

# THE STANDARD BEARER

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A Reformed  
Semi-Monthly  
Magazine

*O, Lord, our God!*

*Unto Thee would we give thanks!*

*And we would bring unto Thee, at the close of another season, in which Thou didst spread the beauty of Thy goodness over all Thy Works, a sacrifice of thanksgiving that is pleasing in Thy sight!*

*For Thou, Lord, didst lavish Thy goodness upon us, and the benefits Thou didst bestow upon us are without number. And we would remember before Thee this day all the abundance of Thy grace and the inestimable riches of Thy lovingkindness.*

*See: Meditation, p. 74*

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## Meditation

Rev. Herman Hoeksema

## Thanksgiving Offering

*The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.*

—Ps. 51:17

*This meditation is from the pen of the late Rev. Herman Hoeksema, and is a reprint from Volume 4.*

O, Lord, our God!  
Unto Thee would we give thanks!

And we would bring unto Thee, at the close of another season, in which Thou didst spread the beauty of Thy goodness over all Thy works, a sacrifice of thanksgiving that is pleasing in Thy sight!

For Thou, Lord, didst lavish Thy goodness upon us, and the benefits Thou didst bestow upon us are without number. And we would remember before Thee this day all the abundance of Thy grace and the inestimable riches of Thy lovingkindness!

As we look about us on this autumn-day and behold the trees of the woods, now shedding the last remnant of their foliage that recently clothed them in a rich

## 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.

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garment of beautifully variegated green; and cast a last glance at the fields, now barren, from which we might gather into our barns a golden harvest of barley and oats, of corn and wheat; and consider the now stripped branches of the fruit tree and the vine, a while ago offering us their rich and luscious products; then, O Lord, shame covereth our faces, because of the doubts and fears, the moments of distrust and the times of murmuring and rebellion against Thee, that so frequently caused us to sin against Thy grace in the season that is now past.

How often did we, anxiously and full of worry and care, lift up our eyes, when day after day the sun rose with golden brightness and the firmament spread itself over us in clearest blue, and fearfully scan the horizon, to watch for a promise of rain! How often did we criticise Thy work, O Lord, and complain that there would be no pasture for our cattle, no fruit on the vine, no crops in the field, when abundant showers did not come at our bidding and in our time! And when the clouds did gather and the rain did descend, refreshing the thirsty creature, how we grumbled that it was too late! And how soon, when the clouds did not scatter and were not dispersed according to our schedule, did we complain that whatever might still have been saved of the harvest now would drown and rot! How distrustful we were, O God, of Thy faithfulness and lovingkindness; how ungrateful we were in the midst of abundance; how small and faithless we revealed ourselves when clouds of trouble lowered!

And now, O Lord . . .

Now, as we have reached the close of this season and count the blessings Thou didst bestow upon us in Thy grace . . .

As we consider our benefits and remember Thy works, how

Thou didst do all things well, giving rain and sunshine, cold and heat, causing the seed to sprout and the trees to bring forth their fruit, making the season abundantly fruitful and filling our barns with Thy good things; how Thou didst amply provide for man and beast, giving food to the hungry, refreshment to the weary, labor for the strong, abundance for all, bread and wine and oil; how Thou didst help in time of trouble, wert our shield against the enemy, our comfort in sorrow, our strength in affliction; how Thou didst reveal Thy Name unto us, always near to help and lead us, and how Thou didst cause all things to work together for our good . . .

Lord, our God! then we must cover our faces with shame. Then, on this thanksgiving day, as we remember our own smallness and weakness and frequent murmurings and distrust, we dare not lift up our eyes to heaven!

Yet, Lord, we would praise Thee for Thy goodness.

And bring Thee thanks for Thy mercy.

A sacrifice of gratitude!

Lord, our God!

\* \* \* \* \*

But, O Lord, how shall we?

How can we express our gratitude to Thee in a manner that may meet with Thy approval?

How shall we appear before Thee in the holiest? What sacrifice, what gift of thanks shall we bring that is acceptable in Thy sight?

Shall we, on this day of thanksgiving prepare our feasts and rejoice, filling ourselves with the good things Thou didst bestow upon us in such rich abundance? And feasting shall we commemorate before Thee how great were our efforts and how hard

we have labored and toiled; how well we deserved Thy bounties and how wisely we dealt with them? Shall we bring into remembrance before Thy face our good works, our marvelous achievements and mighty accomplishments, our charity and brotherly love, in order to prove how worthy we were, in distinction from many around us, of the abundance of Thy grace?

God forbid!

How foolish would be the attempt, for we have corrupted our way before Thee!

How abominable we would become in Thy sight, before Whom no flesh may or ever can glory!

Shall we, then, attempt to remunerate Thee? Shall we bring unto Thee our bulls and goats as a sacrifice of thanksgiving? Shall we take with us to Thy house our money and our possessions and lay them at Thy feet as a reward and recompense for all Thy goodness toward us? Or shall we pledge ourselves, our talents and power, our time and our service, to requite Thee for all the wonders of Thy lovingkindness?

But, O Lord, how shall we bring what is not Thine?

How shall we take into Thy sanctuary a sacrifice of thanks which Thou didst not first bestow upon us?

Is not all the world Thine? Are not the cattle on a thousand hills Thy possessions? Is not all the gold and the silver Thine own? Where shall I search among my possessions for something with which I could increase Thy riches? Nay more. Even I am Thine. My body and my soul belong to Thee, for Thou art the Lord my God. And Thou rightfully requirest of me that I shall love Thee with all my heart and mind and soul and strength. Thou wilt that I shall serve Thee with all that I am and possess.



And if I should most perfectly comply with all Thy holy precepts and keep them to the very last, I would still have nothing wherewith to recompense Thy love and goodness and all the bounties Thou lavishest upon me. I would still be an unprofitable servant and would have accomplished merely that which was required of me! How then could we render unto Thee anything in reward for all Thy benefits toward us?

Lord, our God, how contemptible in Thy sight must be the pretensions of the creature who would remunerate Thee with Thine own! How displeasing in Thy sight must be the man who would offer unto Thee gifts of gold and silver received out of Thine own store!

No, Lord God, Thou art God and Thou alone! All sufficient art Thou in Thyself and no creature can bring ought to Thee to increase Thy great riches!

Thou art the sole Fountain of all good. An outward gift we cannot bring to reward Thy kindness.

Lord, we would bring unto Thee a gift of thanks . . .

But how shall we?

\* \* \* \* \*

What shall we render unto the Lord?

How shall we appear before Thee so, that Thou wilt not despise us and cast us off?

What is the sacrifice of thanksgiving that is pleasing in Thy sight and upon which Thou wilt look down in love and good pleasure?

A broken spirit!

A broken and a contrite heart!

It alone can please Thee, Who hast no respect to that which is merely external, Who despisest the foolishness of insignificant and sinful men, as they exalt themselves and would requite

Thee for Thy goodness and grace, Who desirest truth in the inward parts.

A broken spirit! A spirit, cured of the stiffnecked pride and haughtiness of sin! A contrite heart! A heart that is crushed and overwhelmed in deep humiliation, because of a deep sense of God's greatness and power, of His righteousness and holiness, and of our own insignificance and smallness, our corruption and our guilt.

A heart filled with the sorrow after God!

It alone is the sacrifice, O Lord, that is pleasing to Thee!

We will, then, approach Thee, bringing this sacrifice of thanks!

We will acknowledge that Thou only art God and the Fount of all good. We will not rejoice in things, but in Thee alone. We will make mention of Thy Name as we consider our filled barns and our bounteous blessings. We will count them before Thee, one by one, not forgetting any of all Thy benefits. And as we count them we will mention the glory of Thy Name, we will sing of the marvel of Thy grace and of the wonder of Thy mercy toward us. We will speak of all Thy virtues to Thee. We will mention all Thy wonders before one another. We will speak of Thy glories and of all Thy wondrous works in the midst of the world.

Lord, our God, we will do so, in humility and contrition of heart and mind.

For we will acknowledge before Thee how helpless we are without Thee, and that only when Thou dost provide for us we can live. It is Thou and Thou alone, we will confess, that didst send the rain and the sunshine, that didst cause the grass to grow and the seed to sprout; it is Thou that feedest us out of Thine hand, that providest bread and water, oil and wine; that carest for us, Thy people, in covenant-grace,

that leadest us in ways of joy and sorrow, of prosperity or adversity; it is Thou that doest all things well. We will confess, O Lord our God, that it was not our power or ingenuity, our labor or toil, our wisdom or efforts that brought even the least of all these things to us. For even these, our talents and power, our labor and efforts, our wisdom and insight, were Thine, Thy gifts to us.

Like all Thy helpless creatures, we all wait upon Thee!

And, therefore, we will not boast in Thy presence!

Nay more.

We will humble ourselves before Thee, O Lord our God, on this day of thanksgiving and confess in dust and ashes our own sin and transgressions, and that we had forfeited a thousand times all Thy goodness toward us. For we are guilty in Thy sight. In sin we are conceived and in iniquity we are shaped, and also in the season, now past, in which Thou didst display the wonders of Thy grace toward us, we only could increase our guilt daily. Our transgressions witness against us. Evil we are and evil we did. And, O God, if Thou shouldest mark transgressions and bring into remembrance our sins, how could we stand before Thee?

Thus, Lord, we will come to Thee, with nothing of self and all of Thee, pleading and boasting on nothing we might be or do for Thee, but only in what Thou hast done for us, clinging, even as we come to Thee to give Thee thanks and praise, to the accursed tree of our Lord Jesus Christ, lest we should be cast out from Thy presence.

Thus, Lord, we would come.

For we would bring unto Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving.

And praise Thy holy Name!

\* \* \* \* \*



But, O Lord, how shall we?  
How shall we be able even to  
bring to Thee this sacrifice of a  
broken spirit, of a broken and a  
contrite heart?

We are by nature proud,  
rebellious, haughty.

And even while we were  
speaking unto Thee words of  
contrition and humility, words of  
sorrow after Thee, we felt how  
hard and stiffnecked we are by  
nature, how totally incapable of  
humbling ourselves before Thy  
countenance.

Sinful we are and in darkness.  
Inclined to maintain ourselves  
over against Thee, to seek self  
and our own glory, to forget  
Thee and trample the glory of  
Thy Name in the dust. Even  
while our mouth would speak  
words of contrition and humility,  
our heart would exalt itself  
against Thee. For so deceitful

and wicked we are. And we  
know that Thou demandest truth  
in the inward parts. Even as the  
outward sacrifices of bulls and  
goats, or of our vows and gifts  
could not please Thee and be ac-  
ceptable in Thy sight, so Thou  
hatest the mere word of our lips  
if our hearts do not humbly seek  
Thee.

And, therefore, O Lord God,  
even here we are helpless.

We have no humble heart to  
offer unto Thee!

We cannot appear in broken-  
ness of spirit before Thy face!

Unless even this contrite spirit  
and heart Thou wilt first bestow  
upon us by Thy Almighty grace!

And, therefore, Lord, God, we  
pray Thee: humble all our pride!  
Renew us by the Spirit of our  
Lord Jesus Christ! Create within  
us, even now, a broken heart,  
filled with sorrow after Thee.

Search our hearts and minds, and  
see whether there is any remnant  
of this evil haughtiness within us,  
and cleanse us from all our horri-  
ble corruption.

Then, Lord, we will come!

Then we will bring to Thee  
our contrite hearts, Thy gifts to  
us!

Then we will thank and praise  
Thy holy Name for all Thy  
wonders and the abundance of  
Thy lovingkindness.

And having brought our  
sacrifice we will thank Thee still.

Praise Thee that we might ex-  
press our gratitude!

Thank Thee for the offering of  
thanks we might bring!

And thine be the glory alone!

Forevermore! □ H.H.

## Editorial

## Editor's Notes As To Evolution At Dordt College (3)

*Apology.* Dykstra and Kuiper are both good Dutch names. In fact, my own middle name is the Anglicized form of Kuiper: Cooper. But one should not call a Kuiper Dykstra, nor should he call a Dykstra Kuiper. Yet the former is what I did in my article about Seminary Convocation (Oct. 15 issue). We have no pre-sem student by the name of Doug Dykstra; his name is Doug Kuiper. The explanation? Due to some inexplicable mental quirk I think of him as Doug Dykstra. Sorry, Doug!

\* \* \* \* \*

*Eleven Point.* I hope our readers — especially those with older eyes — will enjoy this issue more than the three previous issues. We had switched to 10-point type when we changed the format of our magazine. However, apparently this made for more difficult reading for a good many of our readers. Beginning with this issue we have returned to 11-point type. Pleasant reading! We *do* like to keep our readers. □

HCH



### As To Evolution At Dordt College (3)

The reader should bear in mind that when I refer to "Evolution At Dordt College," I am referring to the teachings of one of Dordt's professors, Prof. Richard Hodgson. Secondly, I am referring primarily, though not exclusively, to Prof. Hodgson's teachings in a debate with Dr. Duane Gish on "Creation vs. Evolution." In the third place, the reader should keep in mind that Dordt College claims to hold to the truth of creation. However, after preliminary investigation Dordt has allowed Prof. Hodgson to continue to teach, although the Dordt Trustees "have decided to appoint a committee to study and evaluate further Professor Hodgson's position regarding creation and evolution."

Reference has already been made to the fact that the *form* of the issue in this matter is not outright that of creation versus evolution, but rather one of attempted compromise between creation and evolutionism. Dr. Hodgson takes the position of "an old earth creationist" or "progressive creationist" in his opening speech in the debate, in his correspondence with me, and in his presentation to the Dordt Board of Trustees (a copy of which was sent to me by a correspondent). As I stated earlier, because of this, the issue becomes complicated: 1) It is partly whether this "progressive creationist" position is compatible with the Reformed and Scriptural doctrine of creation. 2) It is partly whether this "progressive creationist" position is a shield, a shelter, for some form of evolutionist teachings — in other words, for an attempted compromise between creation and evolution.

With these matters in mind, let us look, first of all, at Prof. Hodgson's presentation in his opening speech at the Hillsdale debate.

In his introductory remarks in his opening speech, Prof. Hodgson seems to belittle the significance of holding to evolution. Among other things he stated: "I realize that many of you, perhaps most of you, here tonight are confessing Christians, and you are disturbed about the possible implications of evolution for the Christian faith. I don't know all you may have been told about evolution. But I do know that there are many who believe that if you hold to evolution, there may be a rather clear cut road to you in terms of spiritual decline. And I don't think that that is necessarily true, but I think we need to talk about it."

Further, he outlined different points of view. "Debates," he said, "by their very nature tend to be two-sided affairs. In the topic which is before us it is easy to over-simplify the reality into a literalistic Christian creationism, on the one hand and a sort of secular humanist evolution on the other hand. This is a serious mistake. There are, in fact, not just two points of view here; but perhaps there may be as many as four. I would like to outline them very briefly for you." Notice already here the prejudicial language with respect to creation-faith.

Prof. Hodgson then mentions first "what we might call a young-earth creationism, represented here by Dr. Gish. It really is the view that the earth is only a few thousand years old, and it is based upon a particular line of interpretation of the Bible." Notice here: 1) That Prof. Hodgson does not really so much as touch on the fundamentals of this view. The essence of the view is not that the earth is only a few thousand years old. It is

rather that God created heaven and earth and all that they contain by the Word of His power in six days, limited by morning and evening. 2) This is not based on "a particular line of interpretation of the Bible," but on the plain and direct teaching of Scripture itself.

The second group which Prof. Hodgson mentions is the progressive creationists. He states in his opening address that "The progressive creation school holds that the earth and the universe is very old, and that the days mentioned in Genesis 1 are of long duration. Many progressive creationists accept the broadly based scientific evidence that the earth is about 4.6 billion years old. They believe the basic kinds of life on earth appeared because they were created by the sovereign God, Who created and upholds the universe, and not because of some naturalistic accidental mechanism. Most accept the reality of some micro-evolution. Most progressive creationists are devout Christians who believe that the Bible is divinely inspired. I say this because I think it is important for us to realize that *the* "Christian position" in this debate should not automatically be interpreted to require a belief in a young earth." In this connection he makes mention of Charles Hodge and Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, of old Princeton Theological Seminary, as examples of progressive creationists, who believed strongly that the earth was old. He also mentions that Charles Hodge was "open to the possibility of a certain amount of evolution being a reality." This is true: Hodge made large concessions to evolutionism. Warfield believed that the earth could be millions of years old and that the days of Genesis 1 were indefinite, long periods of time. The West-



minster scholar, Edward J. Young, is also cited as such a progressive creationist. In his statement to the Dordt Board of Trustees, as well as in correspondence with me, Dr. Hodgson takes the progressive creationist position. I think it rather significant, however, that in describing his position to the Board, Dr. Hodgson makes no mention of evolution in connection with progressive creationism. He states: "On the basis of careful Biblical study over many years, aided by the writings of leading Reformed theologians Charles Hodge, B.B. Warfield, and William G.T. Shedd, and by some of the writings of my former teacher, Old Testament scholar Edward J. Young, I have concluded that the Bible does not teach that the Heavens and Earth are only a few thousand years old. Indeed I believe some Biblical passages suggest an extremely old cosmos. One can believe the Earth is several billion years old (as an abundance of evidence from astronomy and geology strongly indicates) while remaining a staunch believer and defender of the Biblical account of creation. The aforementioned scholars are evidence of that." Would Charles Hodge's concessions to evolutionism be covered by "remaining a staunch believer and defender of the Biblical account of creation"?

To this position of Prof. Hodgson we shall return later.

The third point of view to which Prof. Hodgson calls attention is that of "theistic evolutionism." About this he states: "This point of view is held by some religious people who basically accept the scientific evidence for evolution of life on earth over, perhaps 3 or 3 1/2 billion years' time, but who believe that although from a human perspective the process might seem naturalistic, a divine

mind has been behind the scene, guiding to some extent what was going on, governing the unfolding of life upon the earth throughout this long history. They feel for various reasons — some may say good, some may say weak reasons — that the Bible does not authoritatively speak against such an interpretation. Some theistic evolutionists must be regarded as convinced, confessing Christians . . . A weakness of theistic evolution may be that they do not do justice to some of the Biblical creation passages that we find."

We should bear in mind — and Prof. Hodgson does not bring this out — that there is little fundamental difference between "progressive creationism" and "theistic evolutionism." The main difference is that the former term may sound more palatable. Both views agree in denying the literal account of the days of Genesis 1 and make these days millions and billions of years. Both views agree in making concessions of varying degrees to evolutionism. Both views agree in compromising (not with science) but with unbelieving, evolutionistic science.

The fourth view which Prof. Hodgson describes is that of "humanist evolution." About this he says: 1) That this point of view accepts the overwhelming scientific evidence for an old earth and for increasing biological diversity over time which the theory of evolution teaches. 2) Its proponents argue that the origins of life were the result of accidental combination of the right chemical elements. 3) That it teaches that all life forms probably had a single ancestor which was the result of accidental genetic variation over a span of about 3.5 billion years. 4) That they need not invoke some deity

in order to explain the process. 5) That in most cases these scientists are probably not confessing Christians in the meaningful sense of the term.

Now in the debate Prof. Hodgson states that he intends to represent "as accurately as I can the three points of view which Dr. Gish does not represent," i.e., progressive creationism, theistic evolutionism, and humanistic evolutionism. And he states that "These three points of view, while they have some significant differences, nevertheless are agreed upon the point that the earth and the cosmos are very old — billions of years old, in fact — and that micro-evolution is an observable reality in the world and has probably been operative throughout the earth's history."

From all this it is already plain, first of all, that Prof. Hodgson certainly holds to some form of evolution, and that this is, according to him, implicit in his progressive creationism. To what degree he holds to evolution may be another question; about the fact there can be no doubt.

In the second place, Dordt's Board of Trustees is confronted by the question — even apart from evolutionism as such — whether so-called "progressive creationism" is in harmony with Dordt's own statement concerning creation. That statement is, in my opinion, surprisingly lacking in specifics when it comes to the

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doctrine of creation; and it is particularly lacking in negatives, or exclusions, in a day when various forms of evolutionism abound even in so-called Christian colleges.

In the third place, I must insist that "progressive creationism" even in its mildest form is plainly in conflict with Scripture. Mark you, not with *my* view of Scripture or *my* exegesis of Scripture, but with the testimony of Scrip-

ture itself in Genesis 1. Progressive creationism does not *explain* the days of Genesis 1; it *explains them away*!

Finally, I wonder how Prof. Hodgson squares his progressive creationism with the Westminster Confession and Catechisms, to which he subscribes as an Orthodox Presbyterian minister. Wherever they speak of creation they make a point of saying that it took place in *six days*. And no

matter how anyone may twist and turn exegetically, six days are not billions of years. There are 365 days in one year. How can one of those days (limited, mind you, by morning and evening) constitute a billion years? Don't cite Hodge or Warfield or Young. Give me Scripture! □

HCH

## Bible Study Guide

Jason L. Korterling

# Deuteronomy: Exhorted Unto Obedience (2)

We are in the process of outlining the first discourse of Moses recorded in the book of Deuteronomy (1:1-4:43). We continue our outlining in chapter 2:1. Moses has recalled Jehovah's faithfulness in dealing with them in their initial stay in the wilderness.

Moses describes how God cared for them in their departure from Kadesh Barnea and that they bypassed Mt. Seir, since that country was given to Esau for a possession. They could buy meat and water from them, but not engage in battle (2:1-7). They came to Moab. They, too, were not to be fought, since God gave this land to Lot and his children.

Among the Moabites were the Emims, giants like the Anakims. The length of time it took to get from Kadesh to the brook Zered was 38 years. During this time all the men of war were wasted out of the host (2:8-15). They now received orders from Jehovah to bypass the land of the Ammonites since this, too, was given to the children of Lot. The giants in this land were called Zamzumims but were destroyed by the children of Lot. As soon as they passed by this country, they received instructions to cross the River Arnon and proceed to take Sihon, King of the Amorites. This came about when Moses asked for permission to cross the land on the way to Jordan. When Sihon refused this, because the Lord hardened his heart, all the cities from Aroer unto Gilead were destroyed in battle, and all the people were killed (2:16-37). The same thing happened to Og,

King of Bashan. Israel took 36 cities in all and every inhabitant was killed. Mention is made of the size of Og's bed, nine cubits by four cubits. The land captured was given to Reuben, Manasseh, and Gad, (3:1-17). The men were instructed to go along with Israel to help in the conquest of the rest of the land while the women, children, and cattle stayed in this land. Moses prayed that he might enter into this land, but the Lord was wroth with him. He could see it only from afar. Joshua was assured of God's sustaining presence, (3:18-29). We then have the record of Moses' exhortation to the people to keep the law. They may not add nor subtract from the law. They saw the consequence of disobedience at Baalpeor, and that the faithful are still alive. The only reason

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for Israel's national distinction is the law which Jehovah gave them. By keeping it, they will incur the blessing of God. He reminds them of the events at Mt. Horeb when the voice of the Lord spoke this law unto them. At that time, he (Moses) took great pains to teach them that law. Special mention is made that God gave to them no visible display of his presence, and they are not to make any graven images. They must teach this to their children, for the Lord shall scatter them among the nations if they ever serve gods made by men's hands. Rather, they have the privilege to turn to the living God for all their needs. They may ask Him for anything they need, and He will hear them. By doing this they will prolong their days under His blessing, (4:1-40). Moses also reminds them of the cities of refuge (4:41-43).

3. Moses' second discourse (4:43-26:19). The general content of this discourse differs from the first in that the first was mainly a review of the historical events which brought them to the land of Canaan. This speech reviews the laws which God gave to them. An introductory statement is given, that these are the laws which Moses rehearsed before Israel when they occupied the land of the two kings of the Amorites (4:44-49). Jehovah spoke the ten commandments while Moses stood between God and His people, and the ten commandments are rehearsed (5:1-21). Upon hearing the voice of the Lord, the people were afraid and asked Moses to go into the mountain and take God's words down and speak them to the people. He reminds the people that God granted this request and he went into God's presence to receive them. These laws they are to obey and teach their children. They are exhorted to

walk in them all their days (5:22-33). The keeping of the law involves the fear of Jehovah, love of the Lord with all one's heart, soul, and mind, (6:1-5). Moses reminded them to teach them to their children when they talk with them, sit in the house, walk by the way, and lie down. They are to bind them for a sign on their hand, as frontlets before their eyes, and write them on the door posts of the house. When they finally receive the fulness of the promise, he warns them to beware that they forget not the Lord and follow after the gods of the land. They should be prepared to answer the questions their children will raise concerning their God: how He delivered them from Egypt and brought them to this land. This instruction should include the law which was to be their righteousness (6:6-25). When they come to the land of Canaan, they were to destroy all the idols and the people that worshiped them, they were not to intermarry with them, for the holiness of Jehovah was incompatible with them. The Lord did not choose Israel because they were more in number — they were the fewest, but He loved them. God is merciful and righteous, and they are to keep His commandments (7:1-11). God will bestow upon them blessings in the way of obedience, they will have children, health, victory over the enemies, the Lord will destroy all their enemies bit by bit if they remain faithful in their worship of Him (7:12-26). Israel is commanded to look back and remember how the Lord cared for them during the forty years in the wilderness. He realized His promise to them with the land of riches (8:1-10). They are further warned not to forget the Lord, lest He bring upon them all the terrible things that He brought upon their enemies: "if thou do at all forget the Lord thy God . . .

I testify against you this day, ye shall surely perish" (8:11-20). As they are about to enter the land, and God will destroy the inhabitants, Israel must not think God does it because Israel is worthy, but the wickedness of the inhabitants deserves such judgment (9:1-6). He recalls for them how Israel of old rebelled at Horeb when they made the golden calf, how he had to intercede for the people. He also mentions other places where they provoked God to wrath. Israel was a stiffnecked people, saved by grace (9:7-29). In mercy God provided two new tables of stone and engraved His law upon them (10:1-5), he continued the priesthood in Eleazer, renewed the Levite's role in bearing the ark, (10:6-11). God requires of Israel to fear the Lord, walk in his ways, love and serve him, keep His commandments, circumcise the foreskin of their hearts (10:12-22). Repeated over and over is the duty of Israel to love God, to demonstrate this by keeping his commandments, for their eyes have seen all the great acts of the Lord. This will bring them to the land which is cared for by the Lord, and He will give it to them. It will rain when it should, and grass will grow for their cattle. If they forsake God, the land will be barren and fruit shall fail (11:1-21). Now the contrast is set before Israel. The blessings of God are represented upon Mt. Gerizim, the curse upon Mt. Ebal (11:22-32). When they arrive at the promised land, they are to destroy all the places where idolatry was practiced and God would give them a central place in Canaan where they could worship Jehovah with their offerings (12:1-14). In their practice of sacrifice, they were not to eat blood, nor eat the sacrifice within their own gate, but before



the Lord in a designated place. They may eat flesh in their own private meals in their own tents, only then too, they are not to eat the blood. They are not to imitate the heathen nations in anything (12:15-32). Warning is given concerning the false prophet that may arise among them to lead them into idolatry, and they are to put him to death (13:1-5). Also if a relative within the family practices idolatry, he must be killed with stones (13:6-11); or if an entire city goes after strange gods, they must be destroyed with the sword and all their possessions burnt with fire (13:12-18). The people were warned not to mutilate themselves in their sacrifice as the heathen did (14:1, 2). They were not to eat unclean animals, fish, or birds. The unclean ones were listed and instruction was given to come to the temple to eat the feasts, but if the distance is too far, they could take money and buy food there. The priests likewise are to be cared for and the tithes brought each third year to the Levites and poor (14:3-29).

Reference is made to the Sabbath year, the poor must not be neglected, "the poor shall never cease out of the land, therefore I command thee saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy in thy land" (15:1-11). Each seventh year the slaves were to be released, and were to be sent out loaded with food. If they chose to remain slaves, they had to have the aul put through their ear and that would mean they would be their voluntary servants forever (15:12-18). The firstling of each flock was to be eaten before the sanctuary. It was to be without blemish (15:19-23). A review is given of the annual feasts, the Passover (16:1-8), Feast of Weeks (16:9-12), Feast of Tabernacles (16:13-17), and a summary statement is given that three times a year all the males are to appear before the Lord in feasting to give as they are able (16:16, 17). The judges and officers which were appointed for justice were forbidden to take bribes, all idolaters must be stoned with stones, all controversy between people must be judged by the

priests and Levites (16:18-17:13). Mention is made of Israel's future desire for a king, and specific instruction is given to this king and how he is to rule (17:14-20). Since the priests and Levites have no inheritance, the people were instructed to bring a specific part of their offerings for them (18:1-8). Warning is given against making their children pass through the fire, to use divination or familiar spirits (18:9-14). The Lord will raise up a Prophet in answer to the plea of the people that they not hear the direct voice of Jehovah, but a Prophet. This is an obvious reference to the Lord Jesus. The test of a true prophet is the fulfillment of the word which he spake, (18:15-22). The cities of refuge are marked as a place of refuge for the killer who did it ignorantly e.g. if the axe head flies off and kills someone while chopping wood and the avenger pursues after him. Three cities were on the east side of Jordan, and later three added on the west side. Willful killers were not to be protected in these cities (19:1-13). □

*In His Fear*  
Arie den Hartog

## The Fearful God Who Forgives Our Sins

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What a wonderful blessing is God's forgiveness! It is really the basis for all the other blessings of salvation which the Lord in His grace bestows upon us. Because He is a God Who forgives, there-

fore He did not impute our trespasses unto us, and reconciled us to Himself through the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. Though we are by nature guilty and damnable sinners, He counted us



perfectly righteous because of the sacrifice of His only beloved Son. There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. Truly blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is wholly covered in the sight of God, and to whom the Lord doth not impute iniquity. Because of the wonder of God's forgiveness, He daily restores us in His loving kindness, and cleanses us from all our sins in His great mercy. Though we have sinned a thousand times, yet when we confess our sins before Him He freely in mercy forgives.

The Psalmist David associates the wonder of God's forgiveness with the fear of God. We read in Psalm 130:4 "But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared." We might not readily connect the fear of God with His forgiveness. We might rather imagine that because of God's free forgiveness sinners will become careless about their sins. They might say in their hearts that God will forgive them anyway. Yet that is not and cannot be the case for the true child of God who has experienced the blessed reality and assurance of the forgiveness of sins.

Today the truth of the forgiveness of God has been greatly cheapened and corrupted. Men lightly regard it. Men lay claim to it when they have no right to do so. Ours is an age of superficiality, when there is little fear of God. We witness this particularly in the great scandals that have recently been committed by some of the great televangelists and politicians of our land. These scandals are not of such a nature that they are a momentary lapse into sin because of a man's weakness but are in fact great schemes of wickedness perpetuated over long periods of

time and involving elaborate networks of deceit and corruption. Yet those who publicly commit such great evil glibly claim that God has forgiven them. Meanwhile they continue in their sin and wickedness without the least sign of genuine humility and repentance before God. How dreadful all of this is, and what a blasphemy against the holy God. How can men who do such things still be imagined to be the great Christian leaders of our day? What a perverted age we live in!

Woe unto the Christian who lightly regards God's forgiveness. May we never imagine that God's free forgiveness is reason for us to be careless about our sin and continue in that sin without repentance.

There are several reasons why the truth that God forgives is reason for us to fear Him greatly. First of all, the sovereign prerogative to forgive sins belongs to God alone. No mere man can forgive sin, but God only. Let no man quickly boast that God has forgiven him. To God belongs the sovereignty to judge one man for his sin and to condemn him to everlasting hell, and none shall be able to acquit. While on the other hand He declares another righteous and makes such a one the object of His everlasting favor and blessing. The saints of God can confidently say: "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?" Romans 8:33, 34.

God's forgiveness is so fearful because it is made according to the standard of His own perfect and infinite holiness and righteousness. As the holy God He is too pure of eyes to behold iniquity. In all His judgment, the Lord judges righteously. He never calls that which is evil good nor that which is good evil.

Furthermore, the Lord knows the heart of man altogether. He does not judge on the basis of mere outward appearance. He does not see as man sees. He will not forgive the sin of the wicked hypocrite who in his heart remains impenitent and ungodly.

We must fear the Lord Who forgives us because of the greatness of our own sin which the Lord in mercy forgives. Anyone who glibly claims the forgiveness of God while belittling his own sin is deceiving himself, for, in fact, the wrath of God abides on him. God's forgiveness is so fearful because our sins are so great and so many. Forgiveness is such a fearful thing because our sins are against the holy majesty of God. They are a denial of the sovereign right of the Lord to rule over us and to require of us obedience and love to Him. The greatness and wonder of God's forgiveness is seen against the background of the awful judgment of hell that our sins otherwise deserve before God.

There is one reason greater than all why God's forgiveness ought to make us greatly fear before Him. The forgiveness of God was purchased at an exceedingly high price. It was purchased and accomplished at the cross of His only beloved Son Jesus Christ. God's forgiveness of the sins of His people could only become a reality through the horrible bitter anguish and suffering which our beloved Lord endured in the hours of darkness on the cross, when He cried in the midst of the torments of hell: "My God, My God, why hath Thou forsaken me?" Never before or after did such a terrible agonizing cry rend the heavens and go up unto God the Father. No one will ever be able to im-



agine, much less describe the infinite greatness of the price of suffering anguish which our Lord had to endure so that our sins could be forgiven by the Holy God of heaven and earth. No one shall be able to measure the breadth and length and depth and height of the love of Christ which caused Him to endure the cross in order that our sins might be forgiven. Never may the Christian forget the amazing wonder of the cross. Again and again the Scriptures set before us the cross in its horror and also in its wonder and glory. In order to remember this cross, our Lord also told His church repeatedly to observe His holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper. No one who stands before the cross and truly understands its meaning can ever lightly regard God's great wonder of the forgiveness of sins.

The Christian does fall into sin. He even something falls into the most grievous and terrible sins. The Christian still often falls into sin. It is even possible that the child of God can continue for a long time in his sin without repentance. He can live among men as a hypocrite for a long time. We have the fearful example of king David who committed

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the awful sin of adultery and then of murder. David has given us a number of vivid descriptions of what an awful experience that was. Though he for a short time enjoyed the pleasures of sin, he was soon smitten in conscience before the Lord, and experienced the heavy hand of the wrath of God upon him. It was this that finally caused him to cry out of the depths of his sin and misery unto the Lord. It was the fear of God that made David finally confess his sin in deepest humility and sorrow before God. Surely he did not belittle the awfulness of his own sin, but cried out in amazement, "Behold I was shapen in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me," Psalm 51:5. When David had come to know the awfulness of his own sin, he pleaded for the mercy of God. He was profoundly conscious that because he deserved the judgment of God, his only hope was in the sovereign mercy of God. After David had confessed his sin, he did not boldly continue in that sin. He desired to be wholly cleansed from all his sin and iniquity. He knew that because his sin was so great and because it came forth from his own corrupt and sinful nature, only God could deliver him from it. He greatly feared lest God should take His Holy Spirit from him. He desired to walk uprightly before God and not to continue in sin, but he knew that he would be able to do this only by the Spirit of God. He did not continue to enrich and aggrandize himself nor glory in himself and portray himself as a great man in Israel. He humbled himself to the dust, considering himself wholly unworthy before God and man. He desired only to speak of the mercy and justice of God, and glory in His righteousness. These are the marks of the truly penitent child

of God who has fallen into sin. The modern day so-called penitents bear no resemblance to David. The difference is that David lived in the fear of God.

The more the child of God knows and experiences the wonder of God's great forgiveness the more reason he has to continue in his life with fear and trembling. For the child of God there is nothing so awful as the anger and displeasure of the Lord. There is nothing so wonderful as His favor and loving kindness. With fear and trembling he confesses his sin and pleads for the mercy of the Lord. With fear and trembling and by faith he partakes of the forgiving mercy of God. Before God the child of God says in great amazement; "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He retaineth not His anger for ever, because He delighteth in mercy." Micah 7:18 □



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## The Day of Shadows

John A. Heys

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# A Search For Rest

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Naomi had seen the grace of God break through the dark clouds that had been over her head for many, many years. Her husband died and left her with two sons. These sons died and left her without any grandchildren and with two daughters-in-law who were Moabites.

She herself was too old to get married and have children who could inherit the land of her husband and continue his name in the promised land, which was a shadow of the kingdom of heaven, which is coming in the day of Christ. Her two daughters-in-law might not, according to Deuteronomy 23:3, be taken as wives by kinsmen and fulfill the calling in Deuteronomy 25:5, 6, so that a child would be born and so that Naomi's husband's name would not be "put out of Israel".

One daughter-in-law refused to go back with her to Canaan. Ruth did go with her and was a very kind and loveable daughter-in-law who confessed her faith in God and declared that the people of Israel were her people. Yet,

because she was a Moabitess, the branch of the tree of Judah, which was Elimelech, was cut off and would never bring forth shoots and branches. And Naomi had no hope at all of her husband's name being continued in the promised land in the genealogies to come.

Naomi's relatives and neighbors from the same tribe of Judah could hardly believe that she was the same Naomi who left them ten years ago. There was even a touch of sarcasm in their speech, for they hinted that she did not look like, or have the experiences that indicated that, she was Naomi, that is, the Pleasant One. And indeed her life had not been a pleasant one these last ten years.

But now God showed His grace by leading Ruth to the field of Boaz and to be treated very kindly by Him. Naomi knew that Boaz saw that Ruth was not a Moabitess, but a Jewess. No, not physically and outwardly. But as Paul wrote in Romans 2:28, 29, "For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly . . . But he is a Jew who is one inwardly." And Boaz treated her as a Jewess, that is, as a believing child of God.

Amazingly enough Ruth, the novice, saw that one is not a Jew if one is such only outwardly. For she confessed emphatically to Naomi that her, Naomi's, people were her people. From a spiritual

point of view this was true. And how marvellous is then the grace and the power God by His spirit to cause this novice, this woman with such a limited instruction in the truth concerning Him, and who had not yet seen the types and shadows of Christ to cause her to know that though by natural birth she was a Moabitess, by a new birth she was a true Jewess, a child of God as surely and as really as Naomi was. Naomi, the experienced child of God, did not see that, when Ruth refused to go back with Orpah; but Ruth saw it and confessed it. Boaz also saw it in her works and said, "Blessed be thou of the Lord, my daughter; for thou hast shown more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning, inasmuch as thou followest not young men, whether poor or rich," Ruth 3:10.

Naomi did later on see the possibility of marriage for Ruth and for her husband's, Elimelech's, name to be continued in the promised land. And so she sets out to find rest for Ruth. Orpah had gone back to her parents and fellow Moabites to seek the rest her flesh wanted. Ruth had come with her to Canaan and confessed by that deed that she was a Jewess inwardly.

We may believe that Naomi did some investigating in regard to Boaz. She knew and told Ruth that he was one near of kin to



Ruth's husband and thus to Elimelech. But being gone from the region around Bethlehem for ten years, when there were no telephones yet, no mailmen and post offices, and no newspapers that carried obituaries and marriage announcements she could have been ignorant of this next of kin whom Boaz sought. Or she may have been very sure that, because of the law which forbade marrying a Moabitess, only Boaz would do that, because he had shown clearly that he considered Ruth to be a Jewess inwardly. But she did know that the barley harvest had all been gathered, and she even knew what night Boaz would be winnowing that barley, and sleep there in the threshing floor.

To Ruth Naomi said, "My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee?" Now rest, strictly speaking, is entering into and enjoying the benefits of a finished work. We so often consider rest nothing more than a cessation of work, so that we may return to it refreshed and strengthened. Or we label it as an opportunity to indulge in sports, entertainment and amusements for the flesh. But let us take hold of the fact that rest here, too, when Naomi says to Ruth, "My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee," is enjoying a finished work of God." God's rest on the seventh day after creating the heavens and the earth and all that they contain was an entering into and enjoyment of His perfect work. It was all finished, and He saw that it was very good, and on the first Sabbath day entered into the enjoyment of it.

Then, too, Jesus said, according to Matthew 11:28: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." This He could say because He was going to His cross and

would triumphantly cry out, "It is finished!" And we can now enter in and enjoy that perfected salvation.

The rest that Naomi has in mind for Ruth is that salvation. In that day of types and shadows that rest was for those who belonged to the nation of Israel. Its citizens were God's people. And through marriage to Boaz Ruth would become such a citizen, and no longer be a foreigner living in the land of God's people. For that land which belonged to Elimelech, and to her Jewish husband, Mahlon, would become hers, so that she had a name and a place in Israel and could enjoy the blessings God had for His people in Israel.

It was by no means in Naomi's mind a rest that consisted in Ruth no longer toiling as one who would provide food and earthly requirements of her and for herself. It is true that Boaz was a very rich man, and marrying him would bring earthly riches to Ruth and Naomi as well. But that is not what Naomi has in mind. And when she adds "That it may be well with thee", she not only excludes herself from this rest and good, but clearly shows that she has in mind for Ruth a name and a place in the coming kingdom of heaven.

Go back again to Deuteronomy 25:5. There we read: "If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger: her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an husband's brother unto her. And it shall be, that the firstborn which she beareth him shall succeed in the name of his brother which is dead, that his name be not put out of Israel." This is what Naomi

had in mind, even though Boaz was much older than Ruth. Spiritual things counted, not material, physical realities. And she is interested in it not simply for Elimelech's and Mahlon's sake but for Ruth's.

Not one Israelite, except Boaz, accepted Ruth. All there in the region around Bethlehem knew that she came from Moab and looked on her as a Moabitess, not one who is a Jewess inwardly. No one seemed to want any fellowship with this "outsider." And, as Boaz stated to Ruth, she did not in any way and at any time try to chase after young men of her own age. Striving to keep the letter of the law rather than the spirit of it, the residents in that area made life for Ruth very lonely. Openly they excluded her from membership in the Old Testament church. And surely it was the grace of God in her that kept her there and did not let her run back to Moab.

The question does arise as to whether Naomi did not know that there was a closer kinsman than Boaz. But one thing is plain: Naomi was sure, after Boaz told her that there was a nearer kinsman, that Boaz would "not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day." For her the grace of God had broken through the clouds and was shining very brightly.

We are not to believe that Naomi suggested and wanted Ruth to commit fornication. That would have been the case, if she knew a nearer kinsman. Nor did she want to try to violate that law of God in Deuteronomy 25:5. Indeed, devout children of God can and do slip and slide into grievous sins. David did. Solomon was by no means free from this. And Paul write in Romans 7:19: ". . . the evil that I would not, that I do." But there is no suggestion even that Naomi was here trying to break God's law in order to find rest for Ruth.



Naomi was aware of the fact that Boaz was much older than Ruth, far more so than Abraham was than Sarah. She was also aware of the fact that he was not married. And, indeed, it all is so wonderfully worked out and planned by God in His wisdom and grace that Boaz could legally marry Ruth, when the nearest of kin refused. All things do work together for good to those who love God. And do not forget or overlook the fact that this book of Ruth reveals so clearly and beautifully how all works together for our good as well as Ruth's. This is the way God arranged the coming of Christ in the line of Judah, as Jacob also prophesied in Genesis 49:8-10. The sceptre did not depart from Judah, nor the Lawgiver from between His feet. And Ruth, the spiritual Jewess and physical Moabitess, was used by God to bring forth David, Solomon, and Christ, Who now has dominion over all things at God's right hand.

Now it is true that Naomi warned Ruth to be very careful so that no one would see her "proposing" to Boaz, for that is what Naomi did send her to do. But notice that she instructs her to put off all the drab working clothes, which were also clothes of sadness. Now she must put on her best and most attractive raiment, anoint herself with some sweet smelling perfume, and wash away all her past actions. Now she is not to do something wholly different from what Boaz said of her and to her, namely, "... thou followest not young men, whether poor or rich." Now she was to follow a man much older than she and certainly seek marriage with him.

Ruth had by no means and in any way behaved as a flirt. She had done absolutely nothing in the line of seeking a husband. She in no way tried to make her-

self attractive to men, young or old. And it was not because she still felt so very sad about the death of Mahlon. No, as a believer she took hold of the word of Naomi. In Ruth 1:9 she had said to Ruth and Orpah: "The Lord grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband." She meant a Moabitish husband. Quite plainly she had told them that in Israel such rest would not be obtained; and Ruth took her at her word, knowing that this big difference existed between what were Jehovah's people and those of Chemosh, the Moabite's idol. We can be sure that Ruth had no hope of marriage with an Israelite and never dreamed of a marriage with Boaz. She may also have been completely ignorant of the law, that the nearest of kin to Elimelech and Mahlon had a calling to marry her. Naomi had to teach her that. And she did not lift one finger, and one smallest drop of perfume, or even for an hour wear her most attractive raiment to entice anyone.

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The neighbors and relatives there in that area had snubbed her and made her feel as an outsider. They had asked, "Is this Naomi?" But they spoke not one word to Ruth. That silence spoke loudly. And their failure to help Naomi and Ruth with food, making it so necessary for Ruth to follow the gleaners, also revealed that they wanted nothing to do with her nor with Naomi for having brought this Moabitess into the land which God gave the Israelites. They did not see Ruth as one who was a Jewess inwardly.

Marriage to a kinsman would make quite a difference. That would bring her rest. Then it would "be well" with Ruth. And that tremendous difference we have revealed to us after the marriage and birth of a son. Then these neighbors and relatives said to Naomi, "Blessed be the Lord, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel. And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age: for thy daughter in law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons, hath born him."

Ruth reached the rest Naomi sought for her, and these women even commended her for her love which she showed to Naomi, and called her better than seven sons. Ruth was now considered a Jewess inwardly, a child of God, one who had a name and a place in the Kingdom of Heaven. □



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## *Taking Heed To The Doctrine*

Ronald H. Hanko

# The Two Natures of Christ: The Deity of Christ

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### 1. The testimony of Scripture (continued).

One of the more striking evidences of Christ's divinity is His claim to authority, to sovereign, autonomous, all-encompassing authority. He claimed this authority over all the institutions of the Jewish nation to the consternation of the Jewish leaders. He angered the scribes and lawyers by claiming not only an authority next to theirs as learned interpreters of Moses and the Old Testament, but also by insisting that He was Himself the Law-giver and One greater than all the Prophets and Patriarchs. And not only did He claim this authority, but exercised it in modifying and changing the regulations of Moses (Matt. 19:8, 9), in insisting that He was the One of Whom and by Whom the prophets all spoke (Matt. 12:41; 23:34), and in speaking as though He were personally acquainted

with the patriarchs and other heroes of the nation, and that they, knowing Him personally, acknowledged His superiority. Abraham had seen His day and rejoiced (Jn. 8:56) and David had recognized Him as Lord (Matt. 22:43-45). Though not of the tribe of Levi, He claimed authority over the temple and all its ordinances, exasperating the Chief Priests and Sadducees. He claimed to be the temple-builder (Jn. 2:19), greater even than Solomon (Lk. 11:31), and exercised this authority also in driving from the temple those with whom He was displeased (Jn. 2:13-17; Mk. 11:15-17). In His controversies with the Pharisees He appeared to encourage His disciples openly and flagrantly to violate the Sabbath regulations. When confronted, He claimed Lordship also over that most fundamental of all the Mosaic institutions — claimed that it was His day, and that not the powerful leaders of the Jews and the interpreters of Moses, but He, an unschooled, wandering teacher, would be the One to decide how the Sabbath would be kept, even at the expense of many old traditions.

It is not surprising that in connection with these claims His Godhead became the great issue of His ministry. He not only con-

fronted His enemies as *God* by claiming such authority, but as God Who upholds His Own unchangeable, sovereign right to rule, and command the lives of men. This threatened all their efforts to "be as God" in the nation through their traditions and endless precepts. Thus His claim to have authority to forgive sin also aroused their enmity, not only because they considered it blasphemy, but because by it He took for Himself, as God, that which they and all sinners have wanted since Adam, the right to judge for themselves between good and evil. In this same manner, the claims of Christ continue to be even today the great threat to all of man's sinful and proud pretensions. As God He claims all authority in heaven and on earth in this age, as God He promises that He will come again to judge the words and works of men, as God He pulls down their kingdoms, humbles their pride, thwarts their efforts, and dashes all their hopes to pieces. No wonder, then, that still today they deny Him and reject His Godhead and power. No wonder that the sects, which deify men, and modern Christianity, which makes man the master of his own salvation, so flatly and emphatically deny His divinity.

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Yet, the fact that they all speak to this matter, and are so careful to deny it, is itself an indication that the claims of Christ to divinity and authority cannot be taken lightly. They "protest overmuch." This is especially true of the reaction of the Jews during the days of Jesus' ministry. They understood immediately and unanimously what He was saying, sometimes better than the disciples. So their enmity itself became a testimony and evidence of His Godhead. Certainly that is one reason why Scripture shows it.

Alongside this unwilling and yet powerful testimony of the Jews is the testimony of the devils. The screams of the demon-possessed man in the Capernaum Synagogue, the pleadings of a whole legion of hellish spirits in Gadara, and their complete submission to His authority, all identify Him for us as God's Son (Lk. 4:34; 8:30, 31). As James reminds us, they believed and trembled.

Such violent reaction to the divinity of Christ, though full of hatred, shames our apathy, and the indifference of many teachers today. The Jews at least understood what He said and recognized the fact that if it was not true it must not be said. Apathy not only does not care enough to worship, it does not even care enough to stone Him for blasphemy. Indifference will not even listen to what He says nor make any effort to understand. As one writer says:

*Stark staring incredulity is a far more loyal tribute to that truth than a modern metaphysic that would make it merely a matter of degree. It were better to rend our robes with a cry against blasphemy, like Caiaphas in the judgment, or to lay hold of the man as a maniac possessed of devils like the kinsmen and the crowd, rather than to stand stupidly debating fine shades of pantheism in the presence of so catastrophic a claim. There is more of the wisdom that is one with surprise in any simple person, full of the sensitiveness of simplicity, who should expect the*

*grass to wither and the birds to drop dead out of the air, when a strolling carpenter's apprentice said calmly and almost carelessly, like one looking over his shoulder, "Before Abraham was, I am." (G.K. Chesterton, The Everlasting Man, part II, chapter 2).*

How can we, hearing the testimony of Scripture, be anything but awed and worshipful before Him.

To those who believe and worship, however, all the testimony of Scripture is not proof, but evidence. The proofs of His divinity to us, as the Belgic Confession reminds us, are His works (operations), chiefly those we feel within ourselves (Article IX). All the testimony of Scripture is given to confirm and explain that powerful, divine, and effectual work of salvation, and to assure us that it is of God. To us, therefore, He not only promises but gives that which God alone can give, eternal life, righteousness, peace, rest, and salvation. As Hodge says:

*It is obvious that the infinite God Himself can neither promise nor give anything greater or higher than Christ gives to His people. To Him they are taught to look as the source of all blessing, the Giver of every good and perfect gift. There is no more comprehensive prayer in the New Testament than that with which Paul closes His Epistle to the Galatians, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit." His favour is our life, which it would not be if He were not our God. (Systematic Theology, VVI, 2, D).*

In us He works by the power of almighty God, delivering us from the power of Satan and sin and bringing us to God. By such powerful proof we not only acknowledge Him to be God, but worship and adore, and confess that without Him we have nothing.

## 2. How this doctrine is denied.

Already in the days of Christ's appearance on earth His divinity was almost universally denied. The hatred and fear of two Herods, the jealousy of the Jews,

the scorn of the Romans, and the enmity of the people all strike at His Godhead. Quoting from Psalm 2, Peter says just this in Acts 4:26, 27: that it was against the Lord, that is, against His holy child Jesus, that Herod and Pontius Pilate, the Gentiles and the Jews were gathered. It was the Jews especially, however, who mocked, threatened, cursed, hounded, condemned, and murdered Him, for saying and showing that He was the Son of God.

After His death it was no different. All three Epistles of John, John's Gospel, the Epistle to the Colossians, and the first chapter of Hebrews were written in defense of this doctrine. In fact, not one book of the New Testament neglects it.

Along with the Jews, the Belgic Confession mentions the Mohammedans and six heretics from the early history of the Church. The Creed at that point is defending the doctrine of the Trinity, but it was especially in connection with Christ's divinity that the doctrine of the Trinity was denied, both by the heathen religion of the Mohammedans, and by the heresies of those who rose within the church. Nor was this truth denied only in word in those earlier days. Then too, following the example of Christ Himself, many thousands of early Christians lost their goods and their lives for the confession they made of the divinity of Christ their Saviour.

At the time of the Reformation this truth had to be defended against the blasphemies of Socinus and Servetus. In fact it was one of the few things that the cities of Europe, whether Reformed, Lutheran, or Roman Catholic, agreed upon: that is, that a man like Servetus was not fit to live for the blasphemies which he uttered against the Son of God. The children of these



false teachers are still to be found today. The Jews still spit at the Name of Jesus, the Mohammedans count him only a prophet next to Abraham and Mohammed, and the doctrines of Arius and Socinus are still taught by the Unitarians and the sects.

As far as the Church is concerned, the attack comes first of all and most boldly from these various Sects. With all their different peculiarities and strange teachings, they are alike in this one thing, that they deny the full divinity of God's Son. We have already mentioned the Jehovah's Witnesses and their twisted version of the Scriptures. Their version of John 1:1 sums up all that they teach about Christ; "In the beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god" (New World Translation). The Mormon prophet, Joseph Smith, taught, and His followers still teach the old lie of Arianism, that Christ is only the first and greatest among God's creatures. Such perverse Christology is characteristic not

only of these older sects, including the Christian Scientists, but also of the more modern and popular sects such as the Unification Church (Rev. Sun Myung Moon), the Worldwide Church of God (Herbert Armstrong and "Plain Truth" magazine), the Way and all the rest; those which claim Christian origin, those which are merely the disguised religions of the East, and those who make an unholy alliance of the two.

Their doctrine is evil, but their threat lies primarily in the fact that they practice great deceit, using the language of the faith and claiming to believe in Christ's divinity, and even covering up and obscuring their teachings on these matters in an attempt to win followers. A few quotations very clearly illustrate this. In the *Outline of the Principle, Level 4*, the "vision and guide" of the Unification Church, we read:

*As already mentioned, a true person is one who fulfills the purpose of the creation, is the incarnation of God, and is perfect as God is perfect, possessing divine value . . . Jesus is a true man, and thus is a person of such value.*

*The Principle does not flatly deny the conventional belief held by many Christians that Jesus is God, because a perfect, true person is one with God (page 140). From "Creation in Christ," a sermon by George MacDonald, the author of a number of popular works of fiction comes this statement:*

*I believe that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of the eternal Father; that from the first of firstness Jesus is the Son, because God is the Father. I believe therefore that the Father is the greater, that if the Father had not been, the Son could not have been . . . It was the will of Jesus to be the thing God willed and meant Him, that made Him the true son of God. He was not the Son of God because He could not help it, but because He willed to be in Himself the son that He was in the divine idea.*

Though not himself part of the rise of the various sects, this latter author, a minister in the Church of England, illustrates how easily these lies can creep into the church and can be protected there, for in spite of such teachings as these he was never publicly censured or removed.

The church's battle for this truth is not finished, therefore, but continues to the present time. □

## From Holy Writ

George C. Lubbers

# The Historical Development of the Building of God's Temple (11)

*"For every house is builded by some (man); but he that built all things is God," Hebrews 3:4*

*George C. Lubbers is a minister emeritus in the Protestant Reformed Churches.*

It is important for the proper understanding of the presence of the cherubim in the most holy place, to notice carefully that there is a most intimate relation-

ship between the progressive historical revelation of God's covenant promise and the various stages through which the temple-building passed. The bot-



tom line is that God himself will make a house for David in David's royal Son (II Samuel 7:8-11).

To facilitate a rather clear overview of this temple-building by the great temple-Builder, God in Christ, we must notice that neither the typical tabernacle nor the later temple of Solomon were *per se* fit abodes, dwelling-places, of God in the Spirit (Ephesians 2:19-22). We read in Hebrews 3:4 "For every house is builded of some man, but he that built all things is God." It is also instructive to read: "And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those which were to be spoken after; But Christ as a son over his *own house* (we underscore); whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence . . ." (Hebrews 3:5, 6).

There are many passages in Scripture which teach that God is the Builder of the temple and of the holy city. This was explicitly stated by the prophet Nathan to David. After denying David the privilege and right to build the temple, a house for the Lord, the Lord tells David that He will build a house for David; yes, He will build it out of David's Seed; He will give him a Son in that temple and on the throne (II Samuel 7:11-12, 27-29; I Kings 11:38). In the New Testament, Christ announces Himself to be the one Who will build the temple. In fact, just this temple-building is his proper and convincing credential that he has authority in the temple. He is the Lord of the temple (John 20:14-25). This lesson was never forgotten by the hateful and unbelieving Jewish adversaries (Matthew 26:31; 27:40). Furthermore, the very apostles of Christ never understood that Jesus was the divine master-builder of the spiritual temple until after his resurrection (John 2:22). It was only then that they believed that word of Jesus and believed all

the Scriptures (John 2:21, 22). Until this point they were slow of heart to believe that the Christ must suffer all the hellish agonies on the cross and thus enter into his glory (Luke 24:25-27, 44-45)!

We do well to allow these Scriptures to sink deep into our hearts. Hence, we should notice that the true temple was not made by the hands of men, but by the Christ of God in his death and resurrection. And into this temple, the church of the living God, both the elect Jews and elect Gentiles enter. Fact is that they constitute the living stones, and are thus the very fabric, the material most unfit, which is made into stones fashioned by God's grace. These stones are gathered by the Word and Spirit from those who are far and those who are near, to be the habitation of God in the Spirit (Ephesians 2:22).

This temple David nor Solomon could ever build!

Small wonder that at the dedication of the temple the sublime words were uttered by Solomon, "LORD God of Israel, there is no God like thee in the heaven above, or on the earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants what walk before thee with all their heart . . . and now, O God of Israel, let thy word, I pray thee be verified, which thou speakest unto thy servant David, my father (Confer II Samuel 7:10-17). "But will God indeed dwell on the earth: behold, the heavens and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded" (Acts 7:47).

Yes, this temple which God will build is the hope of heaven and of earth — through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ!

Listen to the exalted words of the prophet Isaiah, "howbeit the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands, as saith the prophet" (Acts 17:33; Isaiah 66:1). It was because Stephen proved from the Scriptures that the Old Testament law and shadows must give way for the reality, the better and greater temple, encompassing both heaven and earth, that he is stoned to death!

The Scriptures everywhere speak of the heaven and of the earth. Heaven must receive the Christ until the times of the restitution of all things, as spoken of by all the holy prophets, since the world began (Acts 3:21). This is true of all the Scriptures as spoken by "all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken . . ." (Acts 3:24).

These are the words of the Scriptures which must guide our thinking and our attempts at formulating the Scriptural data concerning the historical development of God's true temple!

Thus we begin to see that Solomon in all his glory is less than the Christ to come. This one will not merely be a son out of David's loins by a Bathsheba, who had been the wife of Uriah (Matthew 1:6b) but this one is the Son born from a virgin, whose name is Immanuel, God with us (Matthew 1:21-23). He is both David's son and Lord (Psalm 110:1; Matthew 22:41-45). The name "Lord" here implies that he is the *Adonai*: God, very God of God.

This all teaches us that there is need to study the progressive fading away of the shadows and types as embodied in the Old Testament tabernacle till the time that it is removed forever by the Lord. The writer to the Hebrews speaks of this old covenant as "it waxes old, decayed, and ready to



vanish away" (8:13). This vanishing away is spoken of by the Holy Spirit very clearly in both the prophecy of Jeremiah and that of Isaiah and Ezekiel (Jeremiah 31:31; 7:11; Isaiah 56:17; Ezekiel 40:27; compare also Haggai 2:6, 7). These are simply some very clear texts which teach very clearly that the old temple will be destroyed to bring in the true and eternal tabernacle of God with men (Revelation 21:3). Here we read the beautiful words, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them and be their God."

It is very clear in all the Scriptures that the historical development of the building of God's temple is purely a wonderwork of God's saving grace in Jesus Christ. It is what God has wrought, and He alone!

We should also notice particularly that the transition from the Old Testament temple to the New Testament temple, builded by Christ, requires really centuries; it was from the time of the Babylonian captivity till the death and resurrection of Christ. There was a breaking down of the Old Testament temple of Solomon which caused Israel to pine in Babylon. Here Israel learned to sing and utter the words of the Lamentation of Jeremiah, the prophet: "How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people! how is she become a widow! she that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary! . . . Judah is gone into captivity because of affliction, and because of great servitude: she dwelleth among the heathen, she findeth no rest: all her persecutors overtook her between the straits. The ways of Zion do mourn, because none come to the solemn feasts: all her

gates are desolate: her priests sigh, her virgins are afflicted, and she is in bitterness . . . the LORD hath afflicted her for the multitude of her transgressions: her children are gone into captivity before the enemy! (Lamentations 1:1-5)

This is the painful experience of the remnant according to election in Babylon. Here they sing and sigh, "How shall we sing the LORD's song in a strange land of strangers. If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy" (Psalm 137:5, 6).

Now it is exactly in this darkest hour of Israel for the people of God, that the prophetic horizons lift, and that we begin to see more and more of the sure prophetic word which shines as a light in a dark place, until the day dawn and the day-star arises in the hearts of God's people (II Peter 1:19). However, in this prophetic word it becomes abundantly clear that the clock of God is neither turned back, nor does the clock of God stop for seventy years. After Israel has come forth from the refining experience of captivity, they will go forward into the hope of the heavenly temple. A greater and better temple is in the making according to God's sure and everlasting promise to Abraham and to his seed. This does not appear to be the case when we view the building of the temple of Zerubbabel in the time of Ezra the prophet.

Truly, there was great sadness in the heart of those saints in Israel who had seen the beauty and splendor of Solomon's temple, Do we not read "but many of the priests and Levites and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men, that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; and

many shouted aloud for joy . . ." (Ezra 3:12, 13). There was room for weeping when things were viewed as to outward appearance. It looked as if they had not at all recovered from the ignominy of their Babylonian captivity. Here was a small remnant returning, and the house which they were building truly looked, as it were, the "little things that should be despised" (Haggai 2:2-9). For the glory of the latter house shall be greater than the former, saith Jehovah!

It is all the wonder of grace!

When we keep these great and basic Scriptural teachings in mind, we will also be able to understand that it required centuries to make this transition from the typical temple to the real and true temple. This transition is fully fulfilled in the fulness of time in Christ's death and resurrection. We do well to take special notice of the Biblical teaching of the prophetic writings. This is especially true in our times when the winds of the error of dispensationalism and of a social gospel blow upon the church, seeking to remove us from our own steadfastness. We must stand immovable in the faith that we are the New Testament church, in which both Jew and Greek have a place, a dwelling-place of God in the Spirit (Galatians 3:26-29; Ephesians 2:19-22).

We shall, therefore, need to pursue this matter further in the next chapter. □



## All Around Us

Gise J. Van Baren

# Growth In Ecumenism Now: the New Age Spiritism

### Growth In Ecumenism

In our sheltered environment, we sometimes fail to realize the developing ecumenism of our day. A few years ago there was considerable discussion about proposed mergers of different denominations. Some proposed mergers materialized, others seemed to be bogged down in endless discussion and debate. It appeared that though the leaders of the denominations favored mergers, on the "grass roots" level, the people rejected this.

The past several years the attempt has been made to establish clear contact between denominations and people, without formal merger. The theory appears to be that once people in different denominations work together on certain projects, these will begin to see the advantage of organic union as well.

The trend toward greater cooperation, and eventual union, was presented in the *Grand Rapids Press*, Sept. 19, 1987. The Rev. Arie Brouwer, a minister in the Reformed Church in America, and general secretary of the National Council of Churches, was interviewed by George W. Cornell, Associated Press religious editor. He wrote:

*The nation's top ecumenical officer says cooperative work among Protestants, Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches is burgeoning in this country.*

*"It's becoming a common pattern," says the Rev. Arie Brouwer . . . "A sense of genuine Christian community is developing."*

*. . . The overwhelming preponderance of U.S. Christianity, both denominationally and in coalitions, is overcoming the old walls that once kept Protestants and Catholics apart, Brouwer says.*

*"There's a tremendous surge of ecumenical interest among Catholics," he said in an interview. "At many, many points, we now work together, more than most people realize. It's a constantly growing thing."*

*However, asked about a thesis by the late great Catholic theologian Karl Rahner that sufficient agreements have been reached in talks between Protestants and Catholics for reunion now, Brouwer said:*

*"So far, at least, we haven't heeded him. But history has a remarkable way of catching up with the prophets. It's a matter of time. People of vision make statements, and they may not be accepted immediately."*

*"But gradually, the Spirit works and they become the new orthodoxy. We may need to wait a while, but reunion will come."*

*Brouwer . . . said he couldn't predict when that would happen, but added, "I live in hope."*

In the remaining part of the article, Brouwer gives many instances of the cooperation between denominations and specifically of that between Protestant and Roman Catholic. The article concludes:

*"We do dozens of different things together," Brouwer said.*

*This fall, the council's division of overseas ministries and Roman Catholic orders are meeting together to coordinate mission work abroad.*

*However, he said the underpinning of it all comes at the grass roots, among local Protestant and Catholic congregations, and that ecumenical sessions with the pope should spur "those kinds of relationships all over the country."*

*"His meeting with other church leaders was a bit like a meeting of leaders of a commonwealth," he said. "It underscores the fact we are all part of one church. It (is) a very important image, and makes impressions."*

*"These kinds of symbols have tremendous impact. It symbolizes the sense in which we are all part of the same church. It's like a statement of faith, a demonstrative confession that we're one."*

There appears to be no doubt in Brouwer's mind that union between Protestant and Roman Catholic will come. It is true that Christ prayed for unity: "That they all may be one . . .", but He added, ". . . as thou, Father,

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art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us . . . ."

True unity must be sought — but ever on the basis of the truth. That is the unity between Christ and the Father. The unity of which Brouwer speaks is not a unity based on the truth nor a reflection of that unity between Christ and God. One is rather reminded of the end of time when there will be one Antichrist governing one church on this earth in cooperation with a one world government. That time is closer than we sometimes realize.

### Now: the New Age Spiritism

There is in this country a powerful movement called "The New Age" movement. It combines Hinduism and other Oriental religions into a form of modern idolatry. Not only does this movement have a large number of followers, but many of the most admired and imitated men and women openly admit practicing it. Actors and actresses, whose number is already being decimated by the AIDS disease, are also "channelers" or followers of those who claim to be "channels". The whole practice reminds one of the demon possession of Jesus' day. Television stars, some of whom are even seen in our own homes on t.v., are among the chief offenders. If one needed further evidence of the corruption of the dramas both of t.v. and movie, he has but to consider those "art-

ists" who perform under the guidance of the devil.

*Christianity Today*, Sept. 18, 1987, has an interesting article on the subject, "Theology from the Twilight Zone". I quote part of that:

"Bashar" is an extra-terrestrial.

"Mafu" is a highly evolved being from the seventh dimension, last seen on Earth when he incarnated as a leper in first-century Pompeii.

"Ramtha" is a 35,000-year-old ascended master, once a barbarian warrior-king, later a Hindu god, now beyond even deity itself.

"Lazaris" is a disembodied personality with no incarnations — a being with no past lives in his portfolio.

These are not characters from Superhero Comix, or a "Star Trek" episode. They are "entities." And these entities, with others like them, have helped to create a modern mass-mania — the so-called channeling craze.

Besides their general implausibility, these entities have three things in common: They have no physical existence (that is, they are "spirits," or "spirit beings"); they are mainly interested in dispensing their philosophy of life to human beings; and they operate through other humans to do so, temporarily assuming control of the body during trance. People who subject themselves to such entrancement and control are called "channelers," or simply "channels."

According to the channels, the function of the trance state is to disengage the mind from involvement with the space-time world by shutting out sensory input. The same effect is achieved by making the input of a single sense dominant and repetitive, as in the chanting of mantras. This state of disengaged attention permits contact with the nonsensory realm of spirits and also vacates control of the physical faculties for use by the spirits themselves. While the channel is in an entranced condition, the controlling spirit, or entity, will lecture, counsel, teach, or

otherwise advise its human audience. As the entity operates the channel's body, it comes through as a "new inhabitant," a distinct and different personality. As one channel put it, "Channeling is a form of voluntary possession."

. . . The impact of channeling is easy to see, but difficult to assess. Its current high profile comes chiefly from celebrity endorsement. Stars of stage, screen, and tube have given public testimonials about their spirit guides . . . .

. . . There is extensive grassroots involvement as well. Channeled books are the top-selling titles in the growing occult and metaphysical market; many of them instruct readers how to contact their own spirit guides and become channels themselves . . . .

All of this resembles to a remarkable degree the demon possession of Jesus' day. Now many willingly submit to "entities" who reveal bits of "wisdom" for those who would listen. And the evil pervades the so-called "film arts" realm. If one even needed additional reason to shun all of these worldly amusements, the above should be it. Ought we to be entertained by those who subject themselves to such devilish guidance?

May this all be a warning also to us. There is the temptation to adopt many of the "innocent" practices of this New Age movement, such as repeating "mantras" and involving one's self in "meditations". Perhaps, even, it would be "fun" to see if "channeling" would really work for us. But all of this is devilish and the "New Age" movement is nothing other than the old idolatry for which Israel was repeatedly rebuked. □

## Book Review

**Reformed Theology In America:  
A History of Its Modern Develop-  
ment**, David F. Wells, Editor; Grand

Rapids, Michigan, Wm. B. Eerdmans  
Publishing Co. 317 pp. (paper)



\$19.95. [Reviewed by Prof. H.C. Hoeksema]

This is a very interesting book. Perhaps the title is somewhat misleading, because the name "Reformed" is taken in a very broad sense. Grouped under it are the Princeton theology, Westminster Calvinism, the Dutch schools, Southern Reformed thought (Presbyterian), and Neo-orthodoxy. Each section is made up of a chapter of analysis of the tradition and chapters on two leading theologians of each tradition.

Because of the diversity of authors, there is a wide variation in the quality and style of the various sections. I will not attempt to sum-

marize the five sections. Just a few comments:

- 1) I found the sections on the Westminster School (introduced by W. Robert Godfrey) and the Southern Tradition (introduced by Morton Smith) to be very interesting and, perhaps, the most accurate.
- 2) In my opinion, the section on Neo-orthodoxy does not belong in a book of this kind.
- 3) The analysis of the Dutch Schools by James D. Bratt is marked by some of the same shortcomings, inaccuracies, and faults as is his book, *Dutch Calvinism in Modern America*. Henry Zwaanstra's presentation of Louis Berkhof, while informative, is

probably too favorable. And why Herman Dooyeweerd and the Dooyeweerdian movement in North America received a place in this section of the book I will never understand. Dooyeweerd, whatever his significance may be, surely cannot be classified as a "leading theologian" of the Dutch school in North America.

- 4) I found James M. Boice's analysis of "The Future of Reformed Theology" in America to be too irenic and too optimistic.

But read the book for yourself. It is worthwhile. □

## News From Our Churches

Ben Wigger

November 15, 1987

On October 13 Rev. Woudenberg spoke at the chapel services of Heritage Christian School in Hudsonville. He based his remarks on Psalm 18:29, and he came up with an interesting title, one which no doubt raised the in-

terest level of the students at Heritage. "By my God have I leaped over a wall."

Mr. James Decker spoke at Heritage the night of October 8, to help kick off a new school year and a new P.T.A. meeting. He spoke on "Communication between parents and teachers."

Hope Protestant Reformed Christian School's P.T.A. also met during the month of October. Rev. M. Kamps spoke to those there that night on "Teacher Appreciation."

Prof. Hoeksema's Canons class met for the first time this season on October 7 in the Seminary Assembly Room. Plans were to finish the discussion of Canons V, and the conclusion, and then begin a study of the Doctrine of the Last Things.

Doon's bulletin just informed me that the Rev. D. Kuiper has obtained the temporary work

permit needed to begin his work in Canada and the Kuipers planned to leave for LaCombe sometime in mid-October. As of now I have no further word on the date his installation will take place.

The Fall Ladies' League in the Hull, Doon, and Edgerton area met October 15 at 1:00 P.M. in Hull. The topic was "A Comfort in Times Like These". The speaker was Rev. Moore, and Rev. Dykstra was to answer some questions that had been sent in.

"Society Life" was the topic Rev. Kamps spoke on at the annual Fall Mass Meeting of the Eastern League of Men's and Ladies Societies which met recently at Southwest Church.

The Consistory of Doon Church thanked all those who helped paint in their church Saturday, October 3.

*Ben Wigger is an elder in the Protestant Reformed Church of Hudsonville, Michigan.*



# THE STANDARD BEARER

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There was also a note of appreciation from Pella's consistory thanking those who helped clean their church. The congregation was told to take note of the clean windows, the slippery benches, and shiny walls. In spite of the sore muscles and tired bodies, they had an enjoyable day.

The Conference on the Christian Family was held at the South Holland Protestant Reformed Church October 16 & 17. My wife and I were unable to attend, but from those who did we have heard nothing but positive things. Comments like "tremendous, well worth the trip, we wish everyone could have attended, so much to absorb" were not uncommonly heard around our church on Sunday morning. Approximately 300 people attended this two-day conference. Friday evening Rev. Carl Haak spoke on "The Biblical Foundation of the Family". Saturday morning Rev. James Slopsema spoke on "The Role of Family Worship", and Saturday afternoon Rev. David Engelsma brought the conference to a close by speaking on "The Happiness of a Godly Home." Sandwiched between these three main addresses were panel discussions, book reviews, workshops, question and answer periods and lots of good Christian fellowship.

One of the weekly bulletins from the Evangelical Reformed Church of Singapore contained an item you might find interesting. Upon the suggestion of some members that one of the problems faced by their office-bearers is their attempt to do

things beyond their capability, the Session has commissioned Elder See to set up a study committee to look into the following subjects:

1. Frequency, length, and subject of all official meetings.
2. Workloads of all office-bearers.
3. Participation and non-participation of members in the activities and work of the church.

The committee is to give its report by the end of February of next year.

The following is taken from *Across the Aisle*, a publication of First Church in Grand Rapids, and is quoted from a pamphlet titled, "Soundings".

"Why is it," said a rich man to his minister, "that people call me stingy when everyone knows that when I die I'm leaving everything to this church?"

"Let me tell you the story of the pig and the cow," said the minister. "The pig was unpopular and the cow was beloved. This puzzled the pig. 'People speak warmly of your gentle nature and your soulful eyes,' the pig said to the cow. 'They think you're generous because each day you give them milk and cream. But what about me? I give them everything I have. I give them bacon and ham. I provide bristles for brushes. They even pickle my feet! Yet no one likes me. Why is that?'"

"Do you know what the cow answered?" said the minister.

"She said, 'Perhaps it's because I give while I'm still living.'" □

## RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY

The Consistory and the Congregation of the Immanuel Protestant Reformed Church of Lacombe, Alberta, Canada expresses their sincere sympathy to the families John Wierenga and Jim Wierema, as well as their mother, Mrs. Greta Wierenga, in the death of their father and her husband, MR. KLAAS WIERENGA, on September 26, 1987.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose." (Romans 8:28)

Wilbur Linker, Vice President  
Irwin Tolsma, Treasurer

## NOTICE!!!

The members of the BYRON CENTER PROTESTANT REFORMED CHURCH have approved a proposal to build a new church.

The financial committee, for the purpose of constructing a new church, is now accepting offers to purchase debenture notes for this cause. Presently it needs \$35,000.00 more to complete its preferred financing plan. The monies will be needed in March and April of 1988. If you can help or know of anyone who may be interested in helping please contact either:

Terry Kamminga  
4251 92nd St.  
Byron Center, MI 49315  
phone — 878-1448

or  
Sid Miedema  
8589 Homrich Ave.  
Byron Center, MI 49315  
phone — 878-9635