

The **STANDARD BEARER**

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

No, the issue was: to be . . . or not to be Reformed.

That issue would not go away, no matter how hard some tried to ignore it.

And it did not go away.

See "Fundamentally Incorrect

Analysis" — page 30

CONTENTS

Meditation —	
Death: A Gain	26
Editor's Notes	29
Editorials —	
A Worthy Cause	29
Fundamentally Incorrect Analysis	30
The Strength of Youth —	
Who Are Your Friends?	31
Walking In The Light —	
Moral Aspects of Medical Technology (9)	34
The Day of Shadows —	
Grace for Grace	36
From Holy Writ —	
Believing All The Scriptures —	
The Hope of Heaven and Earth (4)	39
All Around Us —	
Divorce and Remarriage	41
Bible Study Guide —	
Leviticus — Reconciliation Through	
Sacrifice (2)	43
Annual Report of the Secretary	45
Book Review	46
From The Contact Committee	46
News From Our Churches	47

THE STANDARD BEARER

ISSN 0362-4692

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

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

Department Editors: Rev. Ronald Cammenga, Rev. Arie den Hartog, Prof. Robert D. Decker, Rev. Barry Gritters, Rev. Cornelius Hanko, Prof. Herman C. Hanko, Rev. Ronald Hanko, Rev. John A. Heys, Rev. J. Kortering, Rev. George C. Lubbers, Rev. Thomas C. Miersma, Rev. James Slopsema, Rev. Gise J. Van Baren, Rev. Herman Veldman, Mr. Benjamin Wigger.

Editorial Office: Prof. H.C. Hoeksema
4975 Ivanrest Ave., S.W.
Grandville, Michigan 49418

Church News Editor: Mr. Ben Wigger
6597 - 40th Ave.
Hudsonville, Michigan 49426

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

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

Business Office: The Standard Bearer
Mr. H. Vander Wal, Bus. Mgr. PH: (616) 243-2953
P.O. Box 6064
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49516

New Zealand Business Office: The Standard Bearer
c/o Protestant Reformed Church
B. Van Herk, 66 Fraser St.
Wainuiomata, New Zealand

Subscription Policy: Subscription price, \$10.50 per year. Unless a definite request for discontinuance is received, it is assumed that the subscriber wishes the subscription to continue without the formality of a renewal order, and he will be billed for renewal. If you have a change of address, please notify the Business Office as early as possible in order to avoid the inconvenience of delayed delivery. Include your Zip Code.

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

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

MEDITATION

James D. Slopsema

Death: A Gain

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. Philippians 1:21

Death is a grim reality which all of us must face.

Everyone of us, except perhaps the very young, has suffered the agony of losing a loved one through death.

Unless the Lord comes soon, each of us will also die ourselves. The time of our death could be years away; but then again it could be only moments away. No one but God knows the moment of our

death. We expect the old to die; but the young can die.

Death, whether it be the death of a loved one or our own impending death, generally strikes fear into our hearts. That's because death is destruction. With our very eyes we have seen death bring destruction to others: destruction of body, destruction of one's total earthly existence. Death is not a pleasant spectacle.

Consequently, God's people must constantly be instructed from God's Word concerning death. The Word of God has much to say about death. For those who belong to Jesus Christ by faith, the Word of God brings peace and comfort.

* * * * *

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

The apostle Paul penned this most beautiful confession from the prison of Rome. Very soon he would be tried before Caesar. The possibility was very real that Caesar would condemn Paul to death.

In this section of his epistle Paul assured the saints in Philippi that he was not afraid to die. He informed them that as far as he was concerned death would be a gain. It would be to his advantage to die. For he was confident that when he died he would depart to be with Christ, which is far better.

Consequently, Paul didn't know what he would choose. He would like to die and be with Christ, which is far better. However, he knew that it was important for the church that he remain in the flesh for the time being

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

A SEEMING CONTRADICTION

Death is a gain?

Certainly our experience seems to contradict what the apostle expected from death! As we witness death it doesn't appear to be a gain, but rather a total and complete loss.

For through death a person loses all things earthly. He loses his earthly possessions for which he has struggled all his life — his business, his investments, his home, his car, his clothing. Besides that he loses his family and friends. At death all the earthly ties and relationships that have meant so much are forever severed. At death a person loses his wife (husband), his children, his brothers and sisters, his friends and companions. And finally through death, a person even loses his name. He is remembered for a generation or two and then he is forgotten, even by his own descendants.

And there is more! Death, as we are able to witness it, is also the complete destruction of the body. At the moment of death the body becomes cold and lifeless. What was once warm and vibrant becomes cold and stiff. And within a very short time, as the body is committed to the grave, the body decays and literally returns to dust.

Death is a gain?

From what we are able to see of death, it would appear as though death is a complete and total loss.

* * * * *

What we are able to witness of death with our eyes is also confirmed by the Scriptures.

The Bible tells us that death is the punishment of God upon man for sin. Man was not originally created to die, but to live. In his original state God warned man, "Of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17). But man disregarded God's warning. In rebellion he ate of the forbidden fruit and brought the punishment of death upon himself.

In harmony with this fact, the Bible also tells us that death is the complete destruction of man.

Yes, the Bible confirms about death all that we are able to witness with our own eyes; death is the complete destruction of man's earthly existence, including his physical body.

But the Bible goes on to tell us things about death that we can not observe with the eye. Death is also the means God uses to destroy man's soul. Man is body and soul. At death God separates for a time the soul of man from his body. And whereas the body of man is committed to the grave to return to dust, the soul of man is cast into a conscious state of torment in hell, never to be released!

What a terrible destruction is death. It is the total and complete loss of everything. It is the complete destruction of man from every point of view.

And yet Paul writes that to him death is a gain! It is to his advantage to die!

A WONDERFUL REALITY

To understand this wonderful claim of the apostle, we must first come to grips with the confession of Paul that for him to live was Christ.

When Paul confessed that for him to live was Christ he meant that Christ was everything to him. Christ was the center of his whole life. His life as he lived it from day to day in this world all revolved around Christ.

If we want to be more specific, all we need to do is turn to Paul's epistles to the churches.

There Paul informs us how he relied upon Christ

for the whole of his salvation. The most important thing in life for Paul was to be right with God. And that should be the chief concern of everyone of us. But now Paul had learned that to be right with God is possible only in Christ. There was a time when Paul tried to establish a right relation with God on the basis of his own works and worthiness. But he had long abandoned that as completely impossible. For he had learned that he was a sinner and that the only way to be right with God was through perfect payment of sin. And he could not make this payment himself. Payment for sin can be found only in the cross of Jesus. Hence, Paul no longer trusted in himself but all his trust was in Jesus alone.

For him to live was Christ.

Having found salvation full and free in Christ, Paul was overwhelmed with loving gratitude to God. No one can taste the wonderful gift of salvation in Jesus Christ without being overwhelmed with thankfulness to God. Paul was no exception. In loving gratitude he no longer lived unto himself but unto Christ who died for him (II Cor. 5:14 & 15). Paul was no longer concerned with his own desires, his own glory, his own purpose. What Christ wanted of him became all important. Paul's goal in life was to promote the honor and cause of Christ in loving gratitude.

For him to live was Christ.

Paul found that to serve Christ required a strength and courage he did not possess. Christ laid many weighty responsibilities on Paul as an apostle and required much suffering of him. Again Paul relied not on himself but on Christ. He learned to rely upon Christ for all things. His confession was that he could do all things through Christ who strengthens him (Phil. 4:13).

For him to live was Christ.

* * * * *

Having understood this, we can now see how death could be a gain for Paul.

Paul would lose many things through death. He would lose his earthly possessions. He would lose all his earthly friends and associates.

But one thing Paul would not lose through death. He would not lose Jesus Christ. Nothing can take Jesus away from you once you are His — not even death.

In fact, Paul lived in the realization that through death he would have more of Christ. The chief concern and joy of Paul, as it is with every born again child of God, was to serve Christ, His Savior, in loving gratitude. But how difficult that proved to be because of sin. Paul possessed a sinful nature and lived with that sinful nature in a sinful world. How that hindered him in serving Christ! The good he

would, he couldn't do; the evil he would not, that he did. What misery this caused him. But death would deliver him from all this. Through death his sinful nature would be forever destroyed. Through death he would be taken out of this sinful world. Through death he would be brought to heaven to live with Christ and to serve him in perfect joy.

Through death he would depart to be with Christ, which is far better!

To die is gain!

AN ONLY POSSIBILITY

Death is a gain only for those whom to live is Christ.

It is not possible to escape death as such. God in His wisdom has chosen not to spare man from physical death and the destruction of all things earthly that death brings with it.

However, God has provided a way for man to change his death from total destruction of body and soul into a wonderful tool of salvation. It is possible that death be changed into a final escape from sin and a passageway into eternal glory. This is possible by faith alone in Jesus Christ, Who has paid for sin.

Consequently, only when we can say that for us to live is Christ, can we in turn confess with confidence that for us to die is gain.

* * * * *

For many, Christ means absolutely nothing. For them to live is wealth, fine living, partying, entertainment, the pleasures of sins. Consequently death will be for them a complete loss. They never had Christ in their life; neither will they have Him in death. And so they will not only lose all things earthly and physical in death; they will also lose their souls eternally in hell.

Death will be a total and complete loss!

How horrible!

Let us rather turn to Jesus Christ by faith. In faith let us cling to the cross of Jesus alone to be right with God. Finding the free salvation of God in Christ, let us serve Christ in loving gratitude, finding all our strength and joy in Him. May Christ be everything to us.

Then we too can stare death fearlessly in the face.

Then we too can with all confidence claim death to be a gain.

Then we too can look forward to departing to be with Christ, which is far better.

Read and Study The Standard Bearer.

Editor's Notes

My third editorial on the Doleantie had to be delayed for one issue, due to the fact that other subjects took priority for this issue.

* * * * *

How many computer users there are among our readers and their grade school and high school children, I do not know. But recently I received a press release concerning a new paper called *Christian Educational Computing*, Dr. David C. Snyder, editor. Dr. Snyder wrote me that parents and others interested in educational computing may find CEC

useful. CEC is geared to the levels of grade school through high school, although some of it is of more general interest. Subscription price is \$15.00. Address: Christian Educational Computing, 1035 Dallas SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49507.

* * * * *

Watch for announcements of a new and enlarged edition of Herman Hoeksema's *The Mystery of Bethlehem*. This book, enlarged by eight new chapters, will make fine devotional reading for the Christmas season. The price will be \$7.95.

EDITORIALS

A Worthy Cause

Elsewhere in this issue you will find an announcement concerning financial help for a sister church, the Protestant Reformed Church of Wellington, New Zealand. It is not my intention to repeat what that announcement says. In connection with that, I only wish to point out that while it is indeed true that the over-all plan calls for help over a period of five years, and while the *average* amount needed is \$13,450.00 in US funds per year, two things should be kept in mind: 1) They need our help for only one year at a time, just as do our own needy churches. 2) The little flock in New Zealand have themselves pledged, according to the plan submitted to Synod of 1986, to contribute more than 25% of the total amount needed — no little feat for a congregation of six families on the New Zealand standard of living.

Nor is it my purpose to stress in these lines a *moral obligation* on our part. This could be done, of course, in the light of the fact that we have received them as a sister church and it is certainly right and proper for a sister to help a sister. Besides, I prefer to speak of a *privilege* rather than of an obligation.

In this connection I would like to call attention to the zeal and the dedication and the courage of this faraway, isolated little flock. They are worthy of our esteem and love and help!

Some of these saints I first came to know by correspondence in the late 1960s and early 1970s, when they were fighting for the Reformed faith in connection with what came to be known as the "Runia Case" in the Reformed Church of New Zealand. I will not go into detail on that matter; you can find many details in earlier volumes of our magazine. For the sake of the truth they were disciplined at that time, and finally found themselves unable to go on in that denomination. Since the early 1970s some of these families have depended on tape recorded sermons from our churches (especially from Hope, Walker, MI) for their spiritual food. Can you imagine such perseverance?

Then in 1975 the Rev. C. Hanko and I met these saints face to face in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Bob van Herk in Wainuiomata. I well remember the Saturday morning meeting there. The group had in mind already then to become a Protestant Re-

formed church. We discouraged them, telling them it was not our purpose to organize Protestant Reformed Churches, but to encourage and help the Orthodox Presbyterian churches of New Zealand. And we urged them to seek and maintain contact with the Council of those churches, and especially with the OPC of Christchurch. Though they had not much expectation of such contact, and though they really wanted to be Protestant Reformed, they reluctantly followed our advice. During this time, some of you will recall, the Revs. Van Overloop and Heys served as visiting ministers in Christchurch and also periodically visited the unorganized group in Wellington.

Later Christchurch turned their back on our churches and on our proffered help, and since that time have gone in a doctrinal and ecclesiastical direction away from us, a direction in which the Wellington group did not want to go. The latter continued to seek our fellowship and our help, and they continued to have as their goal to become a Protestant Reformed Church of New Zealand.

They became established as a "Protestant Reformed Fellowship" and had in view ultimately, if at all possible, to be instituted as a Protestant Reformed Church of N.Z. — not part of our denomination, but a sister church. You will recall that both the Rev. J.A. Heys and the Rev. R.

Miersma labored there repeatedly for extended periods of time. Finally, the congregation was organized; and they immediately applied to be recognized as a sister church, a status which was granted them by Synod of 1986.

In all this time, with the exception of those periods when ministers of our churches came to help, their ministry of the Word consisted of recorded sermons. And still today that is their only source of preaching.

Meanwhile, among our sister churches, this one is the only one of whom it can be said that they are *completely homogeneous* with us. This is not said to denigrate our other sister churches, but rather to help you see the little New Zealand flock in the proper light.

It is also evident: 1) That no congregation can ultimately endure without the lively ministry of the Word. 2) That the flock in Wellington has little prospect of growth as long as they have only taped sermons and no minister to labor among them and in their behalf. 3) That without our help they cannot possibly afford to call a minister. To put it crassly, without our help they are in a "no win" situation.

But the Protestant Reformed Church of Wellington, N.Z. is worthy of our help and support. Pray for this little flock! And remember them generously with your gifts!

Fundamentally Incorrect Analysis

In *The Banner* (Sept. 22, 1986, pp. 6, ff.) Dr. W. Robert Godfrey, writing at the request of *The Banner*, calls the Christian Reformed Church "A House Divided" and offers the opinion that "more often our divisions and debates are really about *whether* we will remain Reformed" than about "*how* best to be Reformed." In the course of his article he also offers several reasons why, in his opinion, the CRC has begun to experience pressures to abandon its Reformed heritage. Meanwhile, "AK" (that's Editor Andrew Kuyvenhoven) rather cleverly attempts to undercut Mr. Godfrey by an appeal to a sermon by another "AK" (that's Abraham Kuyper and his farewell sermon at Utrecht on "Conservatism and Orthodoxy") before the reader ever reaches Mr. Godfrey's article.

I will leave it to others to judge whether today's

"AK" correctly applies yesteryear's "AK" in this instance. That is of minor concern to me.

However, Dr. Godfrey makes a fundamental mistake in his analysis of the current state of affairs in his denomination. His mistake is such that because of it he fails to get at the real reasons why, according to him, the divisions and debates are about "*whether* we will remain Reformed." The latter, of course, is Dr. Godfrey's language. For my part, I would go farther and claim that the Christian Reformed Church has already in large measure *lost* its Reformed moorings. But that is neither here nor there; my concern is with Dr. Godfrey's analysis.

He writes, p. 7:

In the past most of us in the CRC have faced questions such as these by drawing on our heritage — our

orthodox theology; our practical, experiential piety; our Kuyperian world-and-life view. Even then we have not always agreed. Our most difficult and bitter division came with the debates over common grace; these led to a sizable split in our church in 1924. But almost all of those historic divisions have been over *how* we can best be Reformed. Louis Berkhof and Herman Hoeksema, for example, debated whether it was more Reformed to affirm or reject common grace.

Here is the point at which Dr. Godfrey makes the fundamentally incorrect analysis which affects his entire article. Because of this incorrect analysis Dr. Godfrey fails to get at the root causes of the fact that the CRC has increasingly experienced pressures to depart, and has departed, from their Reformed heritage.

First of all, it is the official position of the Christian Reformed Church itself that 1924 was not merely a question of *how* best to be Reformed but of *whether* to be Reformed — or rather, of *what* is Reformed.

Proof?

Item 1. Classis Grand Rapids West directly and literally and Classis Grand Rapids East indirectly and by implication deposed ministers and elders on the basis of the *Formula of Subscription*. The Three Points of Common Grace were simply made a part of the confessional stance of the CRC. Dr. Godfrey will certainly have to agree that discipline on the basis of the Formula of Subscription is a matter of being Reformed or not Reformed.

Item 2. These decisions of Classis Grand Rapids West and Classis Grand Rapids East were upheld

emphatically, on appeal, by the CRC Synod of 1926.

Item 3. The record will show that the CRC still insisted on this position when the dissident De Wolf Group sought admission to the CRC in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The CRC refused to remove the obstacle of the Three Points.

In the second place, it is surely the position of the Protestant Reformed Churches, and has always been, that the Three Points of Common Grace (inclusive of the doctrine of the well-meant offer) are *not* Reformed, but contrary to Scripture and the Creeds. The numerous brochures and articles written especially in the years immediately following 1924 testify to that. To mention just one example: in one of the earliest brochures after 1924, *A Triple Breach*, Herman Hoeksema showed that Louis Berkhof maintained an Arminian interpretation of Romans 2:4.

No, the issue was: to be . . . or not to be Reformed.

That issue would not go away, no matter how hard some tried to ignore it.

And it did not go away.

Christian Reformed failure to face this issue and to return to the Reformed track has led to many subsequent problems and departures ever since. Yes, there have been other contributing causes. But the fundamental and initial departure from the Reformed line was in 1924.

Why not face the facts?

HCH

THE STRENGTH OF YOUTH

Ronald L. Cammenga

Who Are Your Friends?

Friendship is good. Friendship is necessary. We have been made in such a way that it is not good for us to be alone. We have been made in such a way that we need friends. We have been made in such a way that we have to be a companion of someone.

This is especially true of young people. Have friends they will. Be a companion of someone they will. But the question is: "With whom will they be a friend? Who will be their companion?"

This whole matter of the friendships of the young people is a matter of great concern. It is certainly a matter of great concern to their parents and to the officebearers of the church. It ought to be a great concern to the young people themselves.

Again and again the Bible warns against evil friends and admonishes the believer not to make friends with the world. James writes in James 4:4 that "... the friendship of the world is enmity with God; whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." In II Corinthians 6:14, 15 the Apostle Paul exhorts believers, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord (that is, friendship) hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" Solomon warns in Proverbs 13:20 that "... a companion of fools shall be destroyed," and in Proverbs 28:7 that "... he that is a companion of riotous men shameth his father."

The young people of the church are not to make friends with the children of this world. The establishment of friendship on the part of a believing young person with an unbeliever is strictly forbidden by the Word of God. Parents must warn their young people against this. The preaching must address this matter. The elders must confront young people who, not heeding their parents and the Word of God, do make friendships with unbelievers. Caring, concerned young people ought to admonish a fellow young person who falls into this error.

Those with whom friendship is forbidden are unbelievers. Those with whom friendship is forbidden are not only those who live a flagrantly disobedient and carnal life. Those with whom friendship is forbidden are not only the violent, the sexually promiscuous, the drunkards and dope addicts. But those with whom friendship is forbidden are unbelievers. They may very well be clean-cut, neat, polite, outwardly decent young people. But for all that they are not believers. They do not believe in Jesus Christ or in God His Father. They do not regard His Word, the Holy Scriptures, as the authority for their beliefs and their conduct. They are not lively members of the church. With these friendship is forbidden.

There is a real danger that the young people establish friendships with unbelievers. This danger arises from the unavoidable contact that the young people have with the young people of this world.

This unbelieving person may be a close relative, or a neighbor, or a classmate in high school or college, or a fellow worker. Perhaps it is even the case that we are personally attracted to this individual, and apparently have many things in common. And so we are tempted to strike up a friendship with them.

• Especially is this a temptation to those young people who for one reason or another feel a lack of friendship with their fellow young people in the church. They are left out of the conversations and activities. They feel themselves alone and isolated. The real danger is that, needing friendship, they will with some desperation turn for that friendship to the world.

The consequences of friendships with the world are disastrous for the Christian young person, disastrous in almost every instance. Experience as well as the Word of God bears this out. Inevitably there is a corrupting of the believer. Inevitably there is the influence of a bad example. Inevitably there is the leading away from the church, the Word of God, and the commandments of God's Law. Think of the grave consequences that came upon the children of Israel because they made leagues, that is friendships, with the ungodly Canaanites. Think of the result in the life of a believer like Samson of his establishing friendship with an ungodly Philistine.

Not only are there disastrous consequences to friendships with unbelievers, but such friendships also expose one to the judgment of God. In Proverbs 13:20 Solomon says that a companion of fools will be destroyed, destroyed, you understand, by God. James says in chapter 4:4 that whoever makes himself a friend of the world by that very fact makes himself an enemy of God. And woe to that man who is God's enemy!

Although friendship is good and ordinarily necessary, it may come to it that the child of God, concerned about his approval before God, must forgo friendship, or even experience rejection at the hands of his friends. Think of David who laments in Psalm 38:11, "My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore; and my kinsmen stand afar off." Similarly he writes in Psalm 88:18, "Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness." Think of Job's rejection at the hands of his friends. Or think of our Lord's treatment at the hands of his friends: one betrayed him, another denied him, and the rest forsook Him and fled. We too, for the sake of the kingdom may be required to give up certain friendships. Then for the sake of friendship with God, which is dearer than life itself, we let go the friendship of men.

If we are to avoid friendships with unbelievers, we ought to make friends with fellow believers. As

much as the Word of God admonishes us against wrong friendships, it encourages us to friendship with God's people. The alternative to friendship with the world is *not* no friendships at all. But the alternative is friendship with the children of God.

How highly we ought to esteem our friendships in the church! What can compare in value to the treasure of true friendship!

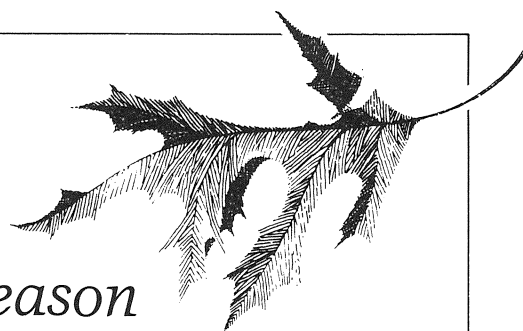
Think of the friendship between David and Jonathan. We read in I Samuel 20:17, "And Jonathan caused David to swear again, because he loved him as he loved his own soul." Think of the friendship of Daniel and his three friends, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. How God used that friendship for their mutual encouragement and strength in the midst of the temptations of Babylon. Solomon says in Proverbs 18:24 that "... there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother," a friend who is a friend through thick and thin. The psalmist writes in Psalm 119:63, "I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts." Not only was it the case that the psalmist was not a friend of those who did not fear God and who did not keep God's commandments. But positively he was a companion, and exerted himself to be a companion, of all those who did fear God and keep His commandments.

Not only must we warn our young people against evil friends and running with the world, but we must encourage them to be friends of their fellow

young people in the church. This is simply their calling, an important aspect of the exercise of the communion of the saints. Then, too, they must be true and faithful friends, friends who have a genuine spiritual concern for each other.

Such friendships God will bless. Such friendships will bring great joy and immeasurable rewards. There will be fellowship, encouragement, exhortation. These are the things that friends are for. There will be someone with whom to share our struggles, someone to confide in, someone to turn to with our disappointments, someone to look to for counsel, someone from whom we can receive the word of needed correction.

There is a saying that goes like this: "Tell me who your friends are, and I'll tell you who you are." That's a true saying. Because they are children of God, may the young people of the church seek their friends among other children of God. The prophet asks the rhetorical question of Amos 3:3, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" That's what friends do: they walk together. We could paraphrase the word of the prophet, "Can two be friends, if they are not agreed?" The obvious implied answer is: "No." The foundation of agreement, agreement in the worship of God, belief on His Son, and acknowledgement of His Word and commandments. May this be the foundation of the friendships of our young people!



*During this busy Fall season
we need to make time to read and study
the Standard Bearer.*

*Do something nice for yourself and your family,
study the Standard Bearer together!*

WALKING IN THE LIGHT

Herman C. Hanko

Moral Aspects of Medical Technology (9)

In Vitro Fertilization

In our last article on this subject we introduced the subject of *in vitro* fertilization (IVF). This is the process by which conception takes place outside the womb of the mother in a test tube or petri dish. It is a technique used for married couples who have exhausted every medical means of having children and remain childless. By this method ova are taken from the wife, sperm from the husband, and the ova of the wife are fertilized in the laboratory. When fertilization is accomplished, the fertilized ovum is placed in the womb of the wife where it is supposed to grow to term and result in the birth of a child.

This technique has proved successful in a number of cases. John Jefferson Davis writes in his book, *Evangelical Ethics*:

There are at least 100 clinics performing *in vitro* fertilizations in 11 different countries, and at least 200 children around the world owe their births to such "test tube" fertilizations [p. 83].

Without a doubt, the world has accepted this method of providing childless couples with children, and there is nothing which can be done to stop this practice. We may expect that this procedure will continue and that the techniques used will be refined in the future. More and more "test tube" babies will be born in our world. The question is: may people of God make use of this technique? Is it morally acceptable? Is it a practice which falls within the accepted moral guidelines of the Scriptures? May covenant husbands and wives look to this practice to enrich their homes with covenant children when God has not blessed such homes

with children? Is it a morally acceptable means of using medical technology to realize a deeply cherished goal of covenant couples?

We noticed in our earlier article that the Scriptures do not speak directly to this issue. We look in vain in God's Word for guidance and instruction on this use of a rather recent medical advance. The Bible neither approves nor disapproves in any direct and explicit way this method of having children. This ought not to come as a surprise to us. The Bible is not a textbook on Ethics and does not speak directly to every moral problem which arises in the life of a child of God. This is especially true of modern ethical questions brought about by recent medical advances. But we may not conclude from this that the issue before us has to be decided on purely pragmatic grounds — as if the Bible is no help at all. God gave His Word to His church as the rule of faith and life. God knew, when He gave the Scriptures, what problems His people would face in the future. God knew that *in vitro* fertilization would also be such a problem, and He gave His Word in the full awareness of the need for Biblical guidance in the lives of God's people who desire to walk in the ways of God's commandments and who look to His Word as a "lamp unto their feet and a light upon their pathway." The Bible sets forth principles of moral conduct within which all these ethical decisions have to be made. We may expect, therefore, that the child of God who earnestly desires to do God's will will also find help for this problem in what God has said.

We must remember, however, that this in itself implies an important principle. Those who are not fundamentally and principally interested in doing that which God requires of them will be able to set forth seemingly plausible arguments which justify

their conduct. The sinner can always find an excuse for his sin — and even justify his sin on the basis of Scripture. The Scriptures will speak, and speak clearly, only to those who bow in humble willingness before God and ask themselves in good conscience before God's face: "Lord, what wilt thou have me do?" In humility and reverence, in the fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom, the believer will find an answer to his question.

Understanding this, we are convinced that IVF (in vitro fertilization) is an unacceptable procedure and that it can only bring upon the one who makes use of it the wrath of God and His sharp and condemning displeasure.

Why is this?

We find, in answer to this question, two lines of argumentation. The first has to do with various practical considerations. The second has to do with principle objections. We discuss the practical considerations because, while they in themselves do not make IVF wrong, taken together they clearly show how evil this practice is and add weight to our arguments against it.

Turning then to these various practical considerations, it is important to note (though often overlooked) that the ability of scientists to bring about fertilization outside the womb is a necessary step in various other techniques and lines of experimentation which are horribly wrong. It must be remembered that IVF is a procedure developed by ungodly men who consider a fetus to be nothing else but a glob of tissue — whether now that fetus is formed through the natural means of intercourse or through the technique of IVF. Because the fetus is nothing else but a glob of tissue, it is considered to be no different from any piece of tissue, whether taken from the skin, the lungs, or the heart; whether taken from a child, a rat, a rabbit or a monkey. It is a laboratory specimen to do whatever the scientist in charge of it wishes to do.

This view not only is a direct conclusion from evolutionary theories of man's development, but is the reason why abortion is so widely accepted. Evolutionism stands behind the whole developed procedure.

Because this is true, all sorts of things can be (and are being) done with these fertilized ova. You see, in order to make IVF work, a number of ova must be taken from the mother and a number of fertilized ova are the result when the sperm of the male are introduced into the test tube. Only one to three fertilized eggs are actually planted in the womb of the mother, and the question is, what to do with the rest.

In some instances, these fertilized ova (and we must remember, on the basis of Scripture, that these are all conceived children, persons, new human beings) are frozen and stored for future use. Sometimes these frozen children are saved for the original mother in case the first attempt fails. Sometimes these frozen children are implanted in the wombs of other women so that they can have children, though not of their own. In the December, 1985 issue of *Trowel and Sword* the author writes:

The process of freezing embryos, though certainly increasing the success rate and decreasing the cost of subsequent transfers, again leads to the problem of what to eventually do with unused embryos. This is clearly illustrated by the recent situation when a Chilean couple died, leaving their frozen embryos as heirs to a fortune.

In IVF, the couple chooses whether excess embryos are frozen for later transfer if the first attempt fails, disposed of, used in experimentation, or donated to another couple.

D. Gareth Jones in *Brave New People* writes:

The embryos not placed in the mother's uterus or preserved by freezing are discarded, or are used experimentally. Not surprisingly this is where controversy comes to the fore. These are the "spare" embryos. Frozen embryos can be returned to the mother's uterus if another embryo has been aborted, in an attempt to ensure a subsequent pregnancy. Embryos stored in this way can be kept for decades, although a limit of 10 years has been imposed in some countries. Pregnancies have resulted following the transfer of embryos stored in liquid nitrogen at -200 degrees C for periods of around four months.

Alternatively, spare embryos may be donated to another woman, they may be discarded or used for research purposes. Experimental work which has been carried out has been aimed at determining how a normal embryo may be recognized. This entails detailed microscopic studies of the cells. If they have already stopped growing, sectioning presumably does not kill them — as they are already dead. If they are still growing, these procedures inevitably destroy them (pp. 86, 87).

This experimentation upon "spare" embryos (children) is very common and is justified on the grounds that it unlocks the secrets of human development and opens up the possibility of dealing with diseases which are inherited.

We must insist that these embryos are indeed children. Every moral sense in the Christian rebels against such procedures which freeze children for later use or which use children for experimental purposes. That it follows inevitably from an evolutionary viewpoint is clear; that it is abhorrent to the child of God and contrary to the Scriptures is equally clear.

From this practice arise other evil practices. If these embryos can be manipulated outside the womb, it is entirely possible, of course, to determine also the sex of the child. In the January-March issue of *Bibliotheca Sacra* (p. 63) the author writes:

Suppose a wife wants a child but she wants to specify its sex and physical characteristics. If she wants a boy, sex selection procedures enable physicians to separate X-sperm (which will produce a girl) from Y-sperm (which will produce a boy). There is no technological reason why this cannot be done; so most people say, Why not?

Perhaps worse than this is the fact that already scientists who busy themselves in this area are speaking of developing techniques which will enable them to grow a fetus to maturity outside the womb. D. Gareth Jones (*op. cit.*, p. 88) writes:

More futuristic (plans) include various forms of genetic engineering prior to implantation such as the sex determination of embryos, the screening of em-

bryos for genetic and/or chromosomal defects, and the repair of genetic defects. Even more futuristic vistas include ectogenesis (the maintenance of embryos *in vitro* beyond the implantation stage, and perhaps ultimately throughout the whole gestation period), the use of ectogenesis as a source of embryo parts for transplantation into children and adults, cloning, and the creation of human-animal hybrids.

The issue of *Bibliotheca Sacra* referred to above speaks of this:

This in fact was the central premise in the novel *Brave New World* written by Aldous Huxley in 1932. His vision for the future was a dystopia (the opposite of utopia). He feared that technology, especially genetic technology, would create a world of tyranny. He envisioned a world dominated by and controlled by genetic engineers who created future generations in their own image and forsook the traditional forms of human procreation and parenting. Certainly some of these new forms of artificial reproduction move us closer to that possibility.

THE DAY OF SHADOWS

John A. Heys

Grace for Grace

In the book of Jonah there are more miracles recorded than we are apt to concede. There is the miraculous sleep of Jonah, the landlubber, during a storm that was so violent that seasoned, experienced seamen were frightened, and sleep was impossible for them. There is the miracle of Jonah being snatched from the jaws of death by the jaws of a fish which God prepared and sent, and then used to keep him alive for three days and three nights in a sphere where death, because of lack of oxygen, has come to thousands upon thousands of men. There is the spewing out of Jonah on dry land rather than on the bottom of the sea. Coming yet, in the chapters we purpose, the Lord willing, to treat, is

the gourd which in one night sprang up to such proportions that it gave Jonah shade and comfort in the midst of the burning, scorching heat of the sun. And then came its sudden withering, and the removal of this protection.

Sad to say, that is where we are inclined to draw the line. Doing so we ignore and overlook the greatest miracles recorded in the book. There is the conversion of Jonah, followed by the conversion of the Ninevites. We, because of our flesh, think first of material, fleshly advantages. The salvation of our bodies from the curse and its pain is uppermost in our thoughts. But the all-controlling, ever present yearning that ought to be foremost in our souls is salvation from the power of sin. Did Jesus not call us to seek first the kingdom of God and *its righteousness*?

John A. Heys is a minister emeritus in the Protestant Reformed Churches.

We do well to remember that miracles are manifestations, pictures and symbols of the breaking through of God's grace, so that the curse, which is upon the world because of sin, is pierced, and blessings come down upon God's people instead. The miracle of all miracles, the wonder of all wonders is the coming of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity into our flesh. Born without a human father the infinite Son became finite, the Creator became a creature, the Independent One came to dwell in a nature that depended upon a father and mother to care for it and provide for it, upon food and drink, oxygen, rain, and sunshine. And He came down piercing the curse and showering down blessings out of heaven upon His church.

This does not mean that each individual who is materially, physically benefited by a miracle receives a blessing out of heaven. All Israel benefited that way in the wilderness through the miracle of manna, which God provided for Israel for forty years. This was not an act of "common grace." Hebrews 3:7-11 declares that many saw God's works for forty years, but He was grieved with that generation and said that "they do always err in their hearts, and have not known my ways." And He swore in His wrath that they should not enter into His rest. Plainly it was not His grace to this erring people, but an act of providence. He was grieved with most of those Israelites. His grace would have made them thankful, and to know how to walk so that they would be in His way, that is, be in the sphere of His law, rather than be erring in their hearts. And that He swore in His wrath that they would not enter into His rest means that they would not taste the smallest part of His grace. They did not enter into His grace to the slightest degree. He is Jehovah, the Unchangeable One. He did not give a "common grace" for a little while and then change His mind and decide not to give them His rest. His grace is an eternal, unchangeable virtue. And on what legal basis could He Who is holy continue to give His grace for forty years to those that err in their hearts?

Romans 8:7, 8, as pointed out last time, teaches us that the carnal mind cannot be subject to the law of God, and that they that are in the flesh cannot please God. Can the *holy* God then find pleasure in such, so that He deals with them in grace? He can and does with those who belong to Christ, because Christ's holiness and righteousness are legally theirs, since they are members of His body by God's eternal, unchangeable decree of election.

And does He not Himself in His law declare that He will not hold them guiltless that worship anyone but Himself? Yea, He is a jealous God and shows mercy — and thus also grace — only to those that love Him and keep His commandments. And even

when His elect turn from His commandments, as Jonah did, He often ceases to show them evidences of His mercy and grace. It is there alright, and it will bring them back. But in that very mercy and grace He, as He did with Jonah, sends distresses and troubles, to teach them and bring them back from their waywardness.

Merely giving material gifts is no sign of grace. Taking these away can be an evidence of His grace. Jonah was stopped in his sinful way by a fierce storm *sent in God's grace*. When God polishes us and refines us by afflictions, it is not a suspension of His grace. It is a gracious work on His part. Similarly, when He gives the wicked earthly things which their hearts desire, it is not grace, for it only supplies them with more means wherewith they earn for themselves a deeper place in hell!

The miraculous saving of Jonah's earthly life was a breaking through of God's grace. For God did this to bring him to the confession of his sin, of which confession we read in Jonah 2:1-4. Yes, he had already told the mariners that he had tried to flee from God. He had even said that he feared the Lord, the God of heaven which had made the sea and the dry land. But take note of the fact, first of all, that this was forced out of him, and that he could not escape it, because the lots clearly single him out as the one because of whom this terrible storm raged. But also take careful note of the fact that he confessed this *to men*. And we live in such a dreadful age today that criminals boast of their evil, readily confess it before men, and even want the credit for their vile deeds. Now, however, here in Jonah 2:3, 4 he confesses his sin before God and acknowledges the fact that he deserves this as an evil doer. That means a whole lot more. After all, did not Judas Iscariot confess before men that he had betrayed innocent blood? Jonah now prays to God and acknowledges the fact that God cast him into the deep, and that all His billows and waves passed over him. And this he does without complaint. It is not the most open confession of his sin, but is a confession that God is punishing him for his disobedience, and in that sense it is a confession of his sin.

Still more, Jonah expresses his confidence in the blessedness of the forgiveness of his sins, and of being dealt with in grace. He states, "I shall look again toward thy holy temple." This was preceded by the confession, "I am cast out of Thy sight." Saved from death, he is sure that he is saved from his guilt, for he shall look again toward God's *holy* temple. He will again enjoy God's covenant fellowship, as undeserving as he is in himself. Plainly this is what he desires also. And that seals his confession as being sincere. When all we want is to escape the punishment we deserve, we are no more spiritual

than the devil. If we do not love God and want to be holy and serve Him in His temple, we are carnal, self-centered and not interested in glorifying God. But Jonah is, and his confession is sincere.

This also explains the statement in Jonah 3:1, "And the word of the Lord came to Jonah the second time." That too was a breaking through of God's grace. Indeed, that Jonah is called the second time to do what he would not do, when first commanded to do so, is a miracle. Our God is a consuming fire (Hebrews 12:29) and as such He smote Ananias and Sapphira who lied about the money they got for their land. This God had sent that terrible storm, of whose waves and billows Jonah spoke. Yet He saved Jonah from His fierce wrath, and now comes the second time with a call to go to Nineveh.

Jonah is not given a second chance. Our God does not give chances. He is no gambler, nor does He arrange for sinners to gamble with their salvation. He had good works eternally decreed for Jonah in His grace. And He had the salvation of the Ninevites eternally in His mind in His grace. And now that Jonah may do that work, and the Ninevites might be brought to faith, God works His miracle of blessing His elect with sorrow for sin, repentance and confession of sin.

Our old man of sin does not think that conversion is a blessing, and it finds no joy even in the thought of serving God. In fact it hates those who reveal a converted life. Yet man was created to serve God, and the new man in Christ does consider conversion a blessing, yea a miracle of God's grace. He also understands that man is given life, food and drink, clothing and shelter, not as a gift of "common grace," but to do as Solomon declares in Ecclesiastes 12:13, namely, "to fear God and keep His commandments." He understands the truth of Psalm 1:1, 2. Note that the psalmist in this Psalm makes a contrast between the believer and the unbeliever. The believer is blessed. The unbeliever is "like the chaff which the wind driveth." Plainly the psalmist knows no grace that God shows to the wicked.

Asaph in Psalm 73 likewise saw no "common grace" upon the wicked. It looked that way to him for a time. He saw that their eyes stood out with fatness. They prospered materially because God sent them an abundance of rain, and the right amount of sunshine to make them prosper materially. O, it seemed that God was so good to them. He sent them such a measure of "common grace" that Asaph became envious of them, so much so that his feet were almost gone, his steps had well-nigh slipped. He had big questions about God's grace, because it looked to him as though he had cleansed his heart in vain, and washed his

hands in innocency. Imagine! There is a grace that God gives to the wicked and keeps from His church! The believers do not prosper materially. They are often in trouble and plagued (verse 5). God has a grace that is only for the wicked!

Not so, Asaph finds when he goes to God's house. For then he understood their end. He saw that instead of being the objects of God's grace, the wicked were set on slippery places BY GOD! (See verse 18.) And surely grace does not do that!

We do well then to listen to what John wrote in John 1:16, "And of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." We, the believers, receive grace, and mind you, receive grace for grace. We even need grace to receive grace. The Greek preposition is *anti*, which can mean over against, in opposition to, as it does in such words as *antichrist* and *antichristian*. But here it means in addition to, grace in addition to grace already received. It does not mean grace that displaces grace, grace that takes away grace, but grace and more grace, an abundance of grace. New mercies and new grace are ours every day.

And it simply is a fact that we need grace to receive grace. We need grace not only to know that we are the objects of God's grace. We need grace to be able to confess that we are saved one hundred percent by grace. Without God's grace we will boast to one degree or another of our works and abilities. It takes grace to reject the theory of a "free offer" that maintains — or at least implies — that we can act *before* we have received the beginning of salvation in us, in the sense that we can desire to be born again before we have received such a birth in God's grace.

No, grace must be there before we hear the preaching, or we will not receive it as God's word. And it was God's grace that brought Jonah to confession of his sin, and unto willingness to go to Nineveh. God's grace turned him; and he did not turn of himself in order to obtain grace. God made him, and makes us, say that all of our salvation, from the desire for it to the fulness of it in heavenly glory, is of the Lord.

*The Standard Bearer
makes a thoughtful gift for
the sick and shut-in.
Give the Standard Bearer!*

FROM HOLY WRIT

George C. Lubbers

Believing All The Scriptures — The Hope of Heaven and Earth (4)

FROM PARADISE TO PARADISE (*Gen. 3:16*)

If we believe all of the Scriptures we receive them as an organic unity, written by one Author, containing one central message concerning the Christ of God, and inspired by one Spirit. For all Scripture is given by inspiration; it is God-breathed (II Tim. 3:16). Besides, the Scriptures are often designated as being "the Scripture" (Mk. 12:14; John 2:22; 5:39; 7:38, 42; 10:35; 13:18; 17:12; 19:24, 28, 36, 37; 20:9; Acts 1:16; 8:32; Rom. 4:3; Rom. 9:17; 10:11; Gal. 3:8, 22; 4:30; I Tim. 5:18; II Tim. 3:16; James 2:8, 23; 4:5; I Pet. 2:6; II Peter 1:20).

In perusing all these many, many passages from Scripture it becomes quite evident that the Bible is a unique Book. Although it was written during many centuries by holy men, yet it has but one Author. God who spoke of old time unto the church through the prophets has in these last times spoken unto us in His Son (Heb. 1:2). Furthermore, God even spoke in all the law and the prophets concerning (*peri*) His Son. Says Jesus to the unbelieving Jews, "For if ye believed Moses, ye would believe *Me* (*emoi* in Greek); for He wrote of (concerning *Me*).

Now these instructions and this rebuke we had better take to heart; they should penetrate deeply into our hearts!

Yes, we must take these words seriously, as exegetes of Scripture.

We believe with all our heart that also in Genesis 3:16 Moses is, at bottom, writing about the Son of God, as He was born from a woman, and as He was

made to be under law (Gal. 4:4). And we make bold to assert that they who do not read of this Son of God in Genesis 3:16 fail to believe *all* of the Scriptures. Such have indeed thrown away the "key of knowledge"; yea, they take the key of knowledge away from the hungry people of God. Not reading of the Christ in Genesis 3:6, all they can read is about divine judgment, without grace. Such teaching is fatal; for then the Scripture is a closed book. God gives the book to them and says, "Read." In the entire Old Testament they then can only find "law," and this Old Testament is for them not the revelation of the covenant of grace, under types and shadows, but it is pure law. Such interpreters must needs ever teach explicitly, or always and again have the overtone of "law" in their sermons, which law then ceases to be a pedagogue unto Christ. Here the words of Isaiah are apt, where we read "therefore shall the word of the LORD be unto them precept upon precept, line upon line: here a little, there a little" (Isaiah 28:13). I almost dread to quote the remainder of this verse, which adds "(In order) that they may go and fall backward, and be broken, and snared and taken."

Unless God *reveals* the Gospel of the Cross here in Genesis 3:16, there is no hope for heaven, neither is there hope for earth. And, we may be certain, there will be no fulfilment of the beautiful words of Genesis 2:4: "These are the Generations (*toledoth*) of the heavens and of the earth . . ." Forsoothe, there will not be a hope for heaven nor for the earth, no joy of the angels in heaven, who always behold the face of their Father, and no song of redemption for the sons of men. The great and glorious judgments of God in heaven and hell will not be an accomplished fact in the "ages to come,

when heaven and earth shall all be united under one head" (Eph. 1:7-10). We would ever be driven from Paradise by the flaming swords of the keepers of the most holy place, the Cherubim.

There would be no "from Paradise to Paradise," the history of salvation which leads up to the birth of the "SEED of the woman" and which leads from the incarnation, cross, resurrection and ascension to the glorious revelation of Christ, the last Adam, in the great salvation of the cosmos (John 1:29).

THAT BEAUTIFUL GOSPEL TEXT IN GENESIS 3:16

We do well to quote this well-known Scripture.

It reads as follows:

"Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow (pain) and thy conception; in sorrow (pain) shalt thou bring forth children and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."

There are here various elements to which we must call attention, elements which are emphatically stated and underscored by the speaker, Jehovah, the covenant God of Israel.

In the first place we ought to notice carefully that the One speaking here is called in Genesis 3:9 and 13 "Jehovah God." He does not really have three separate and disjointed messages here to Satan, the woman, and the man (Adam). It is one message of two parts: eternal destruction of the serpent and salvation for Eve and for Adam in the deep way of *sin* and *grace*! In this message God really sets the seed of the serpent and the Seed of the woman in eternal and perpetual warfare. It is the battle of the ages.

Secondly, we ought to observe that the prediction to Eve was given by the LORD (Jehovah) within the framework of the PROTEVANGEL. Does not Adam as God's prophet, in the Spirit of Christ (I Peter 1:11), call his wife, the woman, with a *new* name? It is a name which she could only bear within the framework of the promised SEED, spoken of in Genesis 3:15! Prior to the fall she can only be known as the one "taken out of the man." Here we see the marriage as it was from the beginning (Matt. 19:4-6). They are made unto one flesh by God's creative act. Here we see the mystery of marriage, only in part. Even as Adam was a "figure" of the Christ-Adam to come, so their marriage was a prefiguration of the higher celestial marriage of Christ and the sanctified bride of all the redeemed of all ages. However, in good prose, in direct discourse, Jehovah here sets the woman, as she is in the marriage-state, to serve greater things to come. Through the pain and sorrow of motherhood Eve, the woman, must serve to bring forth all

men out of one blood (Acts 17:24-28; Heb. 2:10, 11). The natural is first and then the spiritual (I Cor. 15:46).

We do well to notice the following particulars in the text.

The dark and painful and sorrowing side of Eve the mother of the living will be "multiplied exceedingly." Such increase of sorrow is of the LORD (Jehovah) and serves His redemptive purpose, as well as the eternal condemnation of the Serpent, the old Dragon, Satan, the Devil. However, the sorrows are real. The Hebrews text here is very expressive. The terms for "greatly multiply" are really literally translated "causing to multiply I will multiply." We read the same grammatical construction in Genesis 2:17, ". . . for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Here too we have "Dying thou shalt die."

It is a very dark and painful side to the life of the mother of the living. And it is the word of Jehovah, which He will certainly fulfill in strictest justice: "dying thou shalt surely die." The woman, Eve, who had been translated out of death to life, is translated thus in the very world in which she was created into the world of the kingdom of Jesus Christ — through death and hell unto life and glory. It is the way in which the seed of the serpent will be utterly bruised under the heel of the seed of the woman (Rom. 16:20). Note the beautiful promissary word to the church, the seed of the woman, "And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly."

Yes, even through this prediction of gloom, viewed in light of all the Scripture, there are shining light-beams of grace and glory. God made all things by Christ and unto Christ (Col. 1:16). Here in Eve's sorrows, by faith in the Scripture, we detect the joy which one day shall be eternally full. There is deep meaning and deep and comforting pathos in the words of Jesus to His disciples, "A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow because her hour is come; but when she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for the joy that a man is born into the world" (John 16:21).

Yet this sorrow is real and terrifying for the woman.

And it is God's judicious and righteous verdict.

Let us take a little look at the "sorrow" of Eve as here predicted and as fulfilled, even in all godly women throughout the ages. I believe that Eve may be called a "case-study."

First of all, she is the first mother who ever conceived and gave birth to a child. She would experience labor, a grievous thing. The term in the Hebrew is employed in Genesis 6:16, 17 as well as

in Job 9:28; Psalm 16:4; Proverbs 10:10; 15:13. (See also I Chron. 4:9; Is. 14:3.) The term expresses inexpressible weariness and labors, vexing pains and sorrows accompanying motherhood in the history of sin and grace.

Think for a minute of the very sorrowful experience of Eve as a mother of Cain. She thought that she had given birth to a "man, received from Jehovah." This one would fight the Lord's battles, as of the party of the living God against Satan and all his hosts. But, alas, *her* firstborn son, would be from a spiritual point of view dead in trespasses and sins, truly conceived and born in sin, without the new birth. He would be what John calls "a murderer," "out of the Evil One." He would be in a sense the father of the serpent's seed in his generations. He would not be reckoned in the "generations," the *toledoth*, of the heavens and of the earth. He cares not for the blood of the covering of skins, pointing to the blood of Christ, and to be clothed

with the righteousness of the saints. No, the joy of the firstborn must wait till a babe is born to the virgin Mary, the seed of the woman, which was not by the will of an earthly "Adam" (Luke 1:35, Matt. 1:18).

Also the Gospel spoken to Eve concerning the sorrows of her conceiving children awaits its fulfillment in the birth of Jesus Christ.

However, here the sorrows are such that Mary will see that her firstborn Son will be set for a falling and rising again of many in Israel and for a sign which shall be contradicted. Yes, in this fruit of the womb we will see that the Israel of the election in the Old Testament is glorified, and that he will be for a light to the Gentile world.

Truly Genesis 3:16 is a beautiful Gospel-text!

Blessed are the mothers in Israel who believed, walking continuously in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety.

ALL AROUND US

Robert D. Decker

Divorce and Remarriage

The Banner recently focussed its attention on the rising problems of the break-down of family living, divorce and the remarriage of divorced persons, sexual promiscuity and how these phenomena are affecting the church. We do well to pay attention to these problems, for they affect Protestant Reformed people, families, and churches too. Editor Andrew Kuyvenhoven writes:

When a friend of mine was very young, she knew there was something unusual about the life of the church organist. She knew that he did not have a wife. Years later she learned that his marriage had turned sour and that he and his wife had separated from each other. That man always lived alone; he was never divorced.

Today we don't have many such "separated" people in our churches. We do have a growing number of divorced people. One week we are shocked to hear of the marriage breakup of our friends. A couple of months later they file for divorce. We hear that she has gone to live with another fellow. And within a year the former husband comes to church with another woman. And we say, Is this really happening? Is this our church? Then we think, Let's be happy that he still comes to church, with his kids; we should get to know the woman.

CHANGING MORES. One of the church fathers — I believe it was Augustine — tells of a woman who committed adultery. Burdened with shame and full of repentance, she spent seven years in cloistered penitence. That's even stranger than the case of the separated organist.

Were *they* exaggerating or have we lost some feelings that are essential to a Christian esteem of sex and

Robert D. Decker is professor of Practical Theology and New Testament in the Protestant Reformed Seminary.

marriage? Have we become estranged from the holiness of Christian living and the sacredness of the marital covenant? It is not impossible . . .

When it comes to sex and marriage, evangelicals are tempted to imitate the world but translate the concepts into their own jargon. The evangelicals' answer to the feminist movement is a sexually very attractive package of perfection: the full woman, the *femme fatale*, and the go-getter of Proverbs 31 all in one beautiful born-again person. Our burgeoning evangelical-books businesses stock many shelves on the enjoyment of sexuality, and much of this material consists of a recent evangelical adaptation of humanist insights.

Of course, all evangelicals are shocked by and concerned about the decay of families — the crumbling of the bricks that make up society's edifice. More than 50 million of us have watched the Dobson films so that we may get a better hold on the problem and be on the side of the solution. And all denominations and Christian publishers are producing materials on family values.

THE POISON WITHIN. Yet, running through all evangelical thinking is a philosophical current that is basically friendly to divorce and sexual license: it is the gospel of prosperity, vitality, happiness, self-fulfillment. These goods are constantly sold by evangelical people whose own good looks and obvious success seem to back up what they claim as gospel promises.

The only reason why the organist of my friend's youth did not get a divorce was that he did not know the gospel of self-fulfillment. He did not do much thinking about life enrichment. He knew only the hard-to-travel path to the narrow gate, taught by the Calvinist school of obedience. And with sweaty palms behind the organ and nightly pain, he tried to keep looking forward, not around . . .

Dr. Henry Holstege, a professor of sociology at Calvin College, comments in the same issue:

In the Christian family God has given us a beautiful model of how life ought to be lived. It is a model that God blesses and that we should earnestly seek to follow and defend. Unfortunately, it is also a model that today's society threatens to undermine and weaken.

Profound changes are taking place in the North American family. Some of these changes run counter to God's model of family life. Christians ought not to be embarrassed to label such changes as sinful and harmful and unacceptable while at the same time extending love to those who are the victims of these changes.

Let's look at several areas of change and their impact on the family.

SEXUAL PROMISCUITY. On a worldwide basis, nonmarital cohabitation has increased and is much more tolerated than it used to be. For many people, "living together" has become part of the courtship process. Apparently a considerable percentage of

couples in such a relationship eventually do get married, although precise numbers aren't available. On the whole, the institution of marriage has become more fluid and changing than before.

In Europe and North America the intense stigma attached to "living together" began to lessen in the 1960s because of a broader change in sexual mores that enticed a majority of young men and women to have sexual intercourse before marriage. This promiscuity allowed all types of sexually transmitted diseases to run rampant. Although AIDS is getting the most publicity because its victims die, other diseases such as herpes, chlamydia, and genital warts are much more prevalent, along with such well-known venereal diseases as gonorrhea and syphilis . . .

DIVORCE. In addition to the problem of sexual promiscuity, an increasing number of divorces is taking its toll on family life. Until World War II, the United States had a relatively low rate of divorce (about two per 1,000 population) . . . At present it is about five per 1,000 population, which means that forty to fifty percent of all marriages will eventually end in divorce. At least fifty percent of American children today will spend some time living in a single-parent household.

Clearly, a humanistic, existential emphasis on self-fulfillment is gaining wide acceptance, and therefore marital conflict often quickly ends in divorce . . . five out of seven Americans now believe it's socially permissible for a married couple to get a divorce when they can't get along, even if they have children. Religious constraints are playing a diminishing role.

Consider the results of all this. Current evidence says that at least a third of all American children from single-parent homes will suffer continual psychiatric trauma. Over half of these children never see their father . . . Society has moved from a model of marriage based on permanent commitment, self-sacrifice, and agape love to a model that views marriage as a temporary situation that lasts only as long as one finds personal satisfaction. One's own self-actualization and destiny take precedence to those of the marriage.

Throughout the world the reports are similar: the rate of divorce is higher than in the past. The Christian community must realize that this change is not merely the result of structural changes such as industrialization and urbanization; to a great extent, it is the result of new ideological emphases . . .

Holstege goes on to comment on the fact that the current birth rate has fallen well below the 2.1 births per couple that constitutes "zero population growth."

A few comments about all this: 1) The Biblical teachings concerning marriage are plain and easy to understand, but impossible to observe except by the grace of God. According to Ephesians 5:22-33 and other passages, marriage is a picture of Christ and His bride, the church. The calling of husbands is to love their wives just as Christ loved the church

and gave Himself for it. Wives are to submit to their own husbands just as the church submits to Christ. Where, by the grace of God, Christian husbands and wives are obedient to these their respective callings one finds happy, blessed marriages in which difficulties and conflicts are prayerfully resolved in the way of confessing one's faults to each other and to God. The love of God in the hearts of Christian husbands and wives is the very opposite of the world's concepts of "self-fulfillment" and "self-satisfaction". God's love in us is a love of self-denial which finds it more blessed to give than to receive. 2) Divorce is *sin*. Except for the cause of fornication no one may put away his or her spouse. The one who does commits adultery and

the one who marries the spouse who was put away commits adultery. Matthew 19:3-12 and related passages make this quite clear. 3) Marriage is a bond between one man and one woman for life. Only God Who creates the bond may sever the bond, which He does by death. 4) Our churches must never compromise these clear Scriptural teachings. If we do we shall reap a very bitter fruit indeed! 5) Our pastors and elders and all of us in the office of believers must insist on obedience to these truths. Pastors and elders must preach and teach these principles publicly and from house to house. The churches must discipline and excommunicate all unrepentant adulterers and adulteresses and whoremongers.

BIBLE STUDY GUIDE

Jason L. Kortering

Leviticus — Reconciliation Through Sacrifice (2)

2. The priestly consecration with its warnings for violations (8:1-10:20). Aaron and his family were presented to the Lord in the presence of the congregation. Aaron was dressed in the proper clothes of the priest, a robe, an ephod (cape), breast-plate, mitre, and crown. Moses took the oil and anointed the tabernacle, including its contents, and also anointed Aaron (8:1-13). A bullock of sin offering, a ram of burnt-offering, and a ram of consecration were slain after they had laid their hands upon each of the heads. The blood was sprinkled and used as consecration. They remained in the tabernacle for seven days for a period of consecration (8:14-36). On the eighth day, Moses instructed Aaron and his sons to bring a calf for a sin offering, a ram for a burnt offering, and come to the tabernacle. The people were instructed to come with their goats as sin offerings (9:1-7). Aaron offered his sacrifice before Jehovah (9:8-14), after which he

sacrificed for the people (9:15-22). In response to this, the glory of the Lord appeared to the people and fire consumed the offering on the altar (9:23, 24). Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron, violated their trust as priests and offered strange fire on the altar. The fire of the Lord killed them before the altar. Mishael and Elzaphan were instructed to take their bodies and bury them without the camp, and the people were instructed to mourn before the tabernacle (10:1-7). The priests were forbidden to use wine when they served in the tabernacle (10:8-11). Their portion of the sacrifice consisted of the shoulder and breasts of the offering which was to be eaten by the priests and their families in specified places (10:12-20).

3. The laws for purification (11:1-15:33). We find the distinction made between clean and unclean animals. The clean ones for food are those that have a cleft hoof and chew the cud (they must have both and not one of the two, 11:1-8), among the fish they are to have fins and scales (11:9-12), among the

flying creatures that are unclean are the vultures, and those that go on four feet (except the locust, beetle, grasshopper, 11:13-28). A list is given of the creatures which creep and which go about on paws which are unclean as well as all items which become contaminated by contact with such unclean animals (11:13-47). Instruction is given concerning the purification of a woman after childbirth, she is unclean for 40 days for a male and 80 days for a female, at the end of which she is to offer a lamb and a young pigeon or turtledove. If she is poor and cannot bring a lamb she is to bring two turtledoves or two pigeons (12:1-8). Laws concerning leprosy are now given. It is the duty of the priest to determine whether it is leprosy or some scab. Careful distinctions are given as to color and affect upon hair, in order to be sure it is the dread leprosy. If the priest has any doubt, the person is to be placed in hold for 7 or even 14 days to be sure. If he is judged to have leprosy, he is banned from the camp and has to tear his clothes, keep his head bare, put a covering on his upper lip and cry out "unclean!" (13:1-46). The priest was also able to examine the garments of the victim and specific instruction is given in how the evidence of leprosy in the garment itself would help to determine if the person had it. If so judged, the garment had to be burned (13:47-59). The possibility of healing and restoration of the leper is treated next. The priest is to go out of the camp and examine the leper. If he is healed a sacrifice of birds and sprinkling of their blood is to follow. For seven days he lives in the city, but not in this house, having washed and shaved himself. Then he is to shave off all his hair, wash his clothes, sacrifice lambs and the priest is to anoint him with blood and oil before the tabernacle. Provision is made for the poor to take one lamb and two turtledoves or pigeons (14:1-32). Finally, the houses of the lepers had to be dealt with. The owner of the house had to report to the priest the contamination. It had to be emptied before the priest inspected it. If he found evidence of leprosy having corrupted it, the house was sealed for seven days and after that time if it was opened and the blocks had to be removed and scraped until all evidence was destroyed. If evidence of leprosy recurred, the house had to be destroyed. At the end, the priest had to pronounce the house clean. Anyone who came into contact with it had to wash carefully and the clean house was sprinkled with blood (14:33-57). The priests also had to deal with certain unclean issues from the body of both men and women. The first section deals with issues from men. These secretions contaminate anything he lies upon or sits on and requires cleansing. After the issue stops, he must go to the priest and when declared clean must take a bath and wait seven days. On the eighth, he must take two turtledoves

or pigeons which the priest will sacrifice as a sin and burnt offering — as an atonement (15:1-15). The semen of copulation required the washing of garments and bathing (15:16-18). The same applies to a woman with an issue of blood. She and any man who contacts her is unclean, as well as any bed or garment that she touches. Upon the ending of such an issue, she is to go to the priest and also offer two turtledoves or pigeons (15:19-33). Finally, this section closes with details of the great day of atonement. This instruction is given after the two sons of Aaron have died and Aaron is told that he cannot enter into the holy of holies except when the cloud appears. He then was to dress in his priestly garb, take two goats for a sin offering and a ram for the burnt offering. The ram is to be sacrificed for a sin offering, but he is to cast lots over the kids of the goats. The one goat is to be sacrificed in atonement while upon the other goat he lays his hands and confesses the sins of the people upon it after which it is driven into the wilderness. All this is to be accompanied with washings and sprinklings. The statute of keeping this day annually is given (16:1-34).

The next chapter introduced the second main part of the book of Leviticus. In this section we see how God's people enter into fellowship with God through sanctification by means of sacrifice. This section covers chapters 17-27.

4. The use of the blood of animals in sacrifice is spelled out (17:1-16). The oxen, lambs, and goats which may be killed in the camp or outside the camp must be brought to the tabernacle so the priests may offer them as peace offerings. Failure to do this would result in being cut off from the congregation (17:1-9). Any eating of blood was forbidden and would result in being cut off since the blood represents atonement, for the soul of animal is in its blood. If a person ate an animal that died of itself or was killed, and the blood was not properly drained, he had to wash himself and his clothes as a covering for that sin (17:1-16).

5. Various laws dealing with ethical morality in Israel (18:1-20:27). Sexual morality is introduced as God's law in contrast to the doings of Egypt from which they came (18:1-5). Sexual intercourse was forbidden between relatives, father, mother, father's wife, sister, daughter-in-law, aunt, uncle, sister-in-law, step-parents and children. Sexual relations were forbidden during menstruation. Adultery, human sacrifices, homosexuality, bestiality or any evil practice by the heathen nations around them, were forbidden. The impenitent was to be cast out from among the people (18:1-30). Then follows a repetition of many laws previously mentioned, prefixed by the command to be holy. These have to do with sabbaths, idolatry, proper

sacrificing, harvesting of fields, stealing, swearing, robbery, respect of persons, gossiping, holding a grudge, breeding of cattle, fornication with a bond woman, planting and harvest of trees, eating anything with blood, defacing of the body, giving daughters to prostitution, familiar spirits, the honor of the aged and strangers, and cheating with measures (19:1-37). Still more precise detail is given on some of the above prohibitions. Human sacrifices to Molech are strongly forbidden. One turning to familiar spirits will be cut off. Cursing father or mother will result in death. Adultery likewise will result in death for both the man and the woman. Death for homosexuality, bestiality, and adultery with family relatives will result in being cut off and remaining childless; the whole point being that God wants His people to be different from the nations about them. Holiness unto the Lord requires sanctification in all of life (20:1-27).

6. Specific duties of the priests: how they are to express their holiness unto the Lord (21:1-22:33). The priests are not to defile themselves by touching the dead, but a priest may touch a relative such as mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister. He must not cut off his hair to be bald nor trim his

beard or cut his flesh. Keeping the body manifests holiness (21:1-6). The priest may take a wife only she may not be a whore or a woman put away from her husband. If the daughter of a priest plays the whore she shall be burnt with fire. The high priest must observe various rules, including taking a virgin to wife, not a widow, divorced, or profane woman. (21:7-15). Priests that have physical blemishes are forbidden to offer sacrifice in the temple. These included things as blind, lame, flat nose, broken foot or hand, dwarf, crooked back, blemish in the eye, and diseases of various sorts. These all had to stay out of the temple (21:16-24). If any of the priests had some uncleanness, such as leprosy, or if they touched something unclean, they were not to practice the priesthood. Positively, they had to live lives of godly example before the people (22:1-16). Added to this is the command of God that the offerings of cattle, sheep, and goats are to be without blemish, as perfect specimens as possible. Offerings of animals were not to be taken from the mother for sacrifices before the 8th day. Thank offerings were to be eaten the same day (22:17-33).

Annual Report of the Secretary

Reformed Free Publishing Association

September 18, 1986

At the close of volume-year 62, the Board reports on its activities in the past year. We thank God for His faithfulness to us in continuing to allow the R.F.P.A. freely to publish the *Standard Bearer*.

During the past year the Publication and Book Committee investigated new machinery to address the magazines. At our February meeting, the committee recommended that we purchase an Addressograph Electronic Addresser with a Direct Impression Printer. The Board approved this recommendation. The electronic addresser is a small computer which stores all our addresses on 5 1/4 floppy discs. The addresses can be sorted by zip code and many other ways, one of which is by the month in which a subscription is due. We plan also to address our subscription notices with the machinery. Our old equipment is very out of date, but was kept working by Mr. Vander Wal. He coaxed many mailings out of the old machinery.

As you have probably read, Mr. Vander Wal has resigned. We thank him again for his labors on our behalf. He has been helped in this past year by Mr. John Veldman and Mr. Peter Koole. These men assisted in the mailing of the *Standard Bearer*. The Board expresses its appreciation to them for their assistance.

Another noteworthy item is the progress on the index. The committee publishing the index reports that it is being printed and should be ready for distribution soon. The Board would like to thank all those responsible for this monumental task. The index will certainly be a useful tool for many.

We also note with appreciation the labors of our editor, the writing staff and guest writers. Without their work, we wouldn't have a magazine.

The retiring Board members are Tom Bodbyl, Charles Kalsbeek, and Robert Pastoor. On behalf of

the Association, the Board thanks them for their labors in the past three years.

At our last meeting in August the Board agreed to help in planning a storage building with the Permanent Book Committee.

The Board asks that you as members, readers,

and as churches continue to remember the cause of the *Standard Bearer* and continue your support of it in the years ahead. May we never take this privilege for granted.

Yours in Christ,
Jim Van Overloop, Sec'y.

Book Review

CONTENDING IDEOLOGIES IN SOUTH AFRICA, edited by James Leatt, Theo Knefel and Klaus Nurnberger; Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1986; 318 pp., \$10.95 (paper). (Reviewed by Prof. H. Hanko.)

This book is an effort to explain the deep racial conflicts in South Africa from the viewpoint of the many ideologies which have jostled for supremacy

in this troubled country since the beginning of its history. The book discusses Capitalism, Liberalism, Africaner nationalism, African nationalism, Black consciousness, Socialism, Marxism, Communism, and Social democracy. The book makes an effort, for the most part successful, to remain objective. While it is rather heavy going, it will help immensely to understand the present conflicts there.

From The Contact Committee

The Contact Committee of our Protestant Reformed Churches in America, in behalf of our Synod, brings to your attention the financial need of the Protestant Reformed Church of Wellington, New Zealand.

The readership of this publication is undoubtedly aware that a very small, struggling, and independent church at Wellington, New Zealand has asked for and has been granted sister church relationship with us.

This Protestant Reformed Church of six families requested \$13,450.00 in aid per year for five years. Presently and for the past decade or more these saints have been without a shepherd of their own and have had to make do with sermon tapes for their spiritual food and guidance. The aid requested would enable them to support their own under-shepherd, whom they would call from one of our churches.

Synod judged the request of these brethren justified. But Synod did not consider it proper to add this amount to our synodical assessment which are

shared equally by all our families. Many of our people bear extremely heavy financial responsibilities to our churches and our Christian schools. Our Synod was very sensitive to this reality of life.

However, our people have always shown themselves willing and generous when called upon to give for various kingdom causes. Therefore, we ask those who can to give from the heart for the support of the ministry of the Word in the Protestant Reformed Church of Wellington, N.Z.

In addition, we invite those faithful readers of this publication who are not members of our churches to help us in this labor of love.

Send your gifts to Mr. Richard Teitsma, our synodical treasurer. Please be careful to designate for which fund (the New Zealand Fund) your gift is sent. Mr. Teitsma's address is 4830 Green Moor Ct., Hudsonville, MI 49426.

In the love of Christ Jesus,
Rev. M. Kamp
(for the Committee of Contact)

News From Our Churches

Ben Wigger

October 15, 1986

On October 3 and 4 the young people in the west Michigan area held a Fall Retreat at Crystal Springs Camp in Dowagiac, Michigan. The theme for this year's Retreat was "Fighting the Good Fight of Faith." Besides discussions centered around this worthwhile theme, there were other activities, including organized games, an outdoor pool, and canoeing.

By now Rev. Bruinsma and his family have been back in Jamaica for almost a month. Rev. and Mrs. Bruinsma, along with their family, spent an enjoyable and perhaps very busy furlough of 5 weeks back home in the U.S. They arrived in Grand Rapids, Michigan, the evening of August 11, and while here spent much time with family and friends. Rev. Bruinsma also had time to preach on several Lord's Days in Faith Church in Jenison, First Church in Grand Rapids, and South Holland in Illinois. He was also able to acquaint some of us with a detailed account of his labors in Jamaica by means of a short speech and slide presentation on the churches that he has contact with in Jamaica. All of us would do well to remember Rev. Bruinsma and his family, as well as all our missionaries, daily in our prayers. We can only begin to imagine the difficult labors that these men of God face. And a letter or just a note to each of them once in a while would mean so much.

A lot has happened to candidates Steve Key and Russ Dykstra since graduation from our Seminary in June. Both were extended calls and both accepted those calls. They were examined by Classis East and West in the first weeks of September. And both were installed shortly thereafter: Rev. Key in Southeast in Grand Rapids on September 18, and Rev. Dykstra in Doon, Iowa, on September 12. We thank the Lord that He has provided a place for them in His church.

While these two men are beginning their labors as ministers in our churches, another has reached the end of his. We speak of Rev. George Lanting

who was granted his emeritation (or retirement) at the Classis West meeting in September. Rev. Lanting was ordained October, 1953, and served as pastor in five different congregations during his 33 years in the ministry which ended in our church in Pella, Iowa. We extend to him our thanks for all the years he has given our churches, and pray that God will bless him in the future.

The Lecture Committee in the Grand Rapids area has scheduled the annual Fall Lecture for October 30, a Thursday night, at 8:00 p.m. at the First Zeeland Christian Reformed Church with Rev. Kamps as speaker.

From Byron Center we learn that the congregation projects that it will be self-supporting by 1987. In light of that, no Synodical aid was applied for. Byron Center is also moving ahead with their building plans. Their consistory has been informed by the Future Building Committee of progress being made. The committee is waiting for working plans from the architect which will be used for estimating costs.

From Grandville Church Publication Committee we find that the publication of Rev. Harbach's commentary on Genesis is nearly a reality. The book is expected some time in October, and will go on the market at a price of \$21.95, quite a deal for a 900 page cloth bound commentary. To order, send a check payable to the Grandville Church Publishing Committee for the amount of \$23.45 (includes the \$1.50 postage and handling) to: Mr. Dennis Dykstra, 3228 Chestnut, Grandville, Michigan 49418.

And from Lynden, Washington, we find that they introduce the theme for the year's family visitation by means of a sermon dealing with that theme. This year's theme is "Walking in the Truth" based on III John 3:1-4. It seems that this could only lead to a very profitable spirit, and that the visits would be used of God for the strengthening of the faith.

Rev. Van Baren and Prof. Hanko, along with their wives, will be leaving toward the end of this month for a visit to the Evangelical Reformed

Church of Singapore. They will be there the Sundays of Oct. 26 and Nov. 2. As you might expect, they will be kept very busy with all sorts of church-related activities, including preaching. While they are there, they will also take part in the ordination service for Jaikishin Mahtani.

Hope Church in Grand Rapids had a farewell program for Rev. Flikkema and his family on the night of Sept. 26. Rev. Flikkema and his family planned to leave for Covenant Church in New Jersey on October 1.

Hope has formed a trio consisting of the Reverends den Hartog, Slopsema, and Van Overloop.

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Consistory of the Doon, Iowa, Protestant Reformed Church hereby expresses its heartfelt sympathy to our brother Consistory member, Deacon Marvin Mantel in the loss of his mother, MRS. JOHN MANTEL, SR.

May our God abundantly comfort the brother by His Word and Spirit and strengthen him in the hope of the saints.

The Consistory,
Rev. R. Dykstra, Pres.
Edw. Van Egdom, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Sr. Mr. and Mrs. Society of Hope Church, Walker, expresses its Christian sympathy to Carole Reitsma and her children, David, Jonathan and Philip in the death of their dear husband and father, DALE REITSMA and to members James and Barbara Huizinga in the loss of her brother.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints."
(Psalm 116:15)

President: Rev. H. Hanko
Secretary: Helen Hop

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On October 17, 1986, the Lord willing, our parents and grandparents, MR. AND MRS. JOHN E. BODBYL will celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary. We rejoice with them and thank our God for their patient covenantal instruction and constant love. Our prayer is that God will continue to bless them and keep them in His care.

George and Marylynn Postmus	Thomas and Gretine Bodbyl
John, Nathan and Cathy	Maria, Lorissa and Joel
George and Jayne Bodbyl	Daniel and Anna Mae Bodbyl
George, Marcella, Monica and Emily	Amananda and Tina
John and Jane Bodbyl	John and Joan Mulder
Jennifer, John, Jason,	Elizabeth
Jeremy, James and Julia	

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On October 26, 1986, our parents, MR. AND MRS. HARRY KAISER, will celebrate their 30th wedding anniversary. We give thanks to our Covenant God for the years He has given them together and for the Christian love and guidance they have given us. We pray that God will continue to bless and strengthen them in the years ahead.

"The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth and even for evermore." (Psalm 121:8)

Bern and Linda Zandstra	Doug Kaiser
Benjamin, MeriBeth	Tim Kaiser
Dan and Julie Kaiser	

NOTICE!!!

Adams Street Christian School is in need of an administrator/teacher, beginning in September of 1987. Applicants may address letters of inquiry to the chairman of the Education Committee:

Mr. John Flikkema, Jr.
1444 Worcester N.E.
Grand Rapids, MI 49505

U.S. Postal Service STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION <i>Required by 39 U.S.C. 3685</i>		
1A. TITLE OF PUBLICATION THE STANDARD BEARER	1B. PUBLICATION NO. 5 1 7 8 8 0	2. DATE OF FILING 9/15/86
3. FREQUENCY OF ISSUE SEMI-MONTHLY (EXCEPT JUNE, JULY, AUG.)	3A. NO. OF ISSUES PUBLISHED ANNUALLY 21	3B. ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION PRICE \$10.50
4. COMPLETE MAILING ADDRESS OF KNOWN OFFICE OF PUBLICATION (Street, City, County, State and ZIP+4 Code) (Not printers) POST OFFICE BOX 6064, GRAND RAPIDS, KENT, MICHIGAN 49516		
5. COMPLETE MAILING ADDRESS OF THE HEADQUARTERS OF GENERAL BUSINESS OFFICES OF THE PUBLISHER (Not printer) 1047 ALTO AVE., S.E., GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN 49507		
6. FULL NAMES AND COMPLETE MAILING ADDRESS OF PUBLISHER, EDITOR, AND MANAGING EDITOR (This item MUST NOT be blank)		
PUBLISHER (Name and Complete Mailing Address) REFORMED FREE PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION, P.O. BOX 6064, GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49516		
EDITOR (Name and Complete Mailing Address) PROF. H.C. HOEKSEMA, 4975 IVANREST S.W., GRANDVILLE, MICHIGAN 49418		
MANAGING EDITOR (Name and Complete Mailing Address) H. VANDER WAL, 1047 ALTO AVE., S.E., GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN 49507		
7. OWNER (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, its name and address, as well as that of each individual must be given. If the publication is published by a nonprofit organization, its name and address must be stated.) (Item must be completed.)		
FULL NAME REFORMED FREE PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION		
COMPLETE MAILING ADDRESS BOX 6064, GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49516		
8. KNOWN BONDHOLDERS, MORTGAGEES, AND OTHER SECURITY HOLDERS OWNING OR HOLDING 1 PERCENT OR MORE OF TOTAL AMOUNT OF BONDS, MORTGAGES OR OTHER SECURITIES (If there are none, so state)		
FULL NAME NONE		
COMPLETE MAILING ADDRESS		
9. FOR COMPLETION BY NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS AUTHORIZED TO MAIL AT SPECIAL RATES (Section 423.12 DMM only) The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for Federal income tax purposes (Check one)		
(1) HAS NOT CHANGED DURING PRECEDING 12 MONTHS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (2) HAS CHANGED DURING PRECEDING 12 MONTHS <input type="checkbox"/> (If changed, publisher must submit explanation of change with this statement.)		
10. EXTENT AND NATURE OF CIRCULATION (See instructions on reverse side)	AVERAGE NO. COPIES EACH ISSUE DURING PRECEDING 12 MONTHS	ACTUAL NO. COPIES OF SINGLE ISSUE PUBLISHED NEAREST TO FILING DATE
A. TOTAL NO. COPIES (Net Press Run)	1,950	1,950
B. PAID AND/OR REQUESTED CIRCULATION 1. Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales	0	0
2. Mail Subscription (Paid and/or requested)	1,774	1,774
C. TOTAL PAID AND/OR REQUESTED CIRCULATION (Sum of 10B1 and 10B2)	1,774	1,774
D. FREE DISTRIBUTION BY MAIL, CARRIER OR OTHER MEANS SAMPLES, COMPLIMENTARY, AND OTHER FREE COPIES	36	36
E. TOTAL DISTRIBUTION (Sum of C and D)	1,810	1,810
F. COPIES NOT DISTRIBUTED 1. Office use, left over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing	140	140
2. Return from News Agents	0	0
G. TOTAL (Sum of E, F1 and 2 - should equal net press run shown in A)	1,950	1,950
11. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete		
SIGNATURE AND TITLE OF PUBLISHER, BUSINESS MANAGER, OR OWNER <i>H. Vander Wal</i>		