



# REFORMED

— P A V I L I O N —

VOLUME 3 ISSUE 4

MAY 3, 2025

*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*

# CONTENTS

---

## 3 MEDITATION Man's Bestial Gods

---

## 4 HERMAN HOEKSEMA'S *BANNER* ARTICLES Article 108: The New King and His Kingdom: Abraham, the Friend of God (continued)

---



Editor: Rev. Andrew Lanning  
*From the Ramparts* Editor: Dewey Engelsma

See [reformedpavilion.com](http://reformedpavilion.com) for all contact and subscription information.

Whosoever lieth with a beast shall surely be put to death. He that sacrificeth unto any god, save unto the LORD only, he shall be utterly destroyed.

—Exodus 22:19–20

### Man's Bestial Gods

When Israel would enter the land of Canaan, she would encounter the grossest perversions. Canaanite men lay with animals the way a husband lies with his wife. Canaanite women approached animals the way a wife approaches her husband. The Canaanites were infamous for their perversions. Their father Canaan—son of Ham, grandson of Noah—had walked in unnatural and perverse ways. As the father Canaan had done, so had he taught his Canaanite descendants to do. When the Israelites entered the land of Canaan, they must not imitate the perverse Canaanites. “After the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do...Neither shalt thou lie with any beast to defile thyself therewith: neither shall any woman stand before a beast to lie down thereto: it is confusion. Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you” (Lev. 18:3, 23–24).

The Canaanite perversions were not due to lust. Rather, the Canaanites' bestiality was religious. Many Canaanite gods were crosses between humans and animals. The Philistine god Dagon was a merman—half man, half fish. The Phoenician god Molech was a minotaur—half man, half bull. The Canaanite god Baal was also often represented as half man, half bull. When Canaanite men and women lay with beasts, it was a religious act that reflected their bestial gods. When God forbade this perversion, he was not merely forbidding unnatural lust. Rather, God was forbidding idolatry and false religion. Verses 19 and 20 must be read together

as one: “Whosoever lieth with a beast shall surely be put to death. He that sacrificeth unto any god, save unto the LORD only, he shall be utterly destroyed.”

What lay at the heart of this Canaanite perversion was the notion that man is god. Baal was a powerful, virile god; the Canaanites represented him as the powerful, virile bull. And because man is god—powerful and virile through the blessing of his god Baal—the Canaanites represented Baal as the minotaur. Baal was a Man-god. Dagon was a fecund, fertile god; the Philistines represented him as the fecund, fertile fish. And because man is god—fecund and fertile through the blessing of his god Dagon—the Philistines represented Dagon as the merman. Dagon was a Man-god. In its essence the false, bestial religion of the Canaanites was nothing but a religion of man. The false, bestial doctrine of the Canaanites was simply that man is god.

Where is that old Canaanite religion found today? Not in a disordered and unnatural lust for a beast. Certainly, let no one engage in such perversions. But the modern incarnation of that old bestial Canaanite religion is the false doctrine that man contributes to his salvation or decides his worship. Wherever the church gives man the place of God, she makes that old Man-god of Baal and Man-god of Dagon. Whenever the church teaches that man has the place of God, she engages in that old Canaanite bestiality.

Oh, man would be greatly offended to be accused of such a thing. How dare anyone declare that modern, sensible, religious man with his

nice church and his sincere worship is actually engaged in bestiality! But man knows nothing. Man imagines that false doctrine and false worship are perfectly tolerable. Over against man's diseased and perverse imagination stands the testimony of God that man's false worship and false doctrine are bestial gods. For what else is the doctrine of man's free will than a Man-god? What else is the well-meant offer of the gospel than a Man-god? What else is will worship than a Man-god? And "whosoever lieth with a beast" and "sacrificeth unto any god...shall be utterly destroyed."

Now behold what the true God hath wrought. So great is his mercy to his undeserving people

that he sent his only begotten Son into our flesh to bear our sins and to deliver us from our death. God's way is not the unspeakable perversion of a Man-god but the unspeakable mercy of the God-man. For the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. Jesus is not a monster like the merman or the minotaur; he is the mediator, our Immanuel—God with us. Man's gods are confusion; Jesus is God's covenant. He that lieth with a beast shall surely be put to death. But he that believeth on Jesus Christ hath everlasting life!

—AL

## HERMAN HOEKSEMA'S *BANNER* ARTICLES

The Banner

March 3, 1921

(p. 134)

Our Doctrine by Rev. H. Hoeksema

### Article CVIII: The New King and His Kingdom: Abraham, the Friend of God (continued)

**A**braham is called the friend of God. This is presented to us in Scripture as his special distinction.

It is striking that we read of this in the epistle of St. James, the apostle who emphasizes that faith must reveal itself in works. It is in the very context in which he discusses the truth that faith is dead without works, that he quotes Scripture regarding Abraham as saying that the patriarch is called the friend of God. "If a man say that he has faith," so the apostle argues in 2:14, "but he have not works, it profiteth nothing." Faith must become manifest in the works of faith. Without the works faith is barren, is dead, does not exist. Thus it was with Abraham. He possessed the faith, and his faith was reckoned unto him for righteousness. But that his faith was not barren, but fruitful and alive, became evident from the works of faith he performed. His faith

was made perfect by works. In the works he manifested himself as the friend of God. "And the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness; and he was called the friend of God."

The same expression we find in Is. 41:8. In the context the prophet emphasizes the truth that Jehovah is Israel's party over against their enemies. He is with Jacob and will help him. They that are incensed against Israel Jehovah will put to shame and confound. They that seek Israel's soul shall not be found, and they that war against Jacob shall be as nothing. For Jehovah is the Holy One of Israel, the Redeemer of his people, helping them against the enemies that come against them. In the name and through the help of Jehovah the worm of Jacob shall be strong and invincible, and the great

kingdoms of the world shall be destroyed by them and cast to the wind as chaff. This beautiful passage, in which Jehovah presents himself as the faithful party of Israel over against all that would oppress the people and seek their soul, is introduced by the eighth verse: "But thou, Israel, my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham, my friend \* \* \* \* fear thou not, for I am with thee."

Abraham's special distinction is, therefore, that he was called the friend of God.

What does this imply? What is the meaning of this friendship of and with Jehovah?

The words that are used, whether in the Old Testament or in the New Testament, in the Hebrew or in the Greek, do not tell us very much in regard to the specific character of this friendship. They are both derived from words that denote love. In the Hebrew the word for friendship even emphasizes this idea of love. It denotes a strong love, a breathing after the object of this love, a strong yearning, a tremendous longing of the soul. And, therefore, the root-idea seems to be that of a strong, unquenchable, mutual affection.

But the question is: What is the specific nature of this love? Love is not always the same. A child loves his father, and the father loves the child. There is love between man and wife. But there is also the love of a friend to his friend. And the wise man tells us that there is a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother (Prov. 18:24). What is that strong mutual affection that is denoted by the expression that Abraham was the friend of God?

In the first place, the affection, the mutual love expressed by the word friendship, denotes the familiar intercourse, a living on the same level, a confiding to each other of secrets that are intimated to no others, a counseling together, a walking together on the same plane of life. This is evident from the use of the word friendship in different connections. So, for instance, in Matt. 11:19 and Luke 7:34. In both passages we find the incident recorded that John sent some of his disciples to Jesus to inquire whether

He were the Christ that was to come or whether someone else was to be looked for. And when the disciples of John have departed Jesus sings his eulogy on the great Baptist, greater than who had not arisen among those that were born of women. And He upbraids the people of that generation for their attitude over against John the Baptist and over against Himself. Of John they said that he had a devil. John came neither eating nor drinking. As the last of the Nazarites he pointed Israel to their only salvation in isolation. But the people, especially the representatives of that generation, had drawn the conclusion that he had a devil. Who could go without food and drink? But Jesus was no Nazarite. He could cast himself safely into the midst of food and drink. He was conqueror of all, even over the power of sin and death. Hence, He was not afraid. He came eating and drinking. And what did the people say? What was the judgment of that generation? "The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold, a gluttonous man and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!" (Matt. 11:19; Luke 7:34). Jesus was the friend of publicans and sinners. That is, He lived familiarly with them. Such was the meaning of those that accused Jesus. He ate and drank with them. He associated with them. The word "friend" in this connection has the meaning of associate. It denotes one that associates familiarly with another. And this is actually one of the chief ideas expressed by the word friendship. A friend walks and talks and eats and counsels with his friend. He lives in a relation of intimate and familiar association with his friend. He confides to him his counsels, his plans, his secrets. For his friend he has no secrets.

In this connection it is striking that, according to the law of Hebrew parallelism, the covenant of Jehovah is described as the friendship of Jehovah with them that fear Him in Ps. 25:14: "The friendship of Jehovah is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant." Thus the revised version has it. The standard version here translates: "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him." In the original a word is used that denotes familiar and friendly

intercourse, as takes place in a circle of friends. The idea, therefore, is that Jehovah has intimate and familiar intercourse with his people; He shows them his covenant. He treats them as his friends. Clearly the composers of our Dutch psalms have grasped this truth when they paraphrased it as follows:

God's verborgen omgang vinden  
Zielen daar zijn vrees in woont.  
't Heilgeheim wordt aan zijn vrienden  
Naar zijn vreeverbond getoond.<sup>1</sup>

In that beautiful stanza the ideas of familiar intercourse, of the covenant, of the friendship of Jehovah have been so combined as to express the meaning of the original most perfectly. This, then, is one of the chief elements of friendship. It is a mutual affection between persons that live on the same plane, on a level with each other, and therefore exercise familiar intercourse and confide to each other their secrets.

In the second place the idea of friendship implies that of faithfulness over against each other. Friends choose each other's side over against enemies. They represent each other. They are each other's party. They maintain each other, they defend each other's cause. The most beautiful illustration of this we possess in the friendship of David and Jonathan, especially from the latter's side. Jonathan has nothing to gain and everything to lose by this friendship between himself and David. Jonathan is aware of the fact that David shall ascend the throne of Israel and that he himself shall not be heir to that throne. But his soul cleaves to the soul of David. He takes David's side. Over against his father he defends him, and when the anger of his father burns against David Jonathan protects his friend, and warns him against the wrath of the king. The same idea is expressed by the wise man in Prov. 18:24 when he speaks of a Friend

that sticketh closer than a brother. And thus friendship expresses a relationship in which the parties choose each other's side and defend each other's cause over against enemies.

Hence, three elements are presented by Scripture as implied in this idea of friendship.

In the first place, there is the strong affection, the mutual love, the longing for each other, the yearning for each other's presence.

In the second place, there is the idea of familiar intercourse, the living together on the same plane, the confiding to each other of plans and secrets. The counseling together.

In the third place, there is the idea of taking each other's side, of defending each other's cause, of being each other's party over against enemies.

Abraham was the friend of God. God was his friend. He was God's friend. He was the beloved of God and God was loved by him. God and Abraham lived together in familiar association. God counsels with Abraham and reveals his secrets to him, talks with him and walks with him, eats and drinks with him, stops at his home. According to the measure of the creature, of course, Abraham lives on a level with God. God comes to live on a level with Abraham. Abraham is God's party in the world over against the enemy and God is Abraham's party.

Of course, for Abraham this is the result of the operation of God's grace. Abraham is not God's friend of himself. God's grace makes of him his friend. Nevertheless, the wonderful result of this grace of God is that Abraham is the friend of the Most High, that he is received into the counsels, into the familiar intercourse of Jehovah, his covenant-God.

Of this threefold truth the history of Abraham is a living illustration.

—Grand Rapids, Mich.

<sup>1</sup> English translation: "God's hidden communion Souls in which his fear dwells find. The secret of salvation is revealed to his friends According to his covenant of peace." (Translation done by Google Translate, with slight editing.)