

The **STANDARD BEARER**

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

. . . Follow man-made philosophies that credit man with helping God by "accepting His kind offer," present the matter as though man fulfills the condition of believing and that God then proceeds to save him, and you are looking to lying vanities and forsaking mercy, rather than seeking it where it can be found.

See "A Confession of God's Sure Mercy"
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MEDITATION

James D. Slopesma

Baptized With the Spirit

For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

Acts 1:5

These words were spoken by Jesus to His disciples on the very day of His ascension, probably just before He led them out to the Mount of Olives. He informed His disciples at that time that they

must not depart from Jerusalem but must wait for the promise of the Father. As is evident from the words that form the basis for our meditation, this promise was that they would be baptized by the

Holy Spirit.

This promise of the Father had been first spoken through John the Baptist. John had preached, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire" (Matt. 3:11). This promise had later been proclaimed by Jesus Himself. For the promise of the Father, said Jesus, "ye have heard of me" (Acts 1:4).

Now this promise was about to be fulfilled. Not many days hence the disciples would be baptized with the Holy Spirit. Hence, they must wait in Jerusalem.

This baptism in the Holy Spirit took place on Pentecost, ten days after Jesus' ascension. This baptism in the Spirit was a very significant event for the church. When listing the great works of God in our salvation, we give to this baptism in the Spirit a place of great prominence, equal to Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension into heaven.

With Pentecost just a few days away, we call attention to this great work of God in Christ to baptize the church with the Holy Spirit.

* * * * *

To appreciate this great promise of God it is necessary to understand the ministry and baptism of John. For even as John baptized with water, so would Christ baptize with the Holy Ghost.

The main theme of John's ministry was the kingdom of heaven. He fervently proclaimed that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. Very soon the great king Whom God had promised to raise up from David's seed would come and establish the kingdom.

John also emphasized that this kingdom would be radically different from the present order of things.

For this kingdom would be a heavenly kingdom. The kingdom that existed then was merely an earthly kingdom. It had an earthly temple, an earthly throne, an earthly power, an earthly glory. But the kingdom that would soon be established would be heavenly in nature. In fact, the present kingdom was merely a type and picture of this new, more glorious kingdom that was about to come.

Furthermore, the membership requirements of this new kingdom would be different. All that was necessary to be a member of the old kingdom was that you be a descendant of Abraham. If you were a Jew, you belonged to the kingdom of Israel.

However, the requirement for membership in the new kingdom would be much different. In the new kingdom of heaven the requirement for membership would be righteousness. This is due to the fact that this new kingdom would be a kingdom of righteousness.

However, John emphasized that this righteousness must be a true righteousness. It could not be the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees who imagined they could enter the kingdom on the basis of their own works. No, the righteousness necessary to gain entrance into the kingdom of heaven must be the righteousness symbolized in the sacrifices of the law and proclaimed by the prophets of old. This righteousness is the forgiveness of sin and a new life of obedience, both of which result from the payment of sin. This righteousness could be acquired only from the great Savior Who would very soon now appear as the Lamb of God to take away the sins of the world.

But the people had long ago forgotten this righteousness of the Savior proclaimed by the law and the prophets. In the hardness of their hearts they had sought to establish their own righteousness by their own works. Hence, John called the people to repentance. They must leave the error of work righteousness and look in faith for the coming Savior Who alone could provide them with the righteousness of the kingdom.

At this point we can understand the baptism of John. Those who repented, confessed their faith in the coming Savior, and sought His righteousness were baptized by John with water. This baptism was very significant. For baptism with water serves as a sign of the washing away of sins in the blood of Christ. That was no less true in the days of John the Baptist than it is now. Even as water washes away dirt from the body, so also does the blood of Christ wash away the spiritual filth of sin from the soul and render us righteous. As a sign therefore of the spiritual cleansing and righteousness that would be theirs in the coming Savior, John baptized all those who in faith look for Him.

However, John wanted to make it very clear that the baptism he administered was merely a sign and not the reality. The water with which he baptized didn't wash away sins. His baptism didn't make the people righteous so that they might enter into the kingdom of heaven. His baptism was merely a picture of a greater, spiritual baptism that would be administered by the Savior Himself. Even as John baptized with water, so would the Savior baptize with the Holy Spirit. He would send the very Spirit of God into the hearts of all those who believed on Him and through the Spirit wash away their sins. Through the inner working of the Spirit He would

render truly righteous those that believed on Him so that they will be able to enter into the kingdom and enjoy its great blessings.

I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Such was the ministry and baptism of John.

* * * * *

On the day of His ascension Jesus informed His disciples that they should wait in Jerusalem; for they would be baptized with the Holy Ghost "not many days hence."

This spiritual baptism took place just ten days later on Pentecost. Pentecost was a Jewish feast day. That explains why the disciples of Jesus, 120 in number, were all assembled in an upper room in Jerusalem. Suddenly some very wonderful and unusual things happened. First, the disciples heard the sound as of a mighty rushing wind. Then, cloven tongues as of fire appeared to them and sat upon each of them. Finally, they all began to speak in different tongues of the wonderful works of God. These were merely signs that the ascended Lord had now baptized the church with the Holy Spirit. Peter understood that. For when the assembled crowd began to mock and accuse the disciples of drunkenness, Peter pointed out that all these things were a fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel who spoke of the pouring out of the Holy Spirit on the church in the last days.

* * * * *

What a significant event this baptism was for the church!

We must understand that to baptize means to immerse. At Pentecost, therefore, the church was immersed in the Spirit. That implies that at Pentecost the church received the fullness of the Spirit.

Certainly the church had the Holy Spirit before Pentecost. Didn't the Holy Spirit testify through the prophets of old? (I Peter 1:10-13). Didn't David in his repentance pray that God not take the Holy Spirit from him? (Psalm 51:11). Indeed the church of the Old Testament possessed the Holy Spirit. And through the inner working of the Holy Spirit

the saints of old found salvation and true righteousness. Through the Spirit they were assured of the forgiveness of sin in the blood of the Lamb Who was to come. Through the Spirit they were also led to live a new and holy life in the service of God.

However, the Old Testament church had not yet been baptized or immersed in the Holy Spirit. They possessed the Spirit of God and the blessings of salvation through the Spirit only partially. The Old Testament saints had only the small beginnings of what the church after Pentecost would be able to enjoy. And this was due to the fact that the great Savior had not yet come as the Lamb of God to shed His blood for sin. Atonement for sin had not yet been made. This atonement had been promised. And on the strength of that promise the people of God in the Old Testament were able to possess the Spirit of God and His salvation, but only in a very small measure. Certainly they could not yet be *baptized* in the Spirit.

However, the Savior had now come. He had gone to the cross and once for all paid the price for sin that the church might enjoy the fullness of the Spirit and His salvation. Hence, at Pentecost, just 50 days after Jesus' death, the church was *baptized* with the Holy Spirit.

What a blessing for the church!

May the church never cease to celebrate this event!

* * * * *

Being baptized with the Spirit it is now our calling to show the fruits of the Spirit in our living.

The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance (Galatians 5:22 & 23).

Indeed it has been the calling of the church down through the ages to manifest the fruits of the Spirit. This was the calling of the church also in the Old Testament. However, this calling comes especially to us. For we have been *baptized* with the Spirit and enjoy His fullness.

Let us show therefore the fruits of the Spirit with Whom we have been baptized.

*Take the time to ready and study
the Standard Bearer.
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EDITORIAL

Christian Education — The Reformed Viewpoint

Recently *Christianity Today* (April 18, 1986) carried in its *News* section a rather interesting report concerning a conference on Christian education "organized by leaders in a movement known as Christian Reconstruction." To some of our readers perhaps the name "Chalcedon" is more familiar. Post-millennialism and theonomy are trademarks of this movement; and the Rev. Rousas J. Rushdoony is generally recognized as the theonomy patriarch, although others are also known as proponents of this philosophy. The CT report had the title, "War Is Declared On Public Education." The conference was hosted by Paul Lindstrom's Christian Liberty Academy in the Chicago suburb of Arlington Heights. Connected with the academy is a "satellite school system for home educators with an enrollment of over 22,000 children in 36 countries." And among the home schoolers, it is claimed, are thousands of Catholics and Mormons.

According to CT's report there were some rather radical statements made at this conference concerning public education, statements which really have nothing to do with Christian and covenantal education as such, and statements which, if all Christian education and schools are lumped together, as they frequently are, tend to give Christian education a black eye in the public mind. Thus, for example, while it is surely true — and consistently Reformed Christians have always maintained this — that "the public school is not a genuine option for Christians truly concerned about their children and their world," (something which CT ascribes to "public education's most radical opponents") it has nothing as such to do with Christian education to label public education a "multi-billion dollar taxpayer rip-off," as Paul Lindstrom is reported to have done, and to call for "warfare against the humanist elite that controls

America's culture and its schools." Nor does it have anything to do with Christian education as such to encourage families "to avoid seeking permission from state authorities to conduct home schools and simply take their stand on biblical grounds." Or again, it has nothing to do with Christian education to assert that "a generation of barbarians is busily destroying this civilization," as Rushdoony is reported to have said. Or again, it does not promote Christian education to assert, as Samuel Blumenfeld is reported to have done, that "public educators have deliberately downgraded the literary skills of Americans to make them more amenable to socialism," and to assert that the "main instrument for this conspiracy was the 'look-say' method of reading instruction installed in the 1930s to replace traditional phonics methods." And it sounds rather revolutionary, in fact, to propose that "We must first remove the obstacles, including the restrictions on home schooling, mandatory attendance laws, and teacher certification requirements. Then we must separate ourselves financially and stop paying for education that is calculated to destroy us."

However, according to the CT report, there were some truths stated, especially by Rousas J. Rushdoony, which, when stripped of their theonomist, Reconstructionist, post-millennialist context, are truths which have always been emphasized by those who promote Reformed, covenantal education. I have in mind such fundamentals as the following:

- 1) Education is primarily the calling and obligation of Christian parents. This is true even when this education is and must be in part accomplished by means of schools. Education is not the task of the state or of the church. This is the reason why for years and years Reformed people have established and maintained parental Christian schools.

2) Education is inescapably religious; there is no such thing as neutral knowledge. Public education is humanist, and therefore in rebellion against God. Traditionally, in our Christian school movement we have not phrased it this way; and, in fact, we have phrased it more specifically. But surely, education is inescapably religious; and that religion is either the truth or the lie. In the deepest sense, it promotes either knowledge or ignorance, either wisdom or folly, either the fear of the Lord, or enmity against Him. From this same point of view, as Rushdoony is reported to have said, "... nothing is secular for God. All things are to be governed by His Word."

3) The Bible must undergird and inform every discipline. This is precisely what our forefathers meant when in connection with Christian education they insisted that our Christian schools must not merely be "schools with the Bible," but "schools on (i.e., based upon) the Bible."

It is precisely because of the above that we have always striven, wherever possible, to establish our own Protestant Reformed Christian schools — not, mind you, as *church* schools, but as schools owned and operated by societies of likeminded, Protestant Reformed parents. As more than one of our school societies states it in their constitution:

This Society is based on the following principles:

A. The Bible is the infallibly inspired, written Word of God, the doctrine of which is contained in the Three Forms of Unity, and as such forms the basis for administration, instruction, and discipline in the school.

B. Our sovereign, Triune, Covenant God has from eternity chosen and in time forms a people unto Himself, that they may stand in covenant relation to Him, and live to His praise in fellowship and loving service in all spheres of life, in the midst of a sinful world.

C. The training of the covenant child in the school as well as in the home and in the church must serve to prepare him to follow his lifelong calling to reveal the glory of his God in a life lived from the principle of regeneration by grace.

The purpose of this Society is to provide a system of education maintaining and developing the principles sketched above.

Historically, our Christian school movement has always been committed to these principles. In fact, I make bold to assert, these principles have been originally the fundamental principles of the Christian school movement among Reformed people in this country and in the Netherlands from the very beginning — though many have long since departed from them. Only to the extent that we also actually practice these principles will our schools be successful. And if they forget and depart from them,

our schools will lose the fundamental reason of their existence. A mere Protestant Reformed name on our schools, and even a mere separate existence, for whatever reason, is not our goal. Our schools must be Protestant Reformed in truth and in deed!

But there was another significant point made at this conference, according to the report in *Christianity Today*. It is this:

Even Christian schools did not escape criticism at the conference. Speakers attacked the use of humanistic texts by some Christian educators and alleged that teachers certified at university-related colleges of education were tainted with anti-Christian values and methodologies. The implication was that Christian educators need to make a radical break from secular schools and build a system based solely on biblical principles.

This is an important point, one which can be applied to our own Protestant Reformed schools. In the first place, the simple fact is that there is no college, no teacher-training institution, where teachers can be trained to be *Protestant Reformed* teachers, whether you think of secular colleges or religious colleges. And this is only the negative side of the situation. Wherever our teachers go for their education, they have ample opportunity — and they must be on constant guard in this respect — to imbibe non-Reformed and non-Biblical ideas. And if our teachers are to be distinctively Reformed teachers, they must become such, in large measure, on their own and in spite of their higher education. To no little extent their education precisely in those areas of learning which are important to them as teachers involves *negative* learning. There is no such thing as a Protestant Reformed college for them to attend. In the second place, the area of textbooks and manuals for teachers and for students is important. The simple fact is that to a large degree our schools remain dependent on others for these teaching materials — whether on worldly educators and authors or on Christian educators and authors who are not distinctively Reformed. The CT report states that at the conference mentioned "there was little new material that lived up to the ideals of a Christian curriculum espoused by Rushdoony." The same is true of our Protestant Reformed schools. This is an area of sore lack among us. It is a lack which we should attack, and that, too, before it is too late. Do not say that it cannot be done. Our seminary has done it, and is still doing it, at the level of theological education. Our seminary would, in fact, lose its distinctiveness if this were not done. But the same is true of our parental schools. Far more attention should be given to this problem on the part of our schools and our Federation of School Societies than has been given it heretofore. Consider it!

HCH

THE DAY OF SHADOWS

John A. Heys

A Confession of God's Sure Mercy

Safely inside the special fish God provided for him, breathing the oxygen his body needed, and doing so without effort, and tasting the sweetness of salvation, Jonah looks back at his escape from the jaws of death and states a beautiful truth. Because he had been walking in sin, he was cast overboard and into the raging sea. He had fallen to the bottom of the sea and became entangled in the weeds. Instead of going to Nineveh as God had commanded him to do, in order that he might warn them and call them to repentance, lest God's wrath come and destroy them, Jonah found himself worthy of being destroyed because of his own sins. But he tasted God's mercy as it is in Christ and confessed that sure mercy of God.

Emphatically and in a positive statement he declares, "Salvation is of the Lord." To that we would call your attention next time. But we may note first that he states this same truth emphatically and from a negative point of view when he states, "They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy" (Jonah 2:8). He has idols in mind. They are the lying vanities. And he had just had close contact with those who did observe lying vanities on the ship. No, he did not hear them praying to their gods in the storm. He was sound asleep. But when they awakened him and urged him to pray to his God, he became aware of the fact that they had tried in desperation to get their gods to save them. The shipmaster had said to him, "Arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not." Note that he makes a distinction between their idols and Jonah's God. He even states that perhaps *that* God, not their gods but that God, will help them. Remembering this, Jonah now speaks of the folly of putting trust in any one other than Jehovah.

Now it makes no difference whether your idol is mental or made of metal. Slipping the letter *n* between the *e* and *t* does not change the situation one bit. Whether your trust is in an image made of gold or silver, of brass or iron, or whether it is a god of your own imagination, a god you imagine exists but is the figment of your mind, and of the minds of them that taught you, "they that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy." And please note that the word *image* is also in the word *imagine*.

It is important that we bear this in mind, because in our sophisticated day and age, the worship of gods of silver and gold, or other metals or substances, is old-fashioned, and hard to find in our country. That, by no means, means that those living around us do not observe lying vanities. In fact there are more false gods and idols today, and in our own country, than in Jonah's day. In that which calls itself the Christian church today there are so many mental images of God that are such gross distortions of the revelation of Him given in Holy Writ, that Jonah's words ought to be considered seriously. For they too are lying vanities, and in the judgment day will be revealed to have been such.

In many churches they imagine God to be weaker than man. He must wait for man to give Him the right to save them. They preach a changeable god, or even worse one that winks at sin and can show love and grace and mercy upon those whose sins have not been blotted out. Or else, a god who sent his son to die for everyone in the world, but is disappointed because he just cannot get some of them to accept his kind and conditional offer. Instead of examining every word of God in Scripture, they imagine God to be what their flesh wants Him to be. And the truth of what Jonah says stands: they forsake their own mercy.

Now that all images, whether mental or metal,

are lying vanities means that they deceive because they are empty, worthless, powerless, and in the judgment day will be shown to have been no gods at all, and that they who put their trust in them have indeed been deceived by lies. The sailors on that ship with Jonah found out that their gods could do nothing. The storm became fiercer and fiercer, even though they prayed more and more vehemently. They tasted no mercy of any kind from their gods.

Not only do the gods of man's imagination have no power to show the slightest degree of mercy, but they are lying vanities also in that they militate against the one true and living God. Not only do they fail to render to Him the honor due to His name, but they assume to take His place and deny that He is God. In the realm of the spiritual there is no neutrality possible. Jesus said it in Luke 11:23, "He that is not with Me is against Me." That is why it is so important that we preach the God of Scripture and sound doctrine. If we do not, we fight against Him. We worship vanities that lie about God! They do not simply deceive us, but as Satan lied to Adam and Eve about God, false doctrines spread lies to us about God! They are not harmless and neutral. Not being with Him and for Him, they are against God.

And when Jonah speaks of observing lying vanities, he does not simply mean looking at them. There is a good sense in which we can observe these lying vanities. If we observe them to be false doctrines, and lies about the one true God, we are wise and not deceived by them. But what Jonah means is looking up to them, putting one's trust in them. The word is *shamar*, which is translated as observe 45 times, but well over 200 hundred times as keep. And the idea is hold on to, believe in, look up to, direct your prayers unto, retain as your source of help and safety. In fact, the very word mercy reveals that this is what Jonah had in mind.

Mercy is compassion or pity upon someone in some form of misery. Mercy will lift one out of that distress, if it is at all possible. And looking unto one for help in time of woe is seeking mercy from that one. That is what the sailors did during that terrible storm. That is what Jonah stood in desperate need of, as he began to sink deeper and deeper in the waters of the sea, and then got the weeds on the bottom wrapped around his head. To save him one would have to have pity, mercy, compassion upon him. Yes, such a one would have to be able to see him in that awful plight. Such a one would have to be very powerful in order to save. But such a one would also have to be in the vicinity to see, hear, and know of the misery. Yea, such a one would have to be everywhere present, to help all those who, on this sin-cursed earth, suffer the miseries

and woes of this life.

Taking all this into consideration one can see what lying vanities are these idols made of wood and stone, of gold and silver, brass and iron, but also all those gods that simply exist in the minds of men as their mental images of Jehovah. We do well to listen then to what He says through the Psalmist in Psalm 115:5-8, and I quote, "They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them."

Gold and silver, wood and stone, cannot have mercy upon man. Neither can the sun, moon, or stars, or any created object that man makes his god. And a god that man thinks up is no better. That god owes its existence to the man who gave it existence in the minds of man. It depends upon man; and surely what depends upon man cannot help man when he gets into difficulties. These are lies and lying vanities. For, after man dies, these mental gods that depend upon man surely have no life or strength. Only Jehovah, the everywhere present, almighty, unchangeable God can help us in our miseries. David states it so beautifully in Psalm 62:5, 6 in these words, "My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from Him. He only is my rock, and my salvation: He is my defense: I shall not be moved."

By the way, these words David speaks in what is sometimes called David's only Psalm. Indeed, he wrote many more Psalms than this one. But the reason — and it is a good reason — why it is called his only Psalm is because he makes so much use in it of the word "only." The translation does not show this, but he begins by stating, "Only upon God waiteth my soul." Even then in the translation we can find repeated use of the word only. The basic message of the Psalm is that mercy is found in God alone; and the exhortation in verse 8, namely, "Trust in Him at all times; ye people, pour out your hearts before Him: God is a refuge for us. Selah," expresses that idea that only in God is there help for us. Yea, it teaches us that He ONLY is God. All the idols and men and mental images are lying vanities. And if we look to them, we are forsaking mercy, rather than in the true sense seeking it.

God's mercy is sure, and the last verse in Jonah 2 reveals that. There we read, "And the Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah on the dry land." It was God's mercy that caused that fish to vomit out Jonah. It was not that the fish was irritated by the presence of Jonah in its belly and spit

him out to get relief. It was not that the fish sought relief, but that God exercised His mercy. And note that the fish did not simply vomit out Jonah, but that it did so upon the dry land. It swam into very shallow water and very close to the shoreline to spit him out on dry land. Never mind what the intentions of the fish were, it was the thought and mercy of God that gave to the fish the desire to spew him out. It could have vomited him out way back there in the deep water. And large fish do not come that close to shore. God's sure mercy does, through unordinary, unusual events, bring blessings and salvation to His people.

And do not forget that unusual work of God of which Jesus spoke, when He told the Jews that no sign would be given them except the sign of Jonah, who was three days and three nights in the fish's belly. There indeed we have the sure mercy of God. It was in amazing mercy that He sent His Son into the heart of the earth, after sending Him into the belly of hell, and this time in the sense of Gehenna, the lake of fire, for our sins. It was the mercy of God that raised Him up the third day, because by

His cross He had justified us. Do not forsake that mercy. Do not turn away from that merciful God to trust in lying vanities. Listen carefully to Jonah, because it is God Who is speaking through him.

Jonah seeks mercy where it can be found. He confesses here that he will sacrifice to God with the voice of thanksgiving, and will pay his vows to God. Indeed, salvation, every single bit of it, comes from Him, and from Him alone. Follow man-made philosophies that credit man with helping God by "accepting His kind offer," present the matter as though man fulfills the condition of believing and that God then proceeds to save him, and you are looking to lying vanities and forsaking mercy, rather than seeking it where it can be found. That act of believing is part of the work of salvation that God works in us. Salvation, in all its parts, and from every possible aspect, is of the Lord. Do not forsake that truth, but with Jonah confess it. Then you are not following a mental image that is empty and deceives, but you are already enjoying a salvation that is of the Lord.

FROM HOLY WRIT

George C. Lubbers

The Hope of Heaven and Earth (2)

THE COSMOLOGICAL-CHRISTOLOGICAL IMPORT: THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH.

Genesis 2:4ff.

When we desire to have a glance into the "heavens," as the heaven of heavens, Scripture restrains us and bids us to wait a bit. We should never forget that Genesis 1:1 reads "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." However, there is not one iota in the entire first chapter of Genesis which speaks of any particulars concerning the creation of the heavens, nor of the creation of the thousands upon thousands, the myriads of angelic hosts. Genesis 1 tells us of the six-day creation of the earthly cosmos, and ends

with telling us of the grand and wonderful creation of man. Such ought to be obvious to any attentive reader.

And, yet, when the Holy Spirit unfolds before our believing eyes the wonders of the six-day creation (*Hexaimeron*) of the earth, we see that the perspective here is not limited to the work of God's earthly creation. If the earth is God's footstool, then the throne which is heaven too is created. God did not create the one without the other (Matt. 5:33-35). Therefore no man can swear by the earth without swearing by the other. Do not forget that the veil is lifted just a bit in Genesis 2:1, where we read "and the heavens and the earth were finished and all the

host of them." Yes, also the angels sang their *trisagions* already in heaven at the time of the Sabbath of creation. Job seems to refer to this very poetically when he tells us what Jehovah spoke to him out of the whirlwind: "Where wast thou when . . . I laid the foundations of the earth? . . . When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" Did the angels from their heavenly heights of their proper habitation (Jude 6) view with heavenly angelic desire the formation of the light, the firmament, the day and the night, the forming of the dry land and the seas, the wondrous, boundless lights in the firmament to rule the day and the night? And did not their interest heighten when God made living creatures on the fifth and sixth days? And was not the creation of man in God's own image and likeness the breath-taking joy of the angels, when they saw "Adam the son of God," in whose service they would stand forever?

Yes, the veil is lifted here a bit.

God created the heavens and the earth in the beginning!

THE "TOLEDOTH" OF THE HEAVENS AND OF THE EARTH. (Gen. 2:4)

We believe that in Genesis 2:4 we have a backward glance; however, it is far more a forward look into the distant, dim future. It is really a statement full of the prophetic word, reaching from the first Adam to the last Adam. It extends from the first Adam, who is of the earth earthy, to the last Adam, the Second, Who is the Lord from heaven. Yes, it is a prophetic light which shines as a beacon light across the ages. And it really is such that it speaks of the "generations" of the heavens and of the earth.

The order is this: the *heavens* and the *earth*!

This is the consistent and trustworthy form of doctrine to which we have been delivered.

We believe that here in this pregnant statement we have the keynote of all Scripture. It is, so to speak, the substratum of world-history which is church-history! Here is not the dualistic view of "common grace" which makes the influence of God's common, non-saving grace the substratum of world-history, on which the special grace of God is then somewhat related. Nay, here is another life-and-world-view, a quite different *Weltanschauung*. It is the Scriptural view of "Sin and Grace." Here we stand squarely on the teaching of Creation, Fall, and Redemption.

All things were made by the Son of God and unto Him (Col. 1:15-20).

The burden of this chapter of this series of essays is to shew that there is something indeed unique in the term "generations" of the heavens and of the earth.

In the Hebrew text the term which reads "generations" in our English Version is *toledoth*. The term refers in every place in the book of Genesis to *human* generations. It does not refer to the creatures generally, nor can it ever designate the hosts of the angel-world. It ever refers to generations of the Seed of the Woman, except when it is employed in reference to Ishmael's generations in Genesis 25:12, and to Esau's generations in Genesis 36:1, 9. The term occurs in the books of Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Ruth, and I Chronicles. The term occurs thirty-eight times in the Bible. Once it is translated "births" (in Ex. 28:10) in the KJV of the Bible. However, even in this latter passage the term has the basic idea of *toledoth*, generations. Only here the stones in the breast-plate of the high priest are according to the birth, twelve in number, the twelve tribes, whose names are now written upon the gates of the new Jerusalem (Rev. 21:12-25).

There is some very good commentary on the idea of the "toledoth" of Scripture in Matthew 1:1. We read here "The book of the generations of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." There must have been a "Biblos" in Israel. The recording is of the "genealogy" of Christ. In a sense that is the very *heart* of the Old Testament Scriptures. I once read a "version" of the entire Old Testament in which all the "genealogy" of Christ was removed. In that "version" there was a *Toledoth* neither of heaven nor of earth; it left an empty shell, a Christless "bible," a mere saga, a modern heroic story of some Jewish heroes. This "Book" is the inspired record of the prophetic, revelation world which shines until Christ comes, when we will hear angels sing redemption's song in Bethlehem-Ephratha: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased." As is commonly known among students of Scriptures the Greek here reads "men of good pleasure."

Truly, in the light of Matthew 1:1 the term "generations" in Genesis 2:4 is very meaningful.

It is interesting to observe that in the Septuagint version we find the translation here of this *toledoth* by the Greek terms *he biblos geneseos* = the book of the becoming of Jesus Christ. This is the exact verbiage which we read in Matthew 1:1, 18. This places the meaning of this term in a strikingly significant light. In line with the foregoing observations we find that the *Staten Vertaling* (official Dutch translation of 1618) translates *toledoth* by the

noun *geboorten*, births. Now this is a good translation of the Hebrew. For the verb from which the term *toledoth* is derived means "to give birth." From this we may conclude, in passing, that this term could not refer to the angelic hosts of heaven, where there is no marriage, nor bringing forth of children. There in the angel-world there are no believers and their spiritual seed. Christ did not assume the nature of angels, but He took upon Himself the seed of Abraham.

In our considered judgment we must understand by the "book" the record of the genealogy which has its beginning in Adam, and is continued in the heads of Noah, Shem, Terah, Isaac, Jacob, Judah. For it is expressly stated in I Chronicles 5:1, 2 that the genealogy was not reckoned after the (fleshly) birthright, Rueben, but after the fourth son, Judah. In Judah, therefore, the *toledoth* runs to David, and then to Christ. Hence, here is revelation of the covenant of the promise, written by the Spirit through Moses in the desert. Was not the shout of the "King" in Israel in Judah (Num. 23:21; Gen. 49:8-10)?

We are standing on sure ground here.

In Matthew 1:1-18 we read of this great "book" of the generations of Jesus Christ. And this is then summed upon in the grand final, the climax of the song of the saints of all the Old Testament dispensation. "Now the birth (*Toledoth*) of Jesus Christ was on this wise" (Matt. 1:18-24). Yes, it was the Wonder of grace, that the Son of God was born from the virgin Mary, as the Immanuel child, prophesied by Isaiah centuries before (Is. 7:14; 9:6, 7).

Here is the hope of heaven and earth. As a little child I sang with my little peers in the highest and chiefest notes of the "precious name of Jesus." Was it not "the hope of earth and the joy of heaven"? Little did we small children understand the full import. We still sing like these little children, touching only the hem of the garment of this Mystery, which was hid from the ages, but which has been revealed

in these last days. We know in part and we prophesy in part, but when "heaven" will be revealed in the face of Jesus Christ, then shall we know even as we are known (Rom. 16:25, 27; I Pet. 1:20).

Someone will opine, "But the text in Genesis 2:4 precedes the account of the creation of Adam from the dust of the earth, and of Eve from Adam's rib. How can this now all refer in Genesis 2:4 to the Generations which were to be born from this "Woman" spoken of in Genesis 2:23?" We answer that the *Toledoth* of the heavens and of the earth are not born from a woman *per se*. The Woman (*ishah*) never had any children prior to the "Fall" of all mankind, represented by Adam; but all the children were born after the "Fall" from her who was surnamed "Eve," the mother of the living. For the *Toledoth* of heaven and earth do not include the children of Cain at all, but they are in the line of the generations which were born from Adam-Seth as they are under the blood, as they are clothed with the righteousness of the saints. They stand with their children in the Christ, the Seed, Who is the Seed of the Woman, Who will crush the head of the serpent in His church, by His death and resurrection.

Let it be said here and now: Adam and Eve fell by wilful and horrible sinful disobedience. The Fall was by "one man" (Rom. 5:12). After the "disobedience" God had another Man through Whom out of many offenses there is brought about the free gift of grace. Adam and the whole human race, head for head and soul for soul, did not fall into the arms of Jesus Christ, but Adam is from here on an individual, a redeemed member with Eve, in the multitude of the redeemed. O, blessed thought, the *man* Adam, husband of his wife, fell into the arms of mercy. He did not fall into the arms of Christ as representative of the entire human race. He now with Eve belongs to the "many" which are saved in Christ.

Such is the unfolding of the *Toledoth* of the heavens and of the earth.

COUNSEL OF PEACE (con't. from page 383)

ment had to remain separate, because those who served in those offices were only men and the union of all that those offices represented was too great a task even for the best and greatest of them.

In Christ, then, God performs a notable and necessary miracle when He bestows on Christ the gifts of both offices and in Christ reconciles the duties of those offices. In Christ God satisfies all the demands of His justice while at the same time clearing the way for the full revelation of His tender mercy. As the sinless Son of God in our flesh Christ the King is able to bear not only the responsibility

of upholding and executing the law of God but also the responsibility of standing in the place of those over whom He rules when the wrath of God's righteous anger against sin is uncovered. Thus He can be not only the king of His people but the great High Priest who provides for the people of God a place of refuge and shelter from the destroying power of God's wrath. Indeed, He is not only the one who provides the place of refuge but is Himself that place of refuge which we by the grace of God now seek.

This is the miracle that the Psalms celebrate in Psalm 85:10: "Mercy and truth are met together; (con't. on page 377)

ALL AROUND US

Robert D. Decker

Media Hostility to Christian Values Missouri Synod: 'No' to Ordaining Women Persecution, a Reality in Our Modern World

Media Hostility to Christian Values

How carefully do we monitor the programs our children watch on television? How many hours per day or week do we spend in front of the TV? Ought Christians have a television set in the house? At the very least, excerpts from the following article by Jean Shaw ought to cause us to ponder these questions. The article appeared in the March 5, 1986 issue of the *Presbyterian Journal*.

Donald E. Wildmon was obviously tired. On a speaking tour for the National Federation For Decency, he was winding up a series of one-night stands that had taken him all over the United States. One more stop after St. Louis, and he would go home to Tupelo, Mississippi for a rest. Fatigue was not his greatest problem, he told us. "What kills my spirit is the apathy and indifference among Christian people."

Wildmon proceeded to attack that apathy with his own recitation of the ills of television interspersed with actual film clips taken from recent programs. "When I first became concerned about eight years ago," Wildmon explained, "I thought the problem was sex and violence. Now I know that the real problem is an anti-Christian attitude among those who influence the media. The result is discrimination against religious people. Those who control TV are not apathetic, but overtly hostile." Film clips were shown which depicted the clergy as dumb, hypocritical, harsh, unloving people. Persons who gave any evidence of religious upbringing or moral values were shown to be easily tempted by sexual aggressiveness. God was depicted as a being who always forgives sin, even when it is anticipated, and who welcomes into heaven the person who "does good" (whatever that means).

We should not be surprised at the anti-Christian bias of television. According to a non-religious survey of those who control TV, 93% felt that abortion was right, 5% felt that homosexuality was morally wrong. Wildmon pointed out that every television show using homosexuality as a subject is reviewed by the national Gay Media Task Force, and this organization is paid for its services. The survey revealed that 16% of those involved in media believe that adultery is morally wrong. Wildmon added the statistic that 85% of the allusions to sex on TV are between unmarried people.

Who is the leading evangelist on TV? You may recite any of the popular names — Graham, Robertson, Falwell, etc., and you would be wrong. The answer is Norman Lear, whose programs reach more people in one week than all other evangelists reach in a year. "There is religion on TV," Wildmon asserts. "It is a religion of secularism, hedonism, materialism, and humanism. The question is not 'Should values be imposed on the viewers?' but 'Whose values should be imposed?'"

Up to this point the presentations were limited to prime-time television. The seminar now turned to pornography, and if anyone in the audience didn't know exactly what that was, Wildmon had covered a table with magazines, purchased in convenience stores that morning in St. Louis. Available to anyone who asks (regardless of what the stores say), these publications depicted naked men and women in various sexual positions of such erotic nature that one could only gasp at its carnality. On the table also were photocopies of cartoons from sex magazines, all treating clergymen and religion with the grossest disdain.

We were then prepared for brief film clips of pornographic movies — the kind available on cable television or from video cassette outlets. Wildmon explained that he didn't like to show these excerpts but he has learned that verbal descriptions simply do not have the impact. Those who wanted to were allowed to leave the room. Those of us who stayed saw scenes

of indescribable lewdness that glorified self-indulgence.

The person sexually aroused by pornography must have this appetite satisfied by something more than pictures of people in erotic situations. The next step is visualized torture. From this evolves the actual practice of torture itself. Rapes in the United States have increased by 700% in the last decade. Child abuse, largely related to pornography and prostitution, is on the increase everywhere and now accounts for more hospital treatment than tonsillectomies and other child-related problems.

We saw a 30-minute cassette by Dr. Elizabeth Holland, a Memphis pediatrician, describing specific cases of child molestation, not by strangers or outsiders, but by parents and siblings! Almost every case was related to pornography, usually magazines purchased legitimately and kept at home . . .

Missouri Synod: 'No' to Ordaining Women

The same issue of the *Presbyterian Journal* reports that the relatively large Missouri Synod Lutheran Church continues to refuse to ordain women to the ministry of the gospel.

The ordination of women to the ministry "is expressly prohibited by the Scriptures," according to a new report by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod's theological commission.

"The idea that God desires man to be the head of woman and woman to be subordinate to man is rooted deeply in the Old and New Testaments," says the report, titled "Women in the Church." It was issued by the Commission on Theology and Church Relations of the 2.6 million-member denomination to provide theological support for the synod's traditional opposition to ordination of women.

The report claims "the occupation of the pastoral office by women violates the headship structure rooted in God's order of creation." It also asserts that "women are not to be pastors nor perform the essential and unique functions of the pastoral office, since the pastoral office has oversight from God over the congregation, 'the household of God' (I Timothy 3:15)."

In distinguishing between functions of clergy and laity, the report expresses what it calls the "opinion of the (committee) that the reading of the Scriptures is most properly the function of the pastoral office and should therefore not ordinarily be delegated to a lay person, woman or man."

On the question of whether women may serve as assistants in the distribution of communion, the commission "strongly recommends that, to avoid confusion regarding the office of the public ministry and to avoid giving offense to the church, such assistance be limited to men."

One wishes that churches in the Reformed tradition would take as strong a stand on this issue as the Missouri Synod brethren.

Persecution, a Reality in Our Modern World

Christians in America think very little of persecution. They are free to worship, educate their children in God's fear, and live the Christian life according to God's Word. Such is not the case in many parts of the world. Did you know, for example, that: "Christians in Nepal face regular persecution and even torture, according to a delegation of British and U.S. officials who just visited the mountainous Asian country for six days. People who are baptized face a one-year jail sentence, while someone who leads another person to Christ can receive a six-year sentence — equivalent to the punishment for manslaughter. The visiting team, sponsored by Christian Response International, included two members of the British Parliament and two representatives of U.S. congressional staff. But opinions vary on the appropriate response. Any criticism, say some observers, will make things even worse for Nepalese Christians." (*World*, April 7, 1985)

Calvinist Contact, (March 28, 1986) reported that: "Four more ministers of the unregistered Baptist church in Leningrad have been put on trial. On January 29, 1986, sentences were pronounced against Vladimir Filippov, Stanislav Chudakov, Andrei Filippov, and Veniamin Yefremov. Senior pastor Fedor Makhovitsky has been serving a five-year strict regime sentence since his arrest in August, 1981. Vitaly Varvin, a young layman in the church, was released in mid-February after four years strict regime for refusing to collaborate with KGB agents. For many years the Leningrad congregation met regularly for worship services in the home of one of the members, a Mr. Protsenko. In 1981 he was arrested and sentenced to three years of imprisonment plus confiscation of this property. When the Protsenko house was confiscated the congregation started meeting in the forests outside the city. One member of the church commented recently to a Western tourist, 'Our church's refusal to submit to atheistic control by registering has infuriated the authorities. They are doing everything they can to break us. But God has given our church faithful leaders and a dynamic group of young people who are committed to the Lord. We know that Christians around the world are praying for us, and that helps us stand.'"

Many more reports could be cited which tell of the sufferings of Christians in China, Romania, Albania, and other countries. Let us daily pray for those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake.

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the Standard Bearer!*

RESPONSE

Barrett L. Gritters

A Presbyterian Brother Responds

Dear Readers,

In the special issue of March 15, 1986, I wrote an article entitled "We and Our Elders," in which I gave an analysis of one difference between the Reformed and the Presbyterian systems of church government. I will quote the opening pertinent paragraphs.

The relation between believers in the church and the elders is often incorrectly viewed as similar to that between citizens of the United States and their State or Congressional Representatives. Ours (USA) is a government "of the people, by the people, and for the people" in which (according to our constitution) the power rests in the people who are governed. That is, the power rests in the people themselves. Because this kind of representative government is part of our country's heritage, some get the notion that the church runs that way too. In the church of Christ, though, believers are not the basis of authority.

Reformed churches differ from most Presbyterian churches in their views of church government. One of these differences is exhibited in the relation between believers and elders in the church. This difference in viewpoint touches on the positive purpose of this article.

A distinctive character of Presbyterianism is the teaching that "ecclesiastical power is given to the people, and is by them conferred on the Elders, so that the latter exercise this power in the name of the people, and consequently are subject to the people." That is, believers hold in themselves ecclesiastical right to rule by virtue of their general priesthood, or office of believer. Believers then confer this right (or power) on the particular men whom they elect to serve as elders in the church. (See Heyns' *Handbook for Elders and Deacons* (1928) p. 16. Heyns quotes Charles Hodge from his *Church Polity* and the PCUSA "Form of

Church Government" to support this. If this presentation is not correct, though, I would welcome some of our Presbyterian brethren to give us their insight.) This view seems to do justice to the reformational principle of the priesthood of all believers; that is, that we are all "prophets, priests, and kings." Both Presbyterian and Reformed people of God believe in this important principle. How it is applied is the question . . .

Pastor Stephen Larson from the Beverly Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Los Angeles, Calif responded graciously with the following letter that I believe will be helpful for all. (Note: The reference in the letter to the "Protestant Reformed Churches" is not a reference to our denomination "The Protestant Reformed Churches in America," but, I believe, to churches that have their roots in the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century.)

April 12, A.D. 1986

Dear Brother in Christ and in the Reformed Faith:
Grace and peace be to you in the name of him who alone can save, Christ Jesus our Lord!

Thank you for your recent article in the *Standard Bearer* concerning the office of elder. I found the article as a whole true to the Scriptures and therefore useful for edification and encouragement, and I am sure that it will be so used within the churches.

I would, however, offer a response to your "plea" for correction concerning the difference between the Presbyterian and Reformed views of the office of elder. I must first grant that you correctly portrayed the views of Chas. Hodge concerning the office. I do judge, however, that his views were more than slightly influenced by a desire to see Presbyterianism and American Republicanism as counterparts, and as part of this phenomenon, it seems to me that he re-wrote the nature of the office of elder to more parallel the idea of representative government. Of course, he was not alone in this sentiment, and I cannot say how widespread it became within the PCUSA. In the Form

of Government of 1839, we read "Ruling elders are properly the representatives of the people, chosen by them for the purpose of exercising government and discipline, in conjunction with pastors or ministers. This office has been understood, by a great part of the Protestant Reformed Churches, to be designated in the holy Scriptures, by the title of governments . . ." However, this section was not included in the original Form of Government, and seems to have been added as a result of the rising tide of Republicanism in the USA.

On what I would consider to be the more "historic" or faithful side of Presbyterianism, we have the Form of Government of the OPC, which rightly states that, "Christ who has instituted government in his church has furnished some men, besides the ministers of the Word, with gifts for government, and with commission to execute the same when called thereto." No mention is made of elders as "representatives," and as such I believe that the OPC has returned to the original Reformed and Presbyterian view, viz., that we in electing elders are not so much choosing men, as much as recognizing those to whom Christ has given the commission and gifts for service in His church (cf. also the Book of Church Order of the PCA, which says much the same in other words).

I recognize that this is a debatable issue, with some saying that Hodge represents the main line of

Presbyterians, and myself and others insisting that his was a temporary aberration. Still, I do think that you overstated the position when you portrayed this as a difference between Presbyterianism and Reformed churches. If anything, I am afraid that I would have to portray it as an example of a church that sometimes valued nationalism more highly than adherence to the Scriptures that God had given.

Yours in Christ,
Steve Larson, pastor

I thank the brother for responding to my request for a Presbyterian's view on this question. I appreciate his desire to help us understand an important branch of the reformation churches and I believe his letter does this.

There is obvious disagreement among Presbyterians about the historic Reformed position on this subject. Because in our day the historical question is often ignored, I appreciate the desire to answer the historical question here. We should all remember, though, that the final answer is always Scripture. Thus, I agree with Pastor Larson when he states that this doctrinal position was a result of the church valuing nationalism "more highly than adherence to the Scriptures . . ."

Good Morning, Alice (10)

Gise J. Van Baren

The problem for Alice in eating was not only the difficulty of raising her hand to her mouth. There was an increasingly difficult problem in swallowing. We could tell that the muscles in her throat and chest were becoming very weak. She could not exhale very strongly. In fact, she found it impossible to lie on her stomach and still breathe. It was this weakness which created the problem for Alice with eating: she had great difficulty swallowing, and even greater problem in coughing up anything which lodged in her throat. An activity, which most do spontaneously, created for her a major crisis. When any small object lodged in her throat, she

would have coughing spells, hardly able to bring up what blocked the air passages, hardly able to get her breath. It was this awful episode of choking that usually ended in tears for Alice. Each time was such a frightening experience. Would her life end with one of these choking spells? Thus did eating lose all of its pleasure for Alice — and became only a necessity to retain a measure of strength.

Good Morning Alice:

A while ago a dear friend of mine began her letter to me with this verse, "I thank my God on every remembrance of you." I felt strange about it at first, wonder-

ing if we really should use Scripture this way. But I think we can.

These daily visits with you have made me feel this way toward you, Alice. What began as something to cheer your day, has become an important part of my day.

As Paul prayed daily for the Philippians, I do for you. And for your fellowship in the gospel, because even though you can't share your thoughts with me, it is "with" you that I think about these things.

And finally, I am confident that the good work that He has begun in you, He will perform until the day of Jesus Christ. God will sustain you and hold you up and guard you until the day of Jesus Christ comes in your life.

I'm sure you have many people in your life that you wish to show thanks — perhaps you can express your thanks to them this day.

With love, Your friend

Please read Col. 3:12-13

There were occasions in which Alice needed help during the night, though at this point no one was staying with her through the whole night. It was clear to us that she feared the night most of all. Though she did not say so, there was obviously the thought that she would need assistance — but that she would not be able to call loudly enough to be heard. And she could not speak or call very loudly at all anymore. For the present time, the solution was the installation of an intercom system. One unit was placed by Alice's bed, the other in John's bedroom. Brother John had the task of distinguishing between the normal noises a person might make and a real call for help — for Alice could not make more than grunting calls. In later months, the intercom had to be hung above her head, near her mouth, to pick up the weakening sounds. To an extent, we could understand Alice's fear of being alone at night when perhaps none might hear her cry for immediate aid.

Good Morning Alice:

I'm writing this morning, but I don't know if the mail will be picked up. It is really winter again.

Did you realize I already wrote a note on the verses I gave you yesterday?

When I read it, I knew I had to do more thinking about it.

Why is it so hard to be all these things listed here? Paul says, "Put on", not, "Try to put on." With the Spirit dwelling in us, we can do these things, though it comes through our weak flesh.

Gise J. Van Baren is pastor of the Protestant Reformed Church of Hudsonville, Michigan.

Humbleness of mind — that really speaks to me. Not just be humble, but put on humbleness of mind. It's not easy to put others above myself in my mind; to erase all my pride and see myself as the weak sinner I am.

Forbearing one another — to me I guess this means not just "put up with each other," but "patiently, without inward anger, hold back bad feelings." All too often only a quiet prayer to God enables me to do this, and so very often I fall short.

Forgiving one another — as Christ forgave me. To me — difficult as it is, that means: forget it; blot it out of my mind. In other words, when I start brewing in my mind what another person did or does, I am to blot that thought out of my mind and remember what Christ did for me. Very difficult instruction, and yet I can see how obeying these things can make me a much more joyful child of God.

With love, Your friend

Please read Col. 3:16

By the end of May, 1981, the burden of Alice's care, which rested especially upon John and Judy, was becoming too great. Theirs was a busy family anyway — with four sons and one daughter at home. The added responsibility for Alice's care, with its unending demand upon their time both day and night, was almost too much. There was also a constant influx of visitors, relatives and friends, to see Alice. And though visitors were always welcome, and Alice loved to have them come, this created havoc with the family schedule. The point comes when one wonders whether he can do justice to, and find time for, all of these responsibilities at the same time.

Good Morning Alice:

How beautiful it is outside this morning. The wind has calmed way down and the snow is just beautiful.

Col. 3:16 is a beautiful verse too. I really like the way it starts: LET the word of Christ dwell in you. We all have our Bibles, and yet so often we neglect reading it.

When we do read with a desiring heart and strive to remember what we read, we are "letting" the word of Christ dwell in us richly. In His Word is all our richness.

And then right after talking about Scripture, the verse tells us to teach and admonish each other in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in our hearts to the Lord. What a beautiful way to fill our day.

Do take some time today, Alice, to read a passage two or three times, and let it dwell in you. And also, with grace in your heart, read some Psalter numbers to yourself, and you will surely grow closer to our God in this day.

With love, Your friend

Please read Psalm 121

There was also for John and Judy the constant tension of being "on call" constantly. There simply was not a time that one or the other of them was not listening for Alice's call. Nerves wear thin. Tiredness sets in. And Alice was often very demanding. After all, when one can't move one's arm or leg, and it aches, or a limb is "sleeping," why not call for immediate assistance? There were those times when Alice demanded that her limbs be moved about every five minutes. At such times she expected someone to sit by the side of the bed (usually John), ready to help at her call. It became a very real question whether that kind of constant care could be given to her at home.

Good Morning Alice:

Once again this morning it strikes me that there is no such thing as "normal." You get busy with one thing in your life and then when that's over, you think you'll get "back to normal." There just is no such thing. When life goes by so fast, the child of God realizes he must take time often to stop and know that God is God. Psalm 121 is a wonderful Psalm to use to do just that. You see how mighty God is, and how all our dependence is on Him.

The last verse sums it all up. Totally we are in God's care — in everything we do, now and forevermore.

Oh, how independent we can get. I'm going to do this or I'm going to accomplish that or I'll never let that happen, or I'd never be able to stand that.

None of this can really be said by a child of God. He controls all our ways and we must be willing and content to let Him do just that.

Last night, alone in the car with many, many emotions going through my head and heart, I heard this song and it really comforted me. Since I don't have room here, I'm going to copy it out on a separate paper. Don't read it in a hurry. Take your time as you read it even if you know it — as you probably do.

Til tomorrow, With love, Your friend

Please read Isaiah 35

*Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but Thou art mighty,*

*Hold me with Thy powerful hand.
Bread of heaven, Bread of heaven
Feed me till I want no more, Feed me till I want
no more.*

*Open now Thy crystal fountain,
Whence the healing stream doth flow.
Let the fire and cloudy pillar
Lead me all my journey through
Strong deliverer, strong deliverer,
Be Thou still my strength and shield, Be Thou still
my strength and shield.*

*When I tread the verge of Jordan,
Bid my anxious fears subside;
Death of death, and hell's destruction,
Land me safe on Canaan's side.
Songs of praises, songs of praises,
I will ever give to Thee; I will ever give to Thee.*

On Memorial Day a family conference was held. None really wanted to see Alice placed in a rest home or hospital — but was there any alternative? Each of the relatives, by turn, had been visiting and helping Alice regularly, usually at John and Judy's home. Now it was decided to try making arrangements for Alice to visit in the home of the brothers and sisters — each would have her for one day of the week. Though Alice could not move many muscles, she could still sit in her wheelchair and be moved about in the van. So, for a time, each family would have Alice in their home for that one day of the week. When Alice felt well, she could still be taken out to shop or even eat in some restaurant. She would be part of that one family for the day. At the end of the day, Alice would be taken back and put to bed by this family. For a time the arrangement worked quite well — and there was some small relief in John's home from those pressures of Alice's daily care.

Dear Alice:

I have not forgotten you! It has been impossible to write before now. When I have time to write, I will explain, but please read I Cor. 15:55-57 and rejoice in its beautiful promise.

Til later, With love, Your friend

COUNSEL OF PEACE (con't. from page 371)

righteousness and peace have kissed each other." The Psalm sings of Christ as our great Priest-king and about the miracle of redemption in Him. This is the counsel of peace which Zechariah prophesied and which Israel saw so dimly in the co-operation of Zerubbabel and Joshua in the work of rebuilding the temple. It is that union of the two offices of priest and king in Christ by which the true temple of God is built as the place where God's

people find everlasting peace in the fellowship of God Himself. As the great temple builder He is now and shall forever be a priest upon His throne. Thus John saw Him in the visions of Revelation (Rev. 5:6, 19:11-13) and thus we shall see Him when the tabernacle of God which He has built is revealed from God out of heaven. Then the counsel of peace shall be fulfilled.

BOOK REVIEW

Herman C. Hanko

Charismatic?

(Editor's note. Because of the significance of this subject, we place this lengthy review in its entirety in this issue. This and the fact that the Rev. Gritters received some interesting correspondence for our magazine necessitates the omission of some regular departments. HCH)

JOY UNSPEAKABLE, POWER AND RENEWAL IN THE HOLY SPIRIT, by Martyn Lloyd-Jones; Harold Shaw Publishers, Wheaton, IL, 1984; 282 pp., (paper).

Anyone who has read extensively in the works of Dr. Lloyd-Jones must have wondered from time to time whether the Doctor was making concessions to Charismatic thought. There were, e.g., passages in his "Preaching and Preachers" and in his commentaries on Ephesians which made the thoughtful reader raise his eyebrows. But nothing explicit was really to be found, and usually these doubts were assuaged. But this has changed. A book has been recently published which contains edited sermons which Lloyd-Jones preached in Westminster Chapel in 1964-65 which leave no doubt about it that elements of the Charismatic movement were indeed characteristic of his thought.

This book was not sent to the *Standard Bearer* for review, but it seems worth while to review it nonetheless. Lloyd-Jones' books and tapes have had a great deal of influence and many have found him a helpful and interesting preacher and writer. This respect for his writings could lead to the danger of receiving his views expressed in this book as one's own and could lead to serious misconceptions of the work of the Holy Spirit. It is in the interests of presenting to our readers the dangers of this book that this review is written.

It has been argued that Lloyd-Jones' views, as ex-

pressed in this book, are not out of keeping with traditional Reformed thought. In a recent article in *The Banner of Truth*, a minister of the Christian Reformed Church defends Lloyd-Jones and, while not entering as such into his thought, asks the question whether Jones himself experienced the things he writes about in *Joy Unspeakable*. His answer is in the affirmative. In the February, 1985 issue of *The Banner of Truth* Ian Murray also presents a review of this book. The review is much more in depth and, while Ian Murray has some areas of disagreement with Lloyd-Jones, he seems to agree with the general thesis of the book. We cannot concur in these analyses and consider the book contrary to the teaching of Scripture and dangerous to a proper understanding of the life of the Christian in the world.

It is true that the book is not explicitly Pentecostal in the modern sense of the word. Ian Murray reminds us of the fact that, since these sermons were preached in 1964-65, they were preached at a time when the Neo-Pentecostal movement had not yet taken on fixed form. And, at least in this book, Lloyd-Jones does not argue for the special gifts of the Spirit such as prophecy, tongues-speaking, and miracles. (I say "at least in this book," because another book is also available entitled, "Prove All Things," which deals with something of the same doctrines. But I have not as yet been able to obtain this latter book and cannot say what it includes.)

But that *Joy Unspeakable* is explicitly charismatic in its thought cannot be denied. When one reads this, it is not surprising that, after Lloyd-Jones' retirement, Dr. Kendall was able to lead at least a part of the people in Westminster Chapel in a charismatic direction. But we ought to get on with the review of the book.

The whole argument of the book rests upon the (charismatic) assertion that a certain baptism of the Spirit is to be expected in the new dispensational

church, which baptism of the Spirit is distinct from the work of the Spirit in regeneration, conversion, and sanctification. This baptism of the Spirit comes at unexpected times, to unexpected individuals, and imparts various gifts which are not common to all the saints. This baptism of the Spirit is eminently desirable and is, in fact, the solution to the deadness and spiritual lethargy which characterizes the church in our day.

It is precisely at this point that Lloyd-Jones makes a fundamental concession to the charismatic movement, for the very heart of the charismatic heresy is this "second baptism of the Spirit." Lloyd-Jones may not agree with modern day Pentecostalism in all its extreme forms — and indeed he repeatedly warns against "excesses," but the fact remains that this is fundamental to the whole book.

He bases his view of the baptism of the Spirit on serious exegetical and theological errors. In the first place, he identifies Pentecost itself with this baptism of the Spirit and, in fact, limits Pentecost to this phenomenon. This is a serious error. We cannot go into detail on this point in a review of his book, but it ought to be pointed out that Pentecost was quite different from what Lloyd-Jones says it is. Pentecost was really an important part of the work of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because Christ had not yet come in the old dispensation, the work of the Spirit in the hearts and lives of God's people was limited to the objective Word of God which came through types and shadows. Thus the only knowledge of the truth which the Old Testament saints possessed was through the instrumentality of these types and shadows. It is true that the Spirit also regenerated and sanctified them, but the knowledge of the truth of the promise was limited. Only a few in the old dispensation received the Spirit, and then in promise. These were the "office-bearers," the prophets, priests, and kings, who through the Spirit were able to prophesy concerning the truth of Christ. And the people were entirely dependent upon them. But all this changed with Pentecost. It is very clear from the Scriptures that especially two things happened at Pentecost: 1) the Spirit of the exalted Christ was poured out upon the Church so that all God's people become prophets, priests, and kings. Peter makes this clear when he quotes the prophecy of Joel, and John also emphasizes this great point when he reminds God's people that now all of them can know the Lord because they have the anointing of the Spirit. 2) The outpouring of the Spirit on Pentecost meant that Christ Himself came to His church to dwell with her and abide with her forever. In His great sermon, preached on the eve of His crucifixion, Christ repeatedly reminds His people that He will not leave them comfortless, but will come to them.

And this coming to them will be in the Spirit Whom He will send from the Father. This key truth Lloyd-Jones ignores and denies by limiting Pentecost to a baptism of the Spirit which comes only once in a while and which comes only to a few in the church.

In the second place, the exegetical basis for his position is to be found primarily in Acts 8:14-17, 9:17, 10:44-46, and 19:6. While we cannot go into detail in an exegesis of these passages, it ought to be clear to everyone that these refer to the special gifts of the Spirit given in the apostolic age when the New Testament Scriptures were not yet completed, in order to seal the truth of the preaching of the apostles. As B.B. Warfield convincingly proves in his book *Miracles*, these also ceased with the apostolic era. Even Ian Murray takes exception to Lloyd-Jones on this crucial issue. To base a doctrine of the baptism of the Spirit on these passages is to make a major concession to the charismatic movement and leave one wide open to the charge of being, in fact, charismatic in one's thinking.

The historical proof for the baptism of the Spirit is equally unconvincing. Almost without exception this historical proof is limited to various revivals, especially those present in the British Isles and America in the 18th and 19th centuries. Whatever other proof from history is given is limited to heretical sects such as the Montanists and the Donatists, or to such movements as the Waldensians. The latter were a quite orthodox pre-Reformation movement which knew nothing of the baptism of the Spirit, as far as the historical records show. Now this proof from history raises two important questions. The first one is: how does Lloyd-Jones square the blatant Arminianism (an Arminianism which was often forthrightly hostile to Calvinism) of such revivalists as the Wesleys, Finney and Moody (to whom he refers with approval) with his avowed Calvinism? It simply cannot be done. The second is: why is this baptism of the Spirit limited almost exclusively to revivals which are doctrinally suspect? That is, why was no baptism of the Spirit evident, say, among the Reformers of the 16th Century? an age unparalleled in the history of the church? But neither Calvin, Luther, Knox, nor any of the great Reformers ever so much as mentioned it and never made any claims to have had it? This is, after all, a serious matter.

When one gets into Jones' views concerning the effects of this baptism of the Spirit, one is equally at a loss to understand how it is possible for such a noted preacher to hold to such a position. In fact it is at this point that Jones' views become extremely confusing.

It must be born in mind as we discuss this matter

that Jones insists repeatedly that this baptism of the Spirit must be distinguished from the work of the Spirit in regeneration and sanctification. A Christian may be regenerated and sanctified and never experience this baptism all his life long. Again, he may experience it for a short time, but it soon disappears and he may or may not experience it again. It is in this connection that Jones argues from the principle of the sovereignty of God. Claiming allegiance to this fundamental truth, Jones insists that it lies within the Spirit's prerogative to bestow this baptism on whom He will, when He will, and how He will. But here too are difficulties. No rhyme or reason can be found for the Spirit's work in this respect. This baptism comes at unexpected times, in unexpected places, sometimes in new converts, sometimes in old saints, but never with any explanation or reason that we can determine. At the same time, the baptism of the Spirit is so eminently desirable that we all ought to seek it and pray for it; in fact, Jones sharply condemns the church of our day for deadness and spiritual lethargy and explains this in terms of the lack of the baptism of the Spirit, a situation which is to be deplored. This contradiction cannot be easily explained away.

But what does this baptism of the Spirit actually bring to the Christian when it comes? Although Jones is rather vague at this point, the following is a brief summary of its benefits. In the first place, Jones emphasizes that this baptism of the Spirit has as its primary object boldness and power to witness and testify of the truth. Repeatedly he makes the point that this is the main purpose of it and the chief result. In the second place, however, much more must really be expected. Sometimes Jones outlines these benefits explicitly, sometimes he implies them when he describes what went on at various revivals when, in his judgment, the baptism of the Spirit came. These benefits include such things as a supreme and unalloyed joy — hence the title of this book; a religious ecstasy, which sometimes made those who experienced it even unaware of what was happening to them; a spiritual experience which lifted one up from the transient things of this earth and placed one in direct communion with God; a holiness and sanctity (for a period of time at least) which bordered on a perfect life; a clarity of understanding spiritual and heavenly things which was so luminous and superior to anything which one knows apart from this baptism that it cannot be described in mere earthly terms; an overwhelming sense of God's nearness which was so ecstatic that those experiencing it even asked God to take it away; and a direct assurance of salvation which transcends any kind of assurance which mere Christians without this baptism can ever have.

In connection with this latter, Jones insists that this high and direct assurance of salvation is exclusively limited to the baptism of the Spirit. Jones speaks of three different levels of assurance: one level comes from more argumentation: Christ died for sinners; I am a sinner; Christ died for me. The second level is a bit more intense and sure and comes from a work of the Spirit which gives me, through the Word, the consciousness that I belong to Christ. But the third level is direct and immediate, without the Word, which "drowns" one in ecstasy and is so complete and total that it all but consumes one. It is interesting to note in this connection that neither Scripture nor the Confessions of the church (either in the Reformed or Presbyterian tradition) speak of such levels of assurance — although all have recognized, of course, that the child of God struggles with doubts and fears all his life long.

But this separation of the baptism of the Spirit from the work of regeneration brings with it all kinds of other problems, problems which are also apparent in the book.

While we cannot mention all the problems which this distinction raises, we mention a few to demonstrate the impossibility of this position.

In the first place, Jones makes a point of it that Scripture also makes such a distinction, and one proof of this distinction is the fact that Scripture refers to the work of the Spirit in sanctification in terms of admonitions, while the baptism of the Spirit is never spoken of in terms of such admonitions — obviously because of his contention that the baptism of the Spirit is sovereignly given without any effort on our part. Nevertheless, it seems to have escaped Jones that one important text, which Jones claims to refer to the baptism of the Spirit, Eph. 5:18b — "but be filled with the Spirit" — is in fact an admonition.

In the second place, Jones finds abundant texts in the epistles which also refer to the baptism of the Spirit in his judgment. The trouble is that the epistles are written to all the saints in a given congregation or group of churches. This, however, does not square with his insistence that the baptism of the Spirit comes only to some in the church in the post-apostolic period. He faces this question at length, but rather lamely explains the dilemma by claiming that the baptism of the Spirit was so common in apostolic days that Paul could assume that all had it. But this flies in the face of his own description of this baptism and of the historical data of post-apostolic times. This problem is compounded when one thinks of the fact that the Spirit Himself comes upon those whom He chooses. Why so general in the apostolic times? and so rarely in

the post-apostolic times? Jones has no answer for this.

In the third place, confusion reigns when Jones distinguishes between sanctification and the baptism of the Spirit. He speaks, e.g., of the fact that the baptism of the Spirit can come in times of crisis, such as illness, nearness to death, loss of a loved one, etc. Now it is simply a fact, and all Reformed theologians as well as our Confessions recognize it, that the life of the Christian is not on one level. There are times in our lives when the flame of spiritual consciousness and nearness to God flickers low and seems nearly to have gone out. There are other times when we live very near to God, when God's presence is rich and sweet, when we have extraordinary grace to bring peace and comfort, joy and thankfulness, even in the greatest trials. These are, as the Scriptures teach and as especially the Psalms (those wonderful spiritual biographies of the Christian life) make clear, a part of the work of the Spirit in sanctification and daily conversion. They are the fulfillment of the Lord's promise that His grace is sufficient for every need. They are the experience of every child of God and not limited only to a few. They are not at all to be ascribed to some baptism of the Spirit which is added as some special gift to the work of sanctification. What child of God has not experienced in rich and abundant measure the joy of salvation, the assurance of God's love, the peace that passes understanding, the consciousness of God's presence in Christ? To make these unusual, limited to only a few of the saints, marked out as special works of the Spirit bestowed upon only some, is to belittle the work of sanctification and denigrate what every child of God possesses from time to time in his life.

Finally, there is a great danger in the book. I felt this danger strongly as I read the book. You see, as long as we live in this world we still, according to Scripture, carry about with us our old man of sin. We have only a small beginning of the new obedience. We walk in this life which is nothing but a continual death. The result is that life is a constant struggle, a warfare, a battle — also against all the sins of the flesh. Every child of God knows this; but every child of God longs for a greater life of sanctification and renewal. He earnestly wishes that his life were more in harmony with God's law. He earnestly desires the blessedness of walking consciously with God every moment. He pants after God as a hart pants after water brooks. To have an immediate and direct experience of the riches of perfect fellowship with God is eminently desirable to him. But because of the battle, his life seems dull and prosaic, constantly plagued by the sins of his flesh, a spiritually poverty-stricken life in com-

parison with what Jones holds out as the effects of the baptism of the Spirit. And so, this baptism of the Spirit seems to him to be wonderful and worth having above all else. If then he is persuaded that this indeed is the portion of some, he earnestly desires to have such riches. But there is nothing he can do about it; the Spirit works where He will and when He wills.

But then he faces the problem of why that baptism of the Spirit never comes to him. And he reproaches himself. He cannot help but wonder why others receive it and he does not. He lives a half-life, a life of a spiritual pauper, and cannot understand why, when he longs so earnestly for more, it never comes. All the seeds of doubt and disillusionment are then sown in his soul, and the devil has an open door to rob him of what he actually does possess. Jones' book, if true, makes for unhappy and doubting people of God.

This is a great danger. Anyone who reads this book must be warned that the spiritual dangers of journeying on the pilgrimage which Jones prescribes will lead to endless troubles.

We must learn not to expect any such baptism of the Spirit, but to strive earnestly in the difficult and wearying battle of faith seeking our help and strength from the cross of our Savior and looking only to the full perfection of heaven where joy shall be unalloyed, where sin shall be forever taken from us, and where all tears shall be wiped from our eyes for "joy unspeakable."

I and many with me have enjoyed Jones' books and profited from them, even if one could not always agree with everything he wrote. His warning that the church of today is seriously weak because of her deadness and spiritual lethargy is well-taken, as Ian Murray points out in the review mentioned above. But Jones' prescription for new life in the church is wrong, dead wrong. This book is a bad book. It gives an entirely different perspective on Jones' thought and shows that in this important respect Jones was far from the teaching of Scripture. It is well to read it if you have read other of Jones' writings because it will give you warning to be aware of these ideas as they appear somewhat more subtly in his other books.

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TAKING HEED TO THE DOCTRINE

Ronald J. Hanko

The Counsel of Peace (3)

We have shown that the "counsel of peace" referred to in Zechariah 6:13 refers to the union of the two offices of priest and king in Christ, typically represented in the co-operation of Zerubbabel the Governor and Joshua the High Priest in the days of the restoration of the temple. We have seen that this union is significant first of all as far as the offices themselves are concerned, in that the two offices complement and complete each other. The kingly office adds power and authority to the priestly office, and the priestly office tempers the authority of the royal office with its own peculiar gifts.

Nevertheless, there is a far deeper significance to the union of these two offices in Christ. That union lies at the very heart of the work of redemption, it shows that the work of grace is a miracle work of God, and it uncovers the significance of Christ's offices in their relation to the work of redemption.

In order to see all this we must first understand the meaning of the offices themselves, that is, that the kingly office is a revelation of God's righteousness, and the priestly office a revelation of God's mercy. To this could be added the fact that the prophetic office is a revelation of God's wisdom and knowledge. The prophetic office, however, is not of firsthand importance in our discussion, as it is an office which belongs to both priest and king, and the proof and significance of that fact would be the subject of another study.

That the kingly office is a revelation of God's righteousness or justice is clear from many passages of Scripture. Especially prominent is Psalm 45:4-7, where righteousness is mentioned no fewer than four times (once as truth) in connection with the kingly office. Especially significant is verse 6 of this chapter, which states that the scepter of the King's kingdom, the symbol of all his authority and power, is a *right* scepter. Hebrews 1:8 is even

clearer when it quotes this passage in reference to Christ: "A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom," that is, it is a scepter which is characterized especially by righteousness and wielded in righteousness.

This, then, points us to the chief duty of the king, that is, to uphold and reveal true righteousness, the righteousness of God Himself in all the king's work. His work, therefore, was that of maintaining the law of God as the standard of all righteousness, and judging the people righteously and justly in accordance with the demands of that law. Israel's judges, for example, who were the forerunners of the kings, had as their primary task the restoration of the people of God through instruction in God's law (cf. Judg. 4:5, 6:25-27, 12:8-15, etc.). It was the solemn duty of the king, therefore, to rule the people righteously by rewarding and protecting the good and by punishing and destroying all evil as the law demanded (II Sam. 15:1-3, I Ki. 3:16-28, etc.).

It ought to be added here, that this righteousness was the real power of the kingly office. God's own power as King is maintained and supported not by brute strength, but by His righteousness. In other words, He is justified in His works not merely by the fact that He is all powerful and can do as He pleases, but in this, that He always acts righteously. This is the usual answer of Scripture to all the objections of wicked men against God's rule (Gen. 18:25, Rom. 3:5, 6). As it is with God Himself, so also it is with all who bear rule in His Name.

The priestly office, on the other hand, has God's mercy as its foundation and chief gift. This is not so easy to see, unless we remember that it was the priests who had not only the work of sacrifice, but also such duties as the cleansing of lepers and the maintenance of the cities of refuge. Especially the latter reveals this aspect of the priestly office, since the cities of refuge were places where certain types of criminals could find mercy and safety from the demands of the law as executed by the revenger of blood (Numbers 35).

When we understand the meaning of the two offices then we can also see that there is a certain conflict between them. Already in the Old Testament it was the duty of the King to see that all who broke the law were dealt with according to the demands of the law and punished for their evil. The priest's duty as keeper of the cities of refuge often conflicted with that duty of the King. The judgment of the man who killed someone "without malice aforethought" is a case in point. The Scriptures hold such a man guilty, as is clear from the fact that the revenger of blood was justified in killing such a man if he did not seek the safety of the cities of refuge. If the king's duty was the maintenance of justice, then certainly the revenger of blood was at least to be supported by the king, if he was not in actual fact to be considered an agent of the king. And yet, on the other hand, it was the priest's duty to show mercy to such a man and protect him from the demands of justice by giving him a home in the cities of refuge.

Even in this case, there was, of course, a certain justice mixed with the mercy of the priest, but even then the demands of justice and the offices of mercy conflicted at least in this, that neither was entirely fulfilled in trying to meet both. Even the mercy of the priest, exactly because it was mixed with justice, was not entire and the man who had come under the protection of the priest had to live in the city of refuge away from his home until the death of the priest, at best a very severe mercy.

We see this same conflict in the life of David. More than any other of Israel's kings he represented the ideal of a righteous ruler, and is thus the clearest picture of Christ as king in the whole Old Testament. As a righteous king, it was he who delivered Israel from her enemies and executed God's law against the heathen and idolatrous nations around Israel. It was also he who restored Israel itself to righteousness, by upholding the law of God in the nation. Thus it is that he follows and stands in contrast to Saul. Nevertheless, exactly because he had bloodied his hands in the execution

of God's righteous judgments in Israel and among the nations, David was forbidden by God to have any part in the work of building the temple, the great place of God's mercy.

This conflict, then, is the main reason why the offices of priest and king could never be combined in the Old Testament. The separation points to the truth that righteousness (justice) and mercy are forever irreconcilable through any human effort or wisdom. We see that even today. In any judicial system, it is simply a fact that the judge, in executing the law, has mercy or justice as two options, but he can never really be just and show mercy at the same time. Either he maintains the demands of the law and punishes the criminal to the full extent of the law (and that is really his only duty) or he shows "mercy" by setting the criminal free or by lessening his punishment. But even when he tries to temper justice with mercy, he really ends with neither, as is so very evident in our own judicial system. The attempt to be merciful by mitigating the punishment the law demands (or ought to demand) always has as the end result that justice is not really done.

In so far as our salvation is concerned, however, it is exactly that reconciliation of justice and mercy which must take place. Because God is a righteous judge above all others, the demands of His law must be met and fully satisfied. If God is not just and righteous He is not God (Ps. 11:5). Yet at the same time He has determined to reveal Himself also as a God of mercy and promises mercy to the sinner.

That reconciliation is forever beyond man's reach. If he seeks the glory of God (as he ought) in insisting upon justice for himself, he rules out all possibility of mercy, in that the punishment of sin is everlasting. If he seeks mercy, he can seek it only at the expense of justice. The separation of the priestly and kingly offices underlines this inadequacy of every human effort. We could even say that the priestly and kingly offices in the Old Testa-

(con't. on page 371)

News From Our Churches

David Harbach

April 30, 1986

The Spring lecture held in Loveland, Colorado, was well attended and also included many visitors, which has encouraged our church there. The reason for the interest is due in part to the topic that Rev. Cammenga spoke on, "Free Grace Versus

Free-Will." If you would like a copy of this worthwhile lecture, then a tape cassette is available for \$2.00 by writing to the church at 705 E. 57th St., Loveland, CO 80537.

Rev. Cammenga also informs me that all the sheet-rock texturing is finished in the new sanc-

tuary. By now most of the light fixtures are hung and the carpeting installed. When you read this news the congregation of Loveland Church will be worshipping in their new sanctuary. Congratulations, Loveland Church!

Rev. Joostens states that Cave Mt. Church had voiced great appreciation for our work in their midst, especially since they were without preaching for a long time. The Sunday School program and preaching now continues under the capable leadership of Rev. H. Brydson who is digging in and receiving support for housing from the congregation. Rev. Williams and his family have moved into their new home adjacent to the church in Belmont. The Dias congregation has been especially happy with the song booklets. Since they have received these booklets, they persuaded Rev. Joostens to teach them the songs after the Friday Bible Class. He usually took along his two or three oldest children to help with the singing. Rev. Joostens also says the Rev. Nish does a good job in Lacovia Church and is very capable. Perhaps by making Rev. Nish more mobile so that his capabilities can be expanded we would be making a step toward the goal of making the churches in Jamaica indigenous. We appreciate the labors of Rev. Joostens and his family in Jamaica and are also glad that they are home in Grand Rapids, Michigan. I'm glad of that especially because his daughter, Joy, is in my class at Adams Street School. Talking with Joy, it becomes obvious that the Joostens enjoyed their six months with the various congregations in Jamaica.

Rev. Joostens plans to give a talk regarding his work in Jamaica on May 16, 7:30 P.M. at First Church. Refreshments will follow.

Rev. H. Hanko has consented to conduct a Church History course for the summer months. The first meeting was held Tuesday, May 6, 8:00 P.M. at Hope Church. Young and old are cordially invited to attend.

David Harbach is a teacher at Adams St. Prot. Ref. Christian School, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

The church in New Zealand appreciated very much the sacrifice made by the church of Holland when they sent Rev. Miersma there recently. Rev. Miersma says that while he was there he read Rev. Slopsema's article in the March 1 *Standard Bearer* where he emphasized that it is more blessed to give than to receive. It is a blessing to the saints there that Rev. Miersma came, but the Lord blessed us also in giving. The church there is overwhelmed by the love shown in his coming. May we continue to remember the small flock of fellow believers in New Zealand in our prayers.

This past May 2 was the 25th anniversary celebration of the school in South Holland, Illinois. Rev. Heys was the speaker at a commemorative chapel held Friday morning. The school was open for touring and visiting while the students were at school.

Rev. Heys also spoke at the Men's and Ladies' League Mass Meeting held at Hope Church, Walker, Michigan on the subject, "Signs of the Anti-Christ in Our Present World."

Remember that the Scholarship Fund Committee is taking applications for future teachers/ministers for the 1986-87 school year. If you are interested, please contact Mike Rau, 4165 Jenison Street, Grandville, MI 49418 for application forms. An essay of 300 words or more is also required on the topic, "The Protestant Reformed Minister/teacher's Calling to Set Forth the Antithesis in Preaching and Teaching." June 1 is the deadline.

NOTICE!!!

According to the decision of Synod 1985, the Consistory of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, was appointed the calling church for the 1986 Synod. The Consistory hereby notifies our Churches that the 1986 Synod of the Protestant Reformed Churches in America will convene, the Lord willing, on Tuesday, June 10, 1986, at 9:00 AM in the First Protestant Reformed Church, 2800 Michigan NE, Grand Rapids, Michigan. The Pre-Synodical service will be held Monday evening, June 9, 1986, at 7:30 PM. Rev. J. Kortering, President of the 1985 Synod will preach the sermon. Synodical delegates are requested to meet with the Consistory before the service. Delegates in need of lodging should contact Mr. K. Vink, 1422 Linwood SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49507. Phone (616) 245-4339.

K.G. Vink, Clerk