



# REFORMED

— P A V I L I O N —

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*For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion:  
in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me;  
he shall set me up upon a rock.*

—Psalm 27:5

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— PAVILION —

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## MEDITATION

And the LORD said unto Moses, Say unto Aaron, Stretch out thy rod, and smite the dust of the land, that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt. And they did so; for Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod, and smote the dust of the earth, and it became lice in man, and in beast; all the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt. And the magicians did so with their enchantments to bring forth lice, but they could not: so there were lice upon man, and upon beast. Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This is the finger of God: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said.

—Exodus 8:16–19

**W**onder after wonder, the Lord revealed the almighty power of his stretched-out arm. Stroke after stroke, the Lord brought his hand down upon Egypt. Blow after blow, the Lord destroyed Pharaoh and the Egyptians.

Third plague: lice.

The plague of lice devastated Egypt. The devastation was not that the lice were unbearable, although it is certainly true that the lice were unbearable. Even a single louse upon the flesh is a wretched, itchy, painful annoyance. When Aaron stretched out his rod at Moses' command, the dust of the land became lice throughout all Egypt, and all flesh was covered in the tiny pests. The beasts were covered with lice. Men were covered with lice. Lice in their clothes. Lice in their hair. Lice where they could see them. Lice where they couldn't. How uncomfortable, how pained, how desperate every man and every beast in Egypt must have been.

But the devastation of the plague of lice was that God had touched the dust of Egypt and turned it into death. The Egyptians worshiped the soil of Egypt. In the Egyptian telling of the origin of the world, the first mound of earth that emerged from the original chaos was named Tatenen. The soil of Egypt produced many fine crops. The soil of Egypt provided all Egypt's needs. Along with Ra, the sun god; Hapi, the Nile god; and Kek, the frog god, Tatenen, the soil god made Egypt prosperous and comfortable.

But now, in the third plague, God turned the soil god of Egypt into misery and death. Aaron smote the dust of the land with his rod, and the dust became lice in man and in beast. All the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt. It was becoming too much for the Egyptians. The gods of Egypt were falling before Jehovah. The Nile was life for Egypt, but God had made it death. The frog was life for Egypt, but God had made it death. Now the soil that was life for Egypt, God turned into death. For the earth does not belong to Tatenen or to Kek or to the Nile. But the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof.

God was not finished. When Jannes and Jambres and the magicians came forward to replicate the plague, God no longer gave them power to do so. Jannes and Jambres could not make lice, for God had a different task for them. This time God put his word in their mouths. These wicked withstanders of Moses must testify of the greatness of God in spite of themselves. At the last day, in spite of themselves, their tongues will also confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. But already in their own day, Jannes and Jambres were made to testify of Jehovah in spite of their hatred of him. "This is the finger of God," they said to Pharaoh. Indeed it was! And the same finger of God that had turned the dust to lice now touched Pharaoh's heart to harden it again. "Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said" (Ex. 8:19).

And what of us? The Lord has spoken regarding us too. Not this: I will harden their hearts! But this: “A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give

you an heart of flesh” (Ezek. 36:26). Death for Egypt and its false gods and its hard-hearted head. But life for God’s people from our gracious God through our covenant head!

—AL

## FROM THE EDITOR

For our readers in the United States, it is almost Thanksgiving Day. Time to hone the axe, grate some nutmeg, and check on the bog. Or, if you prefer, time to head to Costco for a turkey, pumpkin pie, and cranberry sauce. With grocery prices the way they are, we may be back to the old methods before all is said and done. But in these days, as in all days, there is rest in Christ. Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. And having Christ, let us rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, rejoice.

This week we can report an update on correspondence with *Christian Renewal*. Mr. John Van Dyk, the editor of *Christian Renewal* (CR), replied that he is not going to run the undersigned’s letter to the editor or the article on exclusive psalmody in *Christian Renewal*.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Van Dyk reported that the letter to the editor and the article on exclusive psalmody would only prolong the story of what has been happening in the Protestant Reformed Churches and the Reformed Protestant Churches, which story was already off-putting to some readers of CR and which story the editor judged to be sufficiently covered already. So the letter to the editor and the article on exclusive psalmody will only reach the readership of *Reformed Pavilion*. What a reminder how little our corner is in this world. And what a reminder how gracious God has been to grant us a little space. We may have only a single nail in God’s temple left to us, but with that nail we are firmly fixed in God’s presence.

“And now for a little space grace hath been shewed from the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage” (Ezra 9:8).

Mr. Van Dyk also made the comment that most readers of *Christian Renewal* already know what exclusive psalmody is, with the implication that there is no need for articles explaining it. It is not a stretch to imagine that most people probably think the same way: “I already know what exclusive psalmody is: sing only psalms. I also already know that I disagree with it. What more is there to say about it?” Some, and maybe even many, of the readers of *Reformed Pavilion* may have thought the same way at one point. As the undersigned replied to Mr. Van Dyk:

Speaking as one who grew up in what I would consider an “exclusive psalmody” Protestant Reformed church, I was surprised how little I actually knew about exclusive psalmody. I assumed that I knew what it meant, but there was actually quite a bit for me to learn. At least some readers of *Christian Renewal* might be in the same boat, so that an article on exclusive psalmody would not be as superfluous as it might seem at first. I’m not saying that the article has to be the one I submitted, but someone’s article might be profitable.

<sup>1</sup> See Andrew Lanning, “Letter to the Editor of *Christian Renewal*,” *Reformed Pavilion* 1, no. 30 (November 4, 2023): 8; “Article on Exclusive Psalmody for *Christian Renewal*,” *Reformed Pavilion* 1, no. 30 (November 4, 2023): 9–10.

Let us keep learning from the word of God; let us keep teaching where a door is opened; and let us trust our heavenly Father to bring the fruit that he has determined upon that teaching

where and when he pleases. “Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days” (Eccl. 11:1).

—AL

## HERMAN HOEKSEMA'S BANNER ARTICLES

The Banner

May 1, 1919

(Pp. 277–78)

Our Doctrine by Rev. H. Hoeksema

### Article XXXI. The Fallen King and His Kingdom (continued)

The first point we asked you to bear in mind in connection with the problem that engages our attention is, that God saves the world. Salvation must be understood in its cosmological significance. Not only our soul, but also our body is saved. Not only our individual person, but that person in organic relation with the Body of Christ, the ultimate organism of the human race is to be saved. Not that organism as something separate from the world, but in relation to all the rest of God's creation is to be exalted to the glory unto which God has from eternity destined it in Christ. God will not give the glory of His Name to another. Salvation is not the snatching from the universal destruction what is still to be saved, while most of it is lost, but it is the restoration and completion of all the works of God.

The second fact which must be emphasized is that this entire world is saved only thru Christ Jesus and that thru the power of one and the same grace. The reason that we wish to state this fact, which would otherwise seem so self-evident, is that even in regard to this plain truth one meets with a wrong conception once in a while. There are, among our own people some strange conceptions of what is called “common grace.” Witness the fact that more than once the question is heard: “Does this or that belong to the sphere of special or of common grace?” So you meet with the notion, more or less

consciously and definitely expressed, that God saves His people thru special grace, but the rest of the world is saved by “common grace.” It is over against this strange notion that it is necessary to state once more and with emphasis, that the whole world, all the work of God is saved in and thru Christ Jesus, and that the same power of grace that saves the covenant people also saves all creation. It is on the basis of the blood of reconciliation that God saves all His people and thus realizes His covenant. But it is also on that same basis that all creation is delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

There is nothing strange in this. It was by one sin, by the sin of man, that all creation fell away from God and into the power of corruption. The sin of man, so we confess did not only have its effect on man, but also on the world. He was made king of the world. He ruled over that world. In that world he stood as the representative of God, and it was in him as the King-servant, that all creation was to reach its highest glory and God's Name was to be adored most perfectly. He belonged to that world, and that world belonged to him. It was, therefore, not merely Adam as an individual that fell, but in Adam man as king of the world surrendered himself and his dominion to the devil, and also his kingdom became the dominion of satan. In short, to the fallen king belonged a fallen world,

and if grace had not prevented, the whole kingdom would have dashed down to utter ruin with man.

Now then, if such is the case in regard to sin, it is also true in respect to the power of grace. Even as one sin caused the ruin of the kingdom, so also one power of grace brings the restoration of all things. Besides, thus we find it in Scripture. The connection between the first and last part of John 3:16 is evidently such, that thru the salvation of man by faith, God saves the world. "For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Three things are here mentioned. In the first place, that God loved the world. There is no reason to depart from the original and most natural meaning of the word "world" in this connection. It surely does not mean "evil world" or the order of things as it is subjected to the power and dominion of sin. Neither does it mean "all men" for in that case the unscriptural notion of universal salvation and grace would have to be carried into the text. Nor is it correct to say, that "world" in this connection must be explained as meaning "the elect," for this would be a rather strange significance of the word. There is but one possibility, and that is, that world be taken in its most natural sense, as the sum-total of all the works of God conceived of as one harmonious whole. That work of His hands, which was the revelation of His Name God loved. And He so loved it that He gave His only begotten Son. This is in the second place. The purpose of this gift is evidently the salvation of the entire cosmos, of all the world. Jesus Christ, the Son come into the flesh is, therefore, a manifestation of love of God to His world, and the purpose of His being sent, is nothing less than the salvation of the whole world. And in the third place, it is also indicated in the text that this salvation of the world will take place thru the salvation of man, the king of that world. "That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." This same truth is also evident from the passages we quoted last week, especially that from Col. 1:19, 20: "For it was the good pleasure of the Father

that in Him should all the fulness dwell; and thru Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, having made peace thru the blood of His cross; thru him, I say, whether things upon the earth or things in the heavens." All things are to be reconciled to God, all the world is to be saved, and that in Christ Jesus, the Head of the Body, and thru the blood of His cross. And, therefore, also this truth must be restated with emphasis. God will save the whole world and He does so in Christ, thru the power of one and the same grace. Even as sin surrendered the whole kingdom to satan, so the power of the cross snatches all the kingdom away from him.

The third point we make is, that the world also in its present stage and its present condition, with its present form of existence and its present life and institutions is upheld by the power of that same grace in Christ Jesus.

You realize, here we touch upon the question proper of "common grace." The wrong conception we mentioned above is not as such connected with the theory of "common grace." It is merely a misunderstanding sometimes met with among those who wrongly interpret the common grace theory. That all the world is ultimately saved by Christ and that all things are to be reunited in Him is admitted by all who understand the Reformed View. But this restoration of all things will not be till the end. When all of Christ's people shall have been gathered in and it is time that the New Jerusalem descend out of heaven from God, then Christ will restore all things, complete the whole kingdom and subject Himself to God. That new world will be for His people only, and they only shall walk in the light of the New Jerusalem, while the wicked shall have been cast into outer darkness. But there is an entire, extremely significant period of history between the fall of Adam and the final consummation of all things. Thousands of years elapse that have an altogether peculiar character. The world is, as it were in an intermediate state. It is neither entirely lost nor is it already wholly saved. In this intermediate condition the good and the wicked live alike in the same world, the



elect and the reprobate have a common life in the earth, enjoy common blessings. And, therefore, it is in this period, between the fall of man and the final restoration of all things that God shows His common grace to all men. The world as such in this dispensation is upheld by the power of the Mediator of Creation, and in the meantime the Mediator of the Covenant of Grace calls and prepares His own people in this world. Common grace constitutes the necessary basis for Special Grace to operate.

This “common grace” idea we deny. As we have stated before, in the first place, because it is an inconceivability that God can show any grace at all in the objective sense, except with the maintenance of His righteousness in the blood of Christ Jesus. And in the second place, as we shall develop further, for the evident fact that there is no receptivity in the heart of natural man for the grace of God in any sense.

And over against this theory we maintain, that the world also in its present state and condition exists only because of the work of Christ as Mediator; that it was borne ever since the fall of man on the wings of His grace; and that all does exist, also in this present world has no other purpose than to lead to the completed manifestation of Christ and His glorious Kingdom.

All things exist because of the grace there is in Christ Jesus and His atoning blood. All things have been given to Christ from eternity, that He might reconcile all things unto God thru the blood of his cross. To do this He receives a people. For this people he must suffer and fulfill the law, that they may have eternal life. These people He must prepare for His eternal kingdom. But these people must be born from the organism of the human race, of the which Adam and Eve are the natural parents. Hence, that these people may come out, yea even that the Christ Himself may ultimately assume human flesh, all the human race exists. The reprobate are born along with the elect, for the sake of the elect, or if you please, for the sake of Christ Jesus. These people must live. They must have a place on earth. They must have room to develop. And,

therefore, also the world in its present form is given to Christ and exists for Christ's sake, and for the sake of His people only, that they may come forth and develop to the last man. Still more. It is for their sake that God gives various institutions for this present time, in order to make it possible, that a certain form of orderly life may develop and there can be a history of the world. Especially after the flood this becomes evident. Thus there is the institution of the state, with its power of the sword and its calling to maintain a certain relative righteousness in the earth. There is the institution of the home, the school, society in general, yea, even the church as an institute. They are all temporal institutions, for this present history of the world, and they would never have existed were it not for Christ and His people. Without these temporal gifts and blessings the work of Christ as mediator of the Covenant would have been impossible. And, therefore, they exist of Him and for Him. And they all exist for no other purpose than that the kingdom of Christ may develop, the kingdom of darkness may be temporarily checked in its development, and the people of God in Christ Jesus may be gathered to the last man.

In parentheses, we may suggest that here lies the true basis for a correct conception of “Social Christianity.” There is an almost universal movement in the world to establish the “Kingdom of God” on earth. Thru development and the perfection of this present life and all the institutions God has established for the life of the world, that kingdom must be realized. The state must be perfected, and thru the help of the state society must be placed on a better basis, so that the evils of present day society may be removed and social justice and love may reign supreme. At the same time the nations must come to an international confederation or league, so that war may be prevented and the era of universal peace and righteousness may soon be heralded in. To this great task the Church also must devote her influence and strength. In a word, the conception is, that when the state, church and society are perfected, work in harmony together, so that the life of this world

shall finally have reached the height of its development, the kingdom of God shall have been realized. But this is a fundamentally wrong conception, a conception that is calculated to set the church at work for the development of the kingdom of antichrist. That this is true we shall show later. Now we only wish to point out, that the present existence of the world, with its present life, its present institutions, with state and society, home and school, and all that exists, is of a temporal nature. All these institutions exist for the kingdom of God, but they constitute no integral part of the kingdom. They shall have an end when they shall have served their purpose. And for that reason we should insist that they all should exist in harmony with the principles of

the Word of God, but never should we be allured by the false gospel that a perfecting of them is identical with the establishment of God's kingdom on earth.

But this in parentheses. Fact is that we maintain that also these temporal blessings and institutions exist for Christ's sake and for the purpose of completing His Kingdom. They are blessings that find their basis in the same blood that was shed for the life of the world. Blessings for Christ and His elect.

In these blessings of grace the reprobate participate.

Yet, to them they are no blessings of grace.

—Holland, Mich.



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