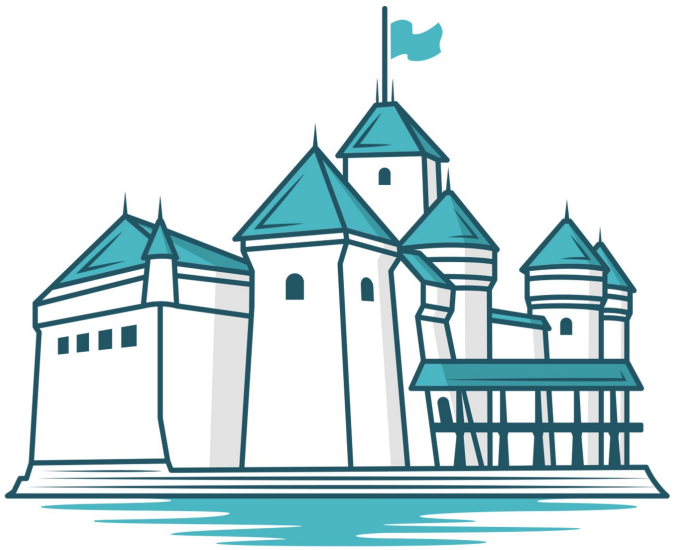

REFORMED PAVILION

Volume 3 Issue 39

January 3, 2026

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
The Mitre

4 FROM THE RAMPARTS
The Life of James Arminus (8)

7 HERMAN HOEKSEMA'S *BANNER* ARTICLES
Article 143: The New King and His Kingdom: The Earthly Sanctuary

REFORMED PAVILION

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

See reformedpavilion.com for all contact and subscription information.

And thou shalt make the mitre of fine linen. —Exodus 28:39 (See also 39:28.)

The Mitre

Upon the high priest's head sat the mitre, or turban. The word *mitre* comes from a root word that means *to wind around*, which indicates that the mitre was probably a long strip of fine linen cloth that was wound around and around the high priest's head and fastened to make a close-fitting head covering. The mitre was pure white, like the foundational garment of the high priest, the broidered coat. The Bible tells us very little about the mitre. The text quoted above almost exhausts scripture's description of the mitre. Nevertheless, we know that the mitre was a distinct garment, being listed separately in the list of the garments in Exodus 28:4. The Bible is also filled with descriptions of the significance of the mitre.

In order to understand the significance of the mitre, we must understand the significance of the head, where the mitre was worn. The head is a symbol of authority. So it is with Christ and his church. "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:22–23). Therefore, so it also is with husbands and wives. "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church" (5:22–23).

Because the head is the symbol of authority, the covering of the head is the symbol of being under authority. So it was for the women of Corinth: "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God...every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head...For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head...But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering" (I Cor. 11:3, 5, 10, 15). So also the high priest, with the mitre upon his head, showed that he was subject to the authority of Jehovah in his work. His covered head showed that he was a servant of God; it showed that he reverenced God, whom he served; and it showed that he obeyed what God commanded him to do. The mitre also demonstrated the greatness of God. If the mighty high priest in all of his glorious and beautiful finery was subject to God, then how great must be his God!

Our Lord Jesus Christ fulfills the meaning of the mitre, for he is the high priest who is subject to God. "The head of Christ is God" (I Cor. 11:3). Jesus expressed his subjection to God repeatedly. "As I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me" (John 5:30). "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (6:38). And, marvelously, in Gethsemane, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matt. 26:39).

How could it be that Jesus Christ was subject to God? Is not Jesus himself God, the second person of the Trinity? Indeed he is, but he is also man. The second person united to himself our human nature, of the flesh and blood of the virgin Mary. According to his divine nature, he is not subject to God but equal with him. According to his human nature, he is subject to God and wears the mitre before him.

What is the benefit of our Lord's subjection to Jehovah? It is this: our Lord came to do his Father's will, which will was to save all his elect.

"Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (John 4:34). It is also this: our Lord finished his Father's work by humbling himself before God and becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (Phil. 2:8). In the mitre, which is our Lord's subjection to God, is found our salvation. Holy garment for glory and for beauty!

—AL

From the Ramparts

The Life of James Arminius (8)

Arminius began his conference with Gomarus, held on May 6–7, 1603, by trying to minimize its significance.[1] He stated that not every difference in religion had to do with the essentials of the faith and that some differences should be met with forbearance. Gomarus responded by stating that in the current context, what mattered was whether the differences between the two of them were essential or not. He contended they were. Arminius disagreed and said their differences were not essential.

Gomarus started the conference by attacking the position of Arminius on Romans 7, stating that Arminius' position was contrary to the Heidelberg Catechism. According to biographer Kaspar Brandt, Arminius responded by testifying that he entirely assented to the Catechism; and regarding his interpretation of Romans 7, he said that Lord's Day 3, Q&A 8 was referring to regeneration in its initial stage and not full and complete renewal.[2] He said that when he referred to the man of Romans 7 as unregenerate, he was not saying that man was "utterly irregenerate," and that was why his position was as far removed from that of Socinus as was possible.[3] As for the uproar over his sermon on Romans 7, Arminius maintained that he had given no cause for such turmoil.

As for the charge that what he was teaching was essentially Pelagian, Arminius responded by rejecting the charge and stating positively that what he had taught agreed with the teachings of those who had *condemned* Pelagianism.

When Gomarus followed up and asked to hear more of Arminius' views on these subjects "a little more fully and accurately," both the curator of the university and Arminius himself refused (132). The curator would not allow it, saying that others should have already informed Gomarus about Arminius' views and that it was up to Gomarus to produce proof of whatever errors he alleged. Arminius, for his part, said he would not say another word until Gomarus and the other rulers in the church had cleared him of the lies that had been hurled against him.

At this point, according to Brandt, Gomarus stated that because Arminius had repudiated Pelagianism, he was satisfied and that Arminius' explanation of Romans 7 could be tolerated in the churches. Then Arminius took out a copy of the New Testament—"which he always bore about with him"—read the entirety of Romans 7, and gave such an explanation that no one, Gomarus included, could speak against it (133). The conference ended with the men's giving him the right hand of fellowship, clearing the way for his appointment to the professorship.

[1] For background on this conference, see Dewey Engelsma, "The Life of James Arminius (7)," *Reformed Pavilion* 3, no. 38 (December 27, 2025): 4–9.

[2] Question: Are we then so corrupt that we are wholly incapable of doing any good, and inclined to all wickedness? Answer: Indeed we are, except we are regenerated by the Spirit of God (Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 3, Q&A 8).

[3] Kaspar Brandt, *The Life of James Arminius, D. D., Professor of Theology in the University of Leyden, Holland*, trans. John Guthrie (Charleston, SC: Legare Street Press, 2023; originally published London: Ward, 1854), 131. Page numbers for subsequent quotations from this book are given in text.

Here is the summary of this conference as related in the Historical Foreword to the *Acts of the National Synod of Dordrecht*:

> In that conference Arminius testified that he expressly rejected the Pelagians' chief points of doctrine concerning natural grace, the powers of the free will, original sin, the perfection of man in this life, predestination, and others. He testified also that he agreed with all that Augustine and other fathers had written against the Pelagians, yea, that he judged the Pelagian errors to have been rightly refuted and rejected by the fathers. Moreover, he promised to teach nothing that conflicted with the adopted doctrine of the churches. Thereafter he was admitted to the office of theology.[4]

With this hurdle cleared, some urged Arminius to pursue the title of doctor, which required another examination—an examination, Brandt notes, that Arminius successfully sustained under Gomarus' hand. As part of the process of obtaining the doctorate, Arminius held a public disputation on the topic assigned to him, "Concerning the Nature of God," which, Brandt writes, Arminius "passed off with universal applause" (135). Brandt proudly records that "Arminius was the first, as Bertius testifies, who, in the Leyden Academy, bore away the title and degree of doctor" (135). The claim is technically correct—it was the first doctorate conferred by that academy—but earlier professors had simply obtained their degrees elsewhere.

Arminius took up his post at Leiden as professor of theology and did so with glowing letters of commendation. The governing academic council of the University of Leiden extolled Arminius as a man of "sacred letters and of orthodox theology" and "judged him in the highest degree worthy to be honoured" with its public testimonial (137). The consistory of the church in Amsterdam also praised Arminius for his "blamelessness of life and soundness of doctrine," while the broader church assembly, the Amsterdam classis, declared that Arminius had always "taught wholesome doctrine" (138–39).

Soon after his appointment as professor, two students asked him to attend the defense of their thesis. Brandt states that Arminius was concerned that these young students were "entangling themselves in the intricacies of many profitless questions," and he found that the positions of these two students contained elements with which he disagreed; so he told his colleagues that students should not preoccupy themselves with such "thorny theorems and problems" but rather return to scripture and focus on that which guides the believer in holiness (145). What were these subjects that were dismissed as profitless questions, thorny theorems, and mere problems? Justification and original sin.

This, Brandt notes, stirred unrest at the university, which he attributes to envy. More controversy followed. The professors established a schedule of disputations, and to Arminius fell the topic of predestination. He taught that

> divine predestination is the decree of God's good pleasure in Christ, by which, with himself, from eternity, he resolved to justify and adopt believers, on whom he decreed to bestow faith, and to give eternal life to them, to the praise of his glorious grace; that reprobation, on the other hand, is the decree of wrath, or the severe will of God, by which, from eternity, he resolved to condemn to eternal death, unbelievers who, by their own fault, and by the just judgment of God, will not believe, as persons who are not in a state of union with Christ—and this for the declaration of his wrath and power. (147–48)

Brandt interprets this as Arminius simply following the dictates of his conscience, though acknowledging that his view of predestination

[4] Homer C. Hoeksema, *The Voice of Our Fathers: An Exposition of the Canons of Dordrecht*, 2nd ed. (Jenison, MI: Reformed Free Publishing Association, 2013), 570.

differed from that of Calvin and Beza. It is, Brandt says, a sign of Arminius' magnanimity that he refrained from openly disparaging those Genevan divines, even though Arminius regarded their opinions as involving "numerous absurdities" (148–49). Arminius also wanted to discard every Genevan doctrine that supported the idea of necessity—that is, the idea that God's counsel was not contingent on events that would unfold but that God's counsel must necessarily come to pass exactly because the sovereign God willed it.

Arminius later submitted other teachings for public examination, including one on original sin, in which he sought to refute the idea of necessity and to establish the contingency of sin. He also engaged in a debate with Petrus Helmichius of Amsterdam, who appealed to passages such as "the word of God stands," "the word of God cannot be broken," and "the counsel of God shall stand" and on the basis of such passages "inferred that what God had decreed must come to pass necessarily" (149–50). Arminius replied that nothing magnifies the glory of God more than to confess that "there is nothing necessary besides God; and that he not only foreknows things contingent, but also that his decrees are accomplished through contingent events and free causes" (150).

Gomarus would have none of it. Word soon spread that he was preparing to dispute the subject, to "descend into the arena against Arminius, in open war" (151). This he did on October 31, 1603, mere months after Arminius' appointment to the professorship. He did so by departing from his assigned topic when it was his time to offer a disputation. Gomarus addressed the topic of predestination, although that was not his assigned topic and although Arminius had already treated it. Brandt takes exception to this, saying that Gomarus was disorderly in his conduct, for he had not waited "till a proper opportunity should be furnished him for disputing on the subject of predestination," and thus Gomarus had "overstepped order." Brandt suggests that Gomarus' actions were probably only done at the "instigation" of others (151).

In this disputation Gomarus set forth, in ways that Brandt judges objectionable but that the Reformed man finds glorious, the truth of God's sovereignty in salvation: that God "might make known his most sovereign authority, wrath, and power on the reprobate, and the glory of his saving grace in relation to the elect" (152).

Arminius, who was present at this disputation and knew it was directed at him, wrote to Uitenbogaert the next day that his conscience, "void of offence," would be his "brazen wall"; that "the disciple is not above his master"; and that, with God on his side, he was prepared to face opposition on every front (158).

Arminius then prepared a written reply to the disputation of Gomarus, titled *Examination of the Theses exposed to view by Gomarus for public discussion*. He circulated this document privately among a few individuals, and it was not published until more than three decades after his death. His central objection? That Gomarus, together with Calvin and Beza, made God the author of sin.

Brandt concludes his account of Arminius' confrontation with Gomarus by stating that Gomarus later taught what "the schoolmen call a conditionate knowledge" (158). What Brandt means by this is not entirely clear; and without more knowledge of the schoolmen, it is difficult for me to determine if what Brandt is saying is descriptive or sarcastic. What is clear, however, is that Gomarus taught the absolute sovereignty of God, a sovereignty in no way conditioned on the will or actions of man. As historian Richard A. Muller explains, Gomarus "assumed an absolute, omnipotent, and inalterable antecedent will" of God, that is, a divine will that stands prior to and governs all creaturely acts, rather than being shaped by them.[5]

(To be continued)

—DE

[5] Richard A. Muller, *God, Creation, and Providence in the Thought of Jacob Arminius: Sources and Directions of Scholastic Protestantism in the Era of Early Orthodoxy* (Grand Rapids: Baker Publishing Group, 1991), 188.

The Banner January 19, 1922 (pp. 37–38)

Our Doctrine by Rev. H. Hoeksema

Article CXLIII: The New King and His Kingdom: The Earthly Sanctuary

"Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men." —Rev. 21:3

The general significance of the tabernacle or temple is quite plain. It was a picture of God exercising covenant communion with his people. In the sanctuary he dwelled with his people under one roof. He lived with them in the same dwelling as a friend with his friends. As such the sanctuary was a symbol of the intimate relationship and intercourse of the covenant God with his covenant people.

In the most holy place dwelled God in the cloud, on the ark of the covenant, speaking of righteousness and mercy, of mercy based on righteousness.

In the holy place dwelled his covenant people. And this not only because the priests, representing the people, entered for them into the holy place while the people stood outside. But also, and even more, because the people were continually present in that holy place, because of the symbolical significance of its furniture. The three pieces of furniture in the holy place, before the veil, evidently were symbols of the people. Thus, the candlestick, or better, the seven-armed lamp, was symbolic of the people of God shining continually through the grace of God as a light in the world, to the glory of the most high God. This is evident from the number seven, referring to the fulness of God's covenant and kingdom. This is evident, too, from the very purpose of this candlestick; it had to be a continual light. This is evident from the fact that these lamps had to be continually replenished with oil, symbolic of the Spirit of God, through whom alone the people of God can realize their calling as a light in the world. And, finally, this is plain from a comparison with the seven golden candlesticks in whose midst Christ appears in Rev. 1. For he himself explains that the seven golden candlesticks are the seven churches, and these, of course, are in turn a picture of the Church of Christ in general. In the candlestick, then, the people of God were present chiefly in their prophetic calling, to magnify the name of Jehovah and shine to his glory in the world. The altar of incense is symbol of prayer and consecration, and points rather to the priestly calling of the people of God, to consecrate themselves with all they are and possess to the God of their salvation. And, if we take it that the twelve loaves of bread on the table of shewbread represented, with the wine that was also present, the fruit of Israel's labor, bestowed on the land of their inheritance, which itself was the kingdom of God, we may find in these twelve loaves offered to God a symbol of the people of God in their kingly office. However this may be, it is rather plain that in the furniture of the holy place we possess the symbolism that points to the people of God's covenant. Thus the sanctuary proper outside of the court was a symbol of God's covenant communion with his people. The most holy place was particularly the dwelling place of God, the holy place of the people of his covenant; together they constituted a beautiful picture of God's dwelling with his people under one roof in intimate covenant relationship.

Of course, all this was a message to the people of Israel at that time. It all had symbolical significance. Neither must we object that the

people of the old dispensation by faith could not and did not understand the clear symbolism of the sanctuary. That tabernacle and that temple were a gospel to them. But although this is true we should never forget that the tabernacle also pointed forward. Its picture contained not only symbolism. It was also typical in character and preaching. It pointed to better things. For the sanctuary, as it stood there, could not satisfy the deepest yearnings of faith. It also clearly preached that the perfecting of this covenant communion of God with his people was still to be expected in the future. It did this, as we shall see again, in the first place, by its repeated offerings, the oft repetition of which preached that they could not atone in themselves. As we know, in the court of the tabernacle stood the altar of burnt offering and the laver. These were symbols of righteousness through the blood of atonement and sanctification. And their place in the outer court, before the door of the sanctuary proper, plainly preached that no one could enter into the presence of God and have communion with him except through the holy place. This symbolism was clear. But it was not sufficient that an offering was made once and that the way into the earthly sanctuary was blood sprinkled once for all. The offerings had to be repeated. And in this oft repetition there was the clear message that the tabernacle and temple were not the perfect realization of God's covenant. They pointed forward to a better offering, to the perfect sacrifice once made on the cross. In the second place, that sanctuary could not be the perfect realization of things, because God in it dwelled in a house made with hands. He dwelled among his people, not yet in his people. Canaan was the domain of God, image of the perfect kingdom to come; Jerusalem was the city of God, where God lived. But after all God dwelled not in all Canaan, but in the city of Jerusalem. And in Jerusalem he dwelled not in all of the houses, but in one particular dwelling, in the sanctuary. And even in that sanctuary he did not dwell in the entire house or tent, but only in the most holy place, behind the veil. If you would enter the holy land with the inquiry after the home of God, people would point you to Jerusalem. And if you directed your steps thither, and entering the Holy City would ask more particularly for the dwelling place of God, they would point you to the sanctuary on Moriah. And again, if you should approach the sanctuary with the expectation that you might appear before God, you would be bitterly disappointed. Your place would be in the court; in the sanctuary you might not enter. And, therefore, the entire sanctuary, beautiful as it was in its rich message and symbolism, yet preached plainly that the perfect dispensation, the fullest realization of God's covenant, had not yet come. In a particular country, and in that country in a special city, and again in that city in one peculiar dwelling place God dwelled behind the veil, to be pierced only by the high priest once a year. In its imperfection the symbolism of the sanctuary pointed forward to better things. It was typical as well as symbolical in its message.

First of all, the tabernacle as a whole pointed forward to Christ Jesus. Centrally he is the realization of God's covenant with men. For he is God and man in unity of person. He is Immanuel, God with us. In him the human nature is inseparably knit to the divine as it never was before. In him the most intimate communion exists between the divine and the human, between God and man. As the Word incarnated he is the central, and at the same time the highest realization of the tabernacle of God. He was the temple of God that would be broken down and built again in three days, never to be destroyed any more. The veil is rent in him. And as the perfect Prophet, Priest, and King, the servant of the Most High and the Friend of God, he has communion with the Father. The tabernacle and its furniture, as well as the Jerusalem sanctuary, pointed to Christ.

But this is not the ultimate realization of the tabernacle and temple. It is also realized in a broader sense in the Church of the new dispensation, the body of Christ. When Christ comes, not only the temple may be destroyed, but also the earthly Jerusalem, the city of God, has served

its purpose. The city of God and his temple have become one in the church of the new dispensation. For Christ is exalted at the right hand of the Father in glory; he pours out his Spirit into his Church to abide with them forever so that he dwells in them and they are in him. And thus his own word is realized in the new dispensation: "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be perfected in one" (John 17:23). Believers of the new dispensation are the living people, the living dwelling places of God. In them Jerusalem and the temple are realized.

But even thus the last thing has not been said. For, after all, the shadow of the sanctuary in Jerusalem shall not be fully realized till the kingdom of glory has come. When the new heavens and the new earth shall have come and the new Jerusalem shall have come down from heaven from our God; when the last of God's people shall have entered into glory and the body of Christ shall be complete; when soul and body, in company with all the saints, shall have been perfectly delivered from the last stain of sin and imperfection, God's people shall walk in the new creation. Then shall also the prophecy of that sanctuary in the earthly city of God be fulfilled and the word of the great voice from the throne shall be heard: "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men."

That will be glory unspeakable. It will be the fulness of glory expressed in the words: "And he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them and be their God" (Rev. 21:3).

—Grand Rapids, Mich.

REFORMED PAVILION