 1980:

Liberal Roman Catholic and liberal Protestant theologians all over the world are coming to the defense of Dr. Hans Kung. Some are referring to Kung as “Little Luther”....

Kung is no Luther. Luther was a Christian who believed that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin, rose physically from the dead, and is truly God, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. Kung denies these fundamental doctrines. Kung is correct when he challenges the infallibility of the Pope, but his views about Christ are thoroughly anti-Christian. If he truly believes what he has been saying, then he cannot be considered a Christian theologian and certainly not a “Little Luther.”

## *Christian News*

The above paper, *Christian News*, is published by Rev. Herman Otten, a pastor in the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod. However, Otten is not “certified.” He is not recognized in the LCMS as one of their pastors. Since he graduated from one of the seminaries of the LCMS, he would seem to be entitled to certification. But Otten is too “conservative.” He opposed the developing liberalism in the LCMS a few years ago and backed the conservatives who managed to elect Dr. Jacob Preus as the president of the denomination. However, in past years Dr. Preus has felt the jabs of the pen of Otten in the *Christian News*

too. In recent years Otten has backed another minister and sought his election as president of the denomination. Now, Otten has been seeking “certification,” but Preus has been strongly opposing that — unless Otten promises to suspend publication of his *Christian News*. A bit of a stir has been created in the LCMS because of this. It will be interesting to see what the outcome of this is within that denomination. It may well happen that the “conservatives” of that denomination who took over from the “liberals” a few years ago, may be split — allowing the liberals once more to gain control.

## Book Reviews

**THE FAITHFUL SAYINGS IN THE PASTORAL LETTERS**, by George W. Knight III; Baker Book House, 1979; 167 pp., \$6.95 (paper). (Reviewed by Prof. H. Hanko.)

The clause, “Faithful is the saying . . .”, appears five different times in the pastoral writings of Paul. In three instances there is appended to this clause the added statement, “and worthy of all acceptance.” It is striking that this expression is found only in the pastoral epistles of Paul and not in his other writings. George Knight, professor of New Testament at Covenant Theological Seminary, devotes this book to a study of this phenomenon. After examining a number of reasons for this, he comes to the conclusion that the expression calls attention to a significant point which Paul wishes to make, and that the significant point is cast into the form of a creed used in the liturgy of the apostolic church. In other

words, already in the days of the apostles, the Church was engaged in formulating her faith in creedal form for use in the worship services. And these expressions in Paul are the evidences of this.

The book is interesting and well worth reading although, because of its extensive use of Greek, it is readable for those who are acquainted with the Greek language.

**COMMENTARY ON GALATIANS**, Martin Luther; Kregel Publications, 1979; 388 pages, \$10.95. (Reviewed by Prof. H. Hanko.)

Shortly before Luther died he is quoted as saying that there were only two books which he wrote in his life which were any good. One was “The Bondage of the Will” and the other was his “Commentary on Galatians.” Apart from appearing in the collected works of Luther, this is the first time in a long time



that this important work of the Wittenberg reformer has appeared in a separate volume.

I cannot recommend this work strongly enough, and every faithful son of the Reformation ought to be grateful for this effort of Kregels to make this book available. It can be used as any commentary is used in a study of this important book of the Bible and the reader will find depths of riches in Luther's explanation of it. But there is more than that. Here, in this commentary, you really find what the truth of the Lutheran reformation, the just shall live by faith, is all about. After all, the great theme of this epistle is justification by faith apart from the works of the law. This was also *the* theological principle of Luther's reformatory work, and it is no wonder then that this

book stands high among Luther's writings. I would almost say that one cannot understand well the Lutheran Reformation without reading Luther's Commentary on Galatians. Yet, finally, the commentary makes excellent devotional reading. It is not difficult to sit down with the book and read it for its great insights into the truth of salvation in the cross of Christ alone.

The book is somewhat condensed, but the price of \$10.95 is a bargain indeed in these days of expensive books. Get it and add it to your library and, above all, read it.

I have not checked on the accuracy of the translation.

### NOTICE!!!

#### FUTURE PROTESTANT REFORMED TEACHERS AND MINISTERS

The Scholarship Fund Committee is offering scholarships for the 1980-81 school year. An essay of 300 words written on the topic, "WHAT HAVE YOU GAINED FROM YOUR COLLEGE OR SEMINARY EDUCATION?", is required, along with a record of your high school and/or college grades and a recommendation from your consistory.

If you are interested in an application contact Deb Buiter, 1551 Wilson Ave., S.W., Grand Rapids, MI 49504. Applications are due May 15, 1980.

The Scholarship Fund Committee  
Deb Buiter, Sec'y.

#### RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Faith, Hope and Love Society of the South Holland Protestant Reformed Church express their sincere sympathy to one of our members, Mrs. John Flikkema, in the passing of her mother, MRS. AL MIEDEMA.

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." (Rev. 14:13).

Rev. David Engelsma, Pres.  
Tena Poortinga, Sec'y.

#### WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On May 4, 1980, the Lord willing, our parents, MR. AND MRS. WILLIAM CORSON, will commemorate their 30th wedding anniversary. We, their children, are thankful to God for the Christian home and covenant upbringing that they have given us. It is our prayer that God will keep them in His care and continue to bless and guide them in the future.

"Blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord; that walketh in His ways." (Psalm 128:1).

Ron and Linda Corson  
Melissa, Chad  
Randy Corson  
Rick Corson  
Grand Rapids, MI

#### RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Ladies Society of the Hope Protestant Reformed Church (Walker, MI), expresses sincere sympathy to a fellow member, Mrs. C. Kamps, in the loss of her father, MR. A. PONSTEIN.

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God; an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." (II Cor. 5:1).

Mr. Jon Huiskens, Pres.  
Mrs. John Buiter, Sec'y.

## News From Our Churches

Rev. Kenneth Koole has declined the call he received from our congregation in Redlands, California. Their new trio includes Rev. Richard Moore, Rev. James Slopsema, and Rev. Gise Van Baren. Rev. Schipper, one of our "retired" ministers, plans to preach for the Redlands congregation during the months of April and May. Since there are more pulpits than ministers to fill them in our denomina-

tion, our retired ministers have been of great help in bringing the lively preaching of the holy gospel to many of our pulpits from week to week.

Professor Herman Hanco has declined the call he received from our Hope Church in Walker, Michigan.

Rev. George Lubbers has made a good recovery from his surgery in early March, so much so that he was able to preach in First Church on Good Friday



and to lead an Easter Chapel in our South Holland, Illinois, Christian School on March 31.

Rev. Robert Harbach has made a good recovery from the eye surgery he underwent in March. Rev. Harbach has always been able to describe many conditions with quotes from the Scriptures. He describes his own condition as follows: "He who formed the eye" (Psalm 94:9) makes "the eyes of the blind see out of obscurity . . ." (Isaiah 19:18).

Rev. and Mrs. Ronald Cammenga were blessed with the birth of a baby boy, Charles Mark, on March 29. Rev. Cammenga is the pastor of our church in Hull, Iowa.

Rev. Ronald Van Overloop is laboring in Birmingham, Alabama, as home missionary. He reported to his calling church, South Holland, Illinois recently. Rev. Van Overloop holds preaching services twice every Sunday as well as midweek Bible study. He is able to call upon persons outside of the group that meets regularly. He has begun distributing cassette tapes and R.F.P.A. publications to interested persons. He is ready to begin a weekly fifteen-minute radio broadcast over a local station. He also spoke of his need for our prayers "That utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth, boldly to make known the mystery of the Gospel."

Word has also been received from our missionary in Singapore. Rev. den Hartog writes, "We are having a blessed time here. There is much work to do and the work is going well. We will soon be sending a report to the *Standard Bearer*. The worship services are attended by more than 100 young people each Lord's Day. I am teaching four catechism classes. There is a real measure of love for the Reformed Faith, and a knowledge of it. There is also an earnest desire to grow in it."

Rev. den Hartog's address is:

Rev. & Mrs. Arie den Hartog  
32D Block C Pacific Mansion  
River Valley Close  
Singapore 0923  
Republic of Singapore

Rev. Rodney Miersma, pastor of our church in Pella, Iowa, spent the month of April in Bradenton, Florida, preaching there at the request of First Church in Grand Rapids. Attendance at services there was reported to be as many as 70 souls. In the absence of Rev. Miersma, Rev. George Lanting preached for the congregation in Pella.

Rev. John Heys, pastor of our church in Holland, Michigan, is retiring this year. He has scheduled his farewell sermons for June 1.

Our Holland congregation has sold their present church parsonage. The present schedule calls for turning over the house to its new owners in early June. Plans for the construction of a new parsonage are now being made.

Rev. Hanco reports in the bulletin of our Covenant Church in Wyckoff, New Jersey, that the walls are up and the roof on their new church building.

A special congregational meeting was held in our church in Hull, Iowa on March 10 to revise the budget due to the increase in Synodical assessments. The congregation also approved the purchase of a model 523 organ from the Associated Organ Builders.

Two public lectures were scheduled in Hull during April. Rev. David Engelsma was to speak on "Reprobation, Is It Reformed?" on April 18, and Rev. Ronald Cammenga planned to speak on "The Foolishness of Preaching" on April 25.

The Reformed Witness Committee of our churches in Doon, Hull, and Edgerton, has decided to take up labors in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

The Spring Meeting of the Eastern Men's and Ladies' League was held on Wednesday, April 9 in our Hudsonville Church. Professor Decker spoke on "The Signs of the Times." The young people in Michigan had a Easter Mass Meeting in Hope Church, led by the Kalamazoo young people. Kalamazoo's pastor, Rev. Woudenberg, spoke.

A Spring Lecture is scheduled for May 8 in South Christian High School in Cutlerville, Michigan.

K.G.V.