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Jewish Education in the Time of Christ

A Protestant Reformed Philosophy of Education

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A mirror reflects with accurate clarity the objects in its proximity; also, it reflects light and shines as if it were that light itself.

A child also reflects. He reflects the moral, spiritual, and intellectual life of his home and family. In many respects he is better than a mirror; he is more than a reflector. He is a tape recorder with the switch always on; he is a camera with the shutter locked open; he is a dynamic transmitter that never suffers from power failure or "blackouts".

Often what one hears from children is both heartening and disheartening. The heartening utterances are varied, interesting, exciting, and soon forgotten. The disheartening are often disturbing, monotonous, annoying, and not-too-soon forgotten by one who is and should be concerned. Consider a concrete example.

When asked the question: "Why do you want a education?", a class of Protestant Reformed young people answered, almost without hesitation, as follows:

"I want an education so that I can make lots of money. I want to make money to buy a new car, new clothes and lots of other things that I can't buy now."

"I want an education so that I can work for Such-and-Such Company, then, I can wear a clean laundered shirt and a flashy suit every day."

"I want to work for my dad's company because he gets a new car every year." Thus, the vigorous clamor continues.

Unfair it certainly would be to blame these children, these home reflectors, for this false education-material-prosperity-perspective. Where did they first hear this idea? In a Protestant Reformed Church which prays daily for young men to enter the ministry and whose congregations are small and the salaries even smaller? Never, by the grace of God, would they hear it there! In a Protestant Reformed Christian School which literally begs for young men and women to enter the impecunious teaching profession? No, they would not hear it here, either! Yes, they did hear it in their own homes! Consider another concrete example.

One hears a mother and daughter talking and working over a pile of dirty dishes.

"Yes, dear", the mother says to the daughter, "get your studies then you can get a good job like Aunt So-and-So. She sure has a lot of fun and makes good money, too.

Or, listen to a father and son banter.

Dad, why can't I have a new car like the rest of the fellas I hang around with?

Son, don't always ask me that question. You know you're not through school yet! Wait till you're through school and making lots of money, then, you can really buy the best!

Familiar conversation? Yes, it is heard, in some form or other, every day.

What is characteristic in both of these conversations is the idea that the school only gives the students the tools with which to make money-to make a living (and a pretty fat one at that!) To say the least, this idea holds the school (and the teachers, school board members, and all those who support the school) in very low esteem. The school does much more.

The school, with God fearing and God praising teachers, gives the students the opportunity to explore the greatness of God's magnificent universe in the light of His Book. In this exploration process the students acquire the tools and/or skills with which to make a living. To deny this would be tantamount to saying that one must starve when the opportunities to survive are present.

The danger in this idea is that it over-emphasizes the materialistic aspect of life. Education, according to this idea, serves one purpose — making money. When lives, even young lives, are crammed with one theory and practice, there is little room for anything else. Too much emphasis is placed on the "making" and not on the "living".

Remember the words of that wise, old, onetime materialist, Solomon:

Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity.

I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold all is vanity and a striving after wind.

Ecclesiastes 1:2 and 2:11b

D.H.
JEWISH EDUCATION IN THE TIME OF CHRIST

The Synagogue-Rabbi System

by REV. ROBERT C. HARBACH

We live in an age in which science seems to advance with the speed of light. Man has not only "aimed at the moon," a phrase formerly denoting, derisively, a ridiculous and impossible aspiration, but he has actually hit it with radar beams, rockets and television cameras. Next he confidently expects within a decade to land a human being on earth's primordial satellite. Not only has science enjoyed a meteoric advance, but so have the popular political ideologies. Socialism and Communism are so fast gaining acceptance, that democracy to many begins to look wan and passe. Also the growth of the false cults and the modernist false church in recent years have been phenomenal. It may be true that every discerning man in history has felt that his was an age of skepticism, unbelief, apostasy, doctrinal indifference and anti-intellectualism. But no age was more so than the present. Men call this the Atomic Age, the Space Age, the Age of Science. The church would call it "this present evil age" (Gal. 1:4), the Age of the Apostasy (The Falling Away), the age of the coming Antichrist. It is by modern men called the Age of the New Morality (the old immorality behind a mere deceptive mask), and of the New Education. Modern education, including religious education, is moving rapidly, but where is it going? It is moving so fast that it ought to be overtaking something, but what? One modern educator claims that it is running itself down headlong to catastrophe.1 Modern education informs us that primitive man lived according to the only educative principle he then knew, the "survival of the fittest." He had to learn out of fear and necessity. But now, today, in the age of the "Mexican stand-off," it has been scientifically proved that life and knowledge can no longer be sustained on the basis of the survival of the fittest, but rather on the basis of the survival of the most co-operative! By sly semantics we are maneuvered into presupposing the judgments of pacificist liberalism. In the age of the philosophers, the sages argued until the day they died as to how men ought to live. They never came to any conclusions on the matter, and if they had, they never would have had time to put them into practice. The friends of Socrates, given as they were to drunkenness and homosexuality, made him the educational ideal the way American teen-agers idolize some beatnik, guitar-strumming, androgynous creature. Education was supposed originally to have been a defense-mechanism. Now, Plato tells us, it became an amusement. In the Dark Ages, the Scholastics wedded Jerusalem to Athens, the Church to the world, in an attempt to Christianize heathen philosophy. Education became culture. In the age of the renaissance, the world sleepily emerged from the gloom of the former era to revive the ancient Greek and Roman humanism. Men were content to live in the past. Education became research. The age of reason was a revolt against dogma, a movement of free-thinking, skepticism and the beginning of dialectical materialism. Education became an intellectual gymnastic. In the age of the electronic computer, education becomes a streamlined melting-pot, boiling and bubbling with a radio-active witches' brew of the expedient, the utilitarian, the pragmatic, the sociological, the controlled, the regimented, the scientific. Education has become a fairy's wand. A wave or two ought to usher in (not the Free, but) the Great Society.

But there is another age deserving of attention. We might call it the age of revelation. Particularly are we concerned with Jewish education at the close of that age. To the Jewish people, still at that time the chosen people of God, education was no mere secular process, nor simply a religious training. It was a theological discipline in the highest sense of the term. Religion was viewed according to its original meaning, the word itself coming from re, back, plus liglo, to bind, i.e., "to bind back," to bind and fasten back to God! All instruction was to be related to God. It proceeded from the fundamental principle that Jehovah is God.

Two
alone, and that Jehovah Elohim is one. Education was therefore from the beginning of Old Testament times pre-adjusted to the later fully revealed New Testament truth of God trium. Since God is the covenant God of Israel, all education in Israel was established on the basis of the covenant idea, "I will be a God unto you, and to your seed after you, and ye shall be My people." That education had a covenant foundation is plain from the entire Book of Deuteronomy. For example, we read, "Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen . . . but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons; . . . I will make them hear My words . . . that they may teach their children . . . Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant . . . For the Lord thy God is a merciful God, He will not forget thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant . . . Unto thee it was showed that thou mightest know that the Lord He is God; there is none else beside Him. Out of heaven He made thee to hear His voice, that He might instruct thee . . . and because He loved thy fathers. therefore He chose their seed after them . . ." (Dt. 4:9, 10, 23a, 31a, 33, 36u, 37a). This covenant foundation of Israel's educational system will give us some idea of Jewish Education in the Time of Christ. That is the subject before us, and may be considered from a three-fold point of view:

I. Its Elementary Education
II. Its Educational Institutions
III. Its Studies and Texts

The Educational Ideal. Every nation in every age has given a prominent place among all its indispensable obligations to that of education. But it was the Jews who formed an educational ideal before any other people of antiquity. The record of Scripture itself informs us of this. "What nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is . . .? What nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this Law?" (Dt. 4:7f). Neither the Greeks nor the Romans of ancient history had special education in religion. Only the religion of the Bible proved competent to furnish the ruling power of a high or an ascending civilization, the power to control, influence and mold all of life, public, social and religious. In Israel, then, especially from the time of Solomon, the root principle of education was expressed in the maxim, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Prov. 1:7), and in "wisdom is the principal thing, therefore get wisdom" (4:7). Since the return from the captivities, Israel no longer envisioned the preservation of its greatness by political power as especially manifested in the reigns of David and Solomon. Rather there developed the new vision of preserving the nation by preserving its religion. This could be done only by way of education, which was a matter first of all, of a divine mission commanded by God. The great teacher was the Lord God Himself. "Now therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the judgments, which I teach you" (Dt. 4:1). When Moses said "the Lord my God commanded me," he meant that God taught me, for the word command means to teach, from a root meaning "to poke with an ox-goad." A teacher in Israel was a man forbids he was an ox-goad in the hands of the Lord to keep Israel in the way of God's commandments. The Lord Himself was the 'Teacher of Moses and Aaron. "I will teach thee what thou shalt say . . . I will teach you what ye shall do" (Ex. 4:12,15). The Lord speaks of Himself not as a disciplinarian, but as a teacher. "Who teacheth like Him?" (Job 36:22). Greek and Roman schools believed that man's mind discovered truth. The Hebrews, in contrast, believed that all the truth comes from God through His written revelation. This Jewish, really Hebrew, ideal of education was expressed in the Book of Proverbs, the oldest handbook of education. From this book we learn that to the covenant people, life was education, and that all the life the knowledge of the true God must be taught. For Israel, religion was more than mere ceremonies, it was Scripture, creeds and the knowledge of God derived therefrom, which dominated and permeated every sphere of life.

Educational Responsibility. Schools as such were unknown in early Bible times because it was firmly believed that the education of the child was the responsibility of the family. The family in Israel always was the fundamental educational institution. This made education the duty of both parents. "Ye shall command your children to observe to do all the words of this law" (Dt. 32:46; cf. Ex. 12:26f; 13:8,14). Especially was it
the duty of the fathers. "O God, our fathers
have told us what work Thou didst in their
days" (Ps. 44:1). "He commanded our
fathers that they should make them known
to their children, that the generation to come
might know them" (78:5f). cf. Dt. 6:6;
Josh. 4:6-21. The mothers, too, had an im-
portant place in the educational process.
"My son, hear the instruction of thy father,
and forsake not the law (teaching) of thy
mother" (Pro. 1:8; 6:20). Education, of
necessity began with the mother. The cove-
nant child was thought of as sucking right-
ceousness from its mother's breast. The idea
was that parents yearned to instruct their
children in righteousness, so that more than
the babe desires to suckle, the mother desires
to suckle. In fact, the world was said to
continue by the breath of school-children.

The instruction of daughters in the fam-
ily was done by the mothers at home. They
were taught "to fear God and keep His
commandments," to read, to write a little,
to know the Torah, although not deeply.
Secular subjects were discouraged, emphasis
instead being placed on "home economics,"
on subjects such as baking (2 S. 13:8), spin-
n ing and weaving (Ex. 35:25f), dyeing (Ac.
16:14), caring for flocks, guarding vineyards
(Song 1:6), gathering harvests (Ru. 2:3),
grinding grain (Mt. 24:41), caring for chil-
dren (2 Samuel 21:8) and managing slaves.
Placed before every Jewish daughter was the
noble ideal of womanhood found in Prov. 31.
"She looketh well to the ways of her house-
hold, and eateth not the bread of idleness.
Her children arise up and call her blessed;
hers husband also, and he praiseth her. Many
daughters have done virtuously, but thou
excellest them all" (27-29). 2 Godly women
in Israel, as Lois and Eunice, did learn the
Scriptures well enough to train a child from
a babe in the knowledge of the Word, and
also, as Priscilla, well enough to explain to
an Apollos the way of God more perfectly.

It was the mother who would make one of
the larger phylacteries, a box called a
Mezuzah (literally, "Door-post"), containing
a small folded parchment inscribed with the
Shema, Dt. 6:4-9, and 11:13-21. On the out-
side of the parchment the name of the Most
High God was written. The Mezuzah was
attached to the door-post of the house, and
all who entered or left, reverently touched
the name on the parchment encased within
the phylactery. then kissed the fingers that
had thus contacted the Holy Name. Prob-
bly Jesus and Timothy as children won-
dered at the use of the Mezuzah and learned
not only to understand its meaning, but per-
ceived the true significance of the Scripture
thus enshrined in some of the homes of Is-
rael. For the elect Israelites were not encum-
bered with Jewish superstitions. Even the
Jewish sect of the Keraín (Readers) adopted
the same creed that the godly Jew was dis-
tinguished for in his faith: the inspiration
and infallibility of the Scriptures, for his re-
jection of the unwritten tradition, and his
denial of the binding authority of the Tal-
ud. He believed that as to a literal binding
of Scripture on the door-posts, or on the
arm, or the forehead, there was not a sign
to be found in the Old Testament or in the
Apocrypha, but that the real spiritual
meaning of inscription upon the heart
is everywhere inculcated throughout Scrip-
ture.

Compulsory Elementary Education. The
elementary school was called Beth Ha-
Sepher, the House of the Book, while the
secondary school was later given the name of
Beth Ha-Midrash, the House of Study, an
academy intended for the promising student.
But it is difficult to determine exactly the
age of the institution of the schoolhouse in
Israel. For, to begin with, there were no
school houses. Schools met originally in
the open air. The pupils sat on the ground, not
on benches, as later, in a near-circle with
the teacher sitting in the opening made, as
prophet, priest and king, wearing his class as
his crown. When the education of orphans
began to be a problem, an educational sys-
tem was established by Simon ben Shetach,
member of the Sanhedrin, in Jerusalem
about 70 B.C., with attendance compulsory.
The orphans were especially provided for,
being made the charge of the whole congre-
gation. They were never put into poor-
houses. One hundred years later, about the
time of Christ's ministry, the high priest,
Joshua ben Gamaliel (Gamaliel), grandson of
the eminent Hillel, passed a law providing
for the establishment of elementary schools
for boys with compulsory attendance from
the age of six. This educational feat was
regarded as being of such merit that it
largely amounted to a sort of penance for
the sin of his wife, Martha, in purchasing
for him the office of high priest. Eventually
it came to pass that it was unlawful to live.
where there was no covenant school. Every Jewish city had to have a school. A city without a school was to be excommunicated or demolished. Indeed, in the immediately following period, the Talmudic Jew believed that “Jerusalem was destroyed because schools and school children ceased to be there.” But the truth is that Jerusalem, the temple and the schools were destroyed because the synagogues gradually displaced the temple and prepared the way for Israel’s rejection of Christ (Mt. 22:7) in preference to Pharisaism.

Children were to attend the schools in their own neighborhood. They were not to attend schools in distant neighborhoods, bypassing their own, nor to attend a school in another town. The Jews foresaw that such practices only led to unwholesome rivalry, and had a tendency to lower the general educational standard. Failing to see the wisdom of this policy, the current public schools in New York City will rue the day when they departed from such a commendable precedent.

According to Gamaliel’s law, each community had to provide a teacher for every 25 children, with an assistant, a pupil teacher, if the number rose to 40, and another teacher if the number reached 50. How successful the system was may be illustrated in Josephus who tells us that at 14 he could expound the most abstruse questions of the law, and that consequently the high priests and principal men of the city frequently came together to him to confer with him on points of the law.

**Aim of the Elementary School.** The duty of the teacher was to inculcate the law, according to the pupil’s capacity, with undying patience, the greatest earnestness, strictness tempered with kindness, discipline without undue severity, with judicious increase of study and work. Overwork of pupils was studiously avoided. School hours were therefore fixed, and attendance shortened during the summer. Education was almost exclusively religious, i.e., scriptural, with but little instruction in nature and secular history. The curriculum included reading. One who could not read was deemed no true Jew. Writing was included, also arithmetic, history and the songs of the Tehillim, the Psalms. Some geography and general knowledge was also taught. In class discussions, few limits were circumscribed, so that every field of knowledge could be touched on, including theology, philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, medicine, geography, history, architecture, botany, animal anatomy, etiquette and manners. There were no Jewish schools of music, architecture, sculpture, painting, arts or drama. Most of these subjects were associated with and had their origin in the pagan religions. So that the Jews never developed these arts. Nor did they have schools of philosophy, rightly regarding the same as humanistic enterprises. The very nature of philosophy tends to deny the idea of divine revelation, the very basis of Hebrew education. Therefore the cultural and educational advantages of Greece and Hellenized Rome not only did not influence the Jews and their schools of this period, but were strictly excluded from their schools and their educational ideals. The Jews saw that the road to ruin led downward from paganism to humanism to amalgamation to oblivion.

But it was never the calling of the teacher merely to inculcate information, nor to impart knowledge for the sake of intellectual development. It was his duty to train the pupil in the fear of the Lord, and to fit him to be a true son of the covenant of Abraham. The general aim of education in ancient Israel was (1) to transmit the knowledge of the history of God’s covenant with His people, and (2) to instruct in the spiritual-ethical application of the covenant to the whole life, according to the Book of the Covenant. Every branch of knowledge was to be dominated by the doctrine of God, and to serve the cause of God and truth.

Relative to its educational institutions, consider, first, the Relation of the School to the Synagogue. The synagogue, one of the oldest institutions of Judaism, probably had its origin in Babylonia during the captivity. Its organization was a considerable departure from the government of the Old Testament church, which was a rule of elders, for it was completely congregational. Although it had elders, the synagogue building itself was called Beth ha-Cheneseth, House of the Congregation, the members of the synagogue congregation were called Bene ha-Cheneseth, Sons of the Congregation, while the head of the synagogue was called Rosh ha-Cheneseth, the Head of the Congregation. He himself could not read the Scrip-
turers in the synagogue unless he was invited by others to do so. Even a woman could on occasion read the Scripture in the public meeting. The reading of the Scripture was done by the members of the congregation. A synagogue could only be formed wherever ten adult males were agreed to meet for study. It became an institution of higher religious learning, and not, originally, one of worship. Nor was it a school for children, who had their own separate institution. It was, to begin with, the place for advanced adult study of the Torah. This institution was the outstanding feature of the post-exilic period. But the elementary school was the special feature of the period we are dealing with, which was Pre-Talmudic (75 B.C. to 70 A.D.) and came at the end of the so-called Scribal period (586 B.C. to 70 A.D.). This school existed in intimate relation to the synagogue. The synagogue itself would provide classroom space for the school, or school was held in the teacher’s house.

1Dr. Max Rafferty, Suffer, Little Children, New Amer. Library, Signet Book, N.Y.C.
3Hastings Bible Dictionary, I, Education, Scribner’s, 641-651.
7HBD, vol. 4, art., Synagogue.

(To be continued. D.V.)

CRITIQUE
by A. LUBBERS

A PROTESTANT REFORMED PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

Christian education and particularly Protestant Reformed Christian education is a work of grace. Protestant Reformed Christian education is naturally impossible and is only possible in the way of faith which is a gift of almighty God. Education in the Protestant Reformed Christian Schools of America is a gift of our covenant-keeping God.

Christian education is a tremendous and unbelievably great responsibility. It is not something which can be taken lightly but a covenant responsibility and a parental calling. It is something laid upon us, who are heirs of the promise, and cannot be shrugged off. What we do as stewards in the vineyard of God cannot be considered passé and a peripheral matter. It is not one of those “indifferent” things. How we fulfill our covenant vows is part of the good works before prepared for us to walk in.

Because parents do not have the time
nor are they prepared academically to train their own children, they have delegated the responsibility for such training to the schools which they have established for this purpose. These schools which are an extension of the home need to be grounded upon firm principles and a sound philosophy of education.

We need not hedge in this matter but say unequivocally that the ultimate purpose of all P.R.C. education is the Glory of God. This is not an outmoded, old-fashioned, over-worked cliché. It is not to be smiled at because of its simple style or because of the commonness of its use by those who love dearly the truth of this concept. P.R.C. education is fundamentally theocentric. God is first and basic in all of education that is given in the school. He commands it to be that way. In the decalogue he says: “Thou shalt have no other God’s before me.” P.R.C. education is in no sense of the word man-centered, if it is to be denominated by the term Christian education. P.R.C. education is fundamentally antithetical and is altogether different from what the world can, will, or does believe. P.R.C. education must be distinctively Reformed. P.R.C. education concerns itself with the thorough furnishment of the man of God who has been redeemed from sin unto every good work.

Since the inception of the P.R.C. schools some work has been done to further the cause of distinctive P.R.C. education. The Federation of P.R.C.S. Societies sponsored a teachers’ seminar which met once monthly for several years. During this time more than twenty different papers were presented by teachers and ministers covering a variety of topics. Papers dealing with the history of education, the psychology of education, and principles for several areas of the curriculum were read and discussed. The P.R. Teachers Institute meets each month. Teachers from the Hope P.R.C.S., Adams P.R.C.S., and South Holland, Illinois, P.R.C.S. are members of this organization. Various topics have been discussed during the years which this organization has existed. Many topics have been of a very practical nature and have been close to the actual day-to-day teaching situation. For a period of time the principles of education prepared by Professor H. Hanko, of the P.R. Theological Seminary, were discussed. These principles of education which cover almost all areas of the curriculum of the school were later adopted by the Hope P.R.C.S.

I mention all of this because I do not want my readers to think that I am not cognizant of much of the work that has been done by teachers and ministers. I am even cognizant of much of the writings which have filled past pages of the Standard Bearer by Rev. J. Heys and Professor H. C. Hoeksema.

A topic such as this may seem a bit presumptuous to the reader. It may even be argued that because of all that has been written and said that we have basically a Protestant Reformed philosophy of education and with this I only partially agree. In principle I believe we do have a P.R. philosophy of education but I can hardly agree that it has been carefully articulated and that the subject has been thoroughly exhausted. Such a philosophy is certainly not in a form that can easily be consulted and used by those who are busy each day in the training of P.R. covenant youth in our grade schools and who will, we hope, some day train them in a high school in the Grand Rapids area and possibly other areas of our country. It might be argued that every P.R. teacher who is Protestant Reformed has a world and life view which is in conformity with the confessional basis of the P.R. Churches of America. A teacher must be a confessed member of the P.R. Churches of America they might argue and, therefore, must be willing to say that the Word of God and the Reformed Confessions are true and inerrant. This in a very real sense must be a philosophy of life and also a philosophy of education, because education is the training of citizens of the kingdom of heaven for their place and calling in this life.

These arguments are not false but the fact remains that teachers, who have been active in the work of instructing covenant youth have a calling, it seems to me, to articulate what they believe is a P.R. philosophy of education, so that, if God will, young people who enter the ranks of the teaching profession may know what we stand for and what we believe P.R. education should be. Secular educators refer to their basic commitments as their philosophy of life. Relative and emerging as this may be for them they, nevertheless, believe that they must have some objectives which govern their method of instruction and the content of
their instruction. The professional educator expects that the classroom teacher have a philosophy of life and that the philosophy of life be consistent with the goals, objectives and philosophy of the culture or civilization in which the school exists. If this be true it is urgent, it seems to me, that the P.R.C. school teacher subscribe to a basic philosophy of education which is not divisive or compromising but is based four-squarely upon the truth of the Word of God, Sole Deo Gloria.

Because I feel the need is urgent, I set myself to discuss in a series various aspects of a Protestant Reformed Philosophy of Education. I propose to discuss the question under the general title Protestant Reformed Christian Education. Under this general heading I hope to discuss:

I. What it is.
II. The educator.
III. The Protestant Reformed Christian School — how distinctive.
IV. The schools' accomplishment of its task.
V. The pupil.
VI. The curriculum.

**TRUTH vs. ERROR**

by REV. ROBERT C. HARBACH

10. ITS EXHIBITION

The view of the decree of election presented in the last three installments is not only the most acceptable, but the correct one, not because it happens to agree with our opinion, but because it is most in harmony with Scripture. Divine election is that act of God according to which He chose to everlasting life, not a group of individuals merely, but a whole church. All of the members of this elect church without exception, from the beginning to the end of the world, God regards as His own children. That, of course, means there are yet many unconverted elect, who nevertheless from all eternity are His dear people. However, such a wonderful truth does not enjoy any place in the man-centered theology of modern popular "evangelicalism." For the latter teaching has it that we become children of God only after we are regenerated, that we have no relation to the Redeemer until we are converted and accept Him by faith. Such ignorant thinking is inexcusable with the Scripture so plain on this score. But if any will repudiate such perspicacious teaching, they must answer to the primary Author of holy Scripture for their impudence. Surely they can understand that the Lord regarded the people of Israel as His own chosen possession before they were redeemed out of the land of Egypt, before the passover lamb was slain! and this while they were steeped in utter idolatry (Ezek. 20:5-10)! Even then the Lord referred to them as "My people" (Ex. 3:7; 5:1). For in the midst of that idolatrous nation was the divinely ordained Israel of God, the spiritual seed,
the remnant according to the election of grace.

Admitted that all the elect are "by nature the children of wrath, even as others" (Eph. 2:3), but before that was true of them the Lord had said, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." Then He loved them as His own before He quickened them. They were His children before they were saved by grace through faith. Adoption does not stand on faith as its basis, but on election. They were His children before they believed. For "He should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad" (Jn. 11:52). They were His children before gathered by the Son of God. As they were His people before they were redeemed from Egypt and their heathen idolatry, so they were His people before they themselves were made willing to be His people. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power" (Ps. 110:3). It is no strange thing that God has unconverted elect, whom He deems His people even before the Gospel is preached to them and they become converted. This is plain in Scripture, "I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee, for I have much people in this city" (Ac. 18:10). They are His elect sheep long before brought into the fold. "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold. Them also I must bring" (Jn. 10:16). These other sheep are the elect Gentiles. These Gentiles the Lord called "the Tabernacle of David" while still involved in the Fall of Adam. "God at the first did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. And to this agree the words of the prophets ... after this I will return, and will build again the Tabernacle of David, which is fallen down" (Ac. 15:14-16). The designation "the Tabernacle of David," then, is one which identifies the elect of God, though involved in the Fall, as set up again, not in the first Adam, but in the Last Adam, not in the first man, but in the Second Man, who is the true David.

Election is exhibited in God's people being clearly identified. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him" (1 Jn. 4:9). The love of God has exclusively very particular objects as marked by the pronoun "us." This designation appears in the Word of God to indicate the elect. "God commendeth His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8, ASV). This is the distinguishing term the apostles used to specify the election of God, thereby including themselves, the saints and all believers in it. We read then that "the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us," not for all men. "If God for us, who against us! . . . He . . . spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all . . . Christ . . . also maketh intercession for us" (8:26,31,32,34. See 35:39), but "not for the world" (Jn. 17:9). Further, "God . . . hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ: according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world . . . In love having predestinated us unto the adoption of children . . . He hath made us accepted in the Beloved One" (Eph. 1:3-6). The repeated "us" shows how particular grace, predestination, election, atonement and intercession are. So particular and limited-to-the-elect is this "us" that it excludes all others, and can neither truly nor properly be applied to any but God's chosen in Christ. Election is definitely exhibited in the love of God being manifested "toward us" (1 Jn. 4:9). Nor is it possible that this "us" may be stretched to include all men in the world, for it is very carefully qualified in, "I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world" (Jn. 17:6).

God's election is further evidenced in Effectual Calling. Divine calling is distinguished in different ways. First, there is flat calling, according to which God calls the things not being as being (Rom. 4:17). "For He spake and it was done, He commanded and it stood fast" (Ps. 33:9). He said, "Let be light! and light was." Second, there is the efficacious creative calling of all men, which brings them to their ordained place and labor within the stream of history. According to His counsel God calls forth the rulers of the nations to their destiny. Cyrus is a case in point. "For Jacob My servant's sake, and Israel Mine elect, I have called thee by thy name. I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known Me" (Isa. 45:1-4). Third, there is a providential calling directed to all men, including the reprobate, which calls them to serve and glorify the Creator in a life of thanksgiving. This cal-
ing comes to men through the natural creation. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge" (Ps. 19:1,2). This is a powerful witness which, like a titanic, wrap-round, three-dimensional television screen with the volume turned up full, clearly reveals the invisible things of God by the things which are made. This calling leaves the reprobate without excuse (Rom. 1:19,20). Fourth, there is the external calling through the Word. This is a somewhat general calling, although it does not come to all men, but only to all who in the good pleasure of God come under the sound of the Gospel. In general, this call comes through the Gospel not only to the elect, but also to the reprobate. However, that call is refused by both. "Unto you, O men, I call, and My voice is to the sons of man . . . I have called and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded" (Prov. 8:4; 1:24). But the significance of this call is not that it is grace to all who hear it. For the Gospel is a savor of life to "us" who are being saved, but it is a savor of death to them that are perishing. Its significance is rather that the responsibility of man is maintained and increased over the providential calling. Fifth, there is the saving, efficacious calling of the people of God. This call comes to the elect alone. The ones God calls are the elect, the sheep. "He calls His own sheep by name . . . and the sheep follow Him for they know His voice" (Jn. 10:3,4). They did not become sheep when they were called or converted. They were sheep from eternity. This effectual calling is not an offer to all men, the efficacy of which depends on man's acceptance of it. There must be no suggestion that the dead sinner has any ability to respond to the call. That would be the word (teaching) of Arminius or the word of Pelagius, not the word of the Cross (I Cor. 1:18, ASV). Nor is it an invitation, but a translation out of darkness into light. So the calling must be; since it is the necessary effect of eternal election. Calling is a sure demonstration of election, as in the call to Lazarus (and are we not all Lazaruses?), "Come forth!", in the call to the man with the withered hand, "Stretch forth thy hand!", in the divine imperative to the Philippian jailer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ!", and in the efficacious command, "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear." For through the effectual calling we are made to pass out of death into life, we are given faith to believe, and do believe through grace, and we receive ears to hear, eyes to see and quickened members to yield to the Lord as instruments of righteousness.

We are called to peace, "God hath called us to peace" (I Cor. 7:15). He has done so because peace was ordained for us (Is. 26:12). When Peter addresses the elect, he determines the originating cause of every saving good to them. In that connection he mentions "peace" (I Pet. 1:2), appending one effect which invariably and infallibly follows from that cause. As the calling is particular so also the peace unto which we are called! For "there is no peace to the wicked." They from of old have been ordained to condemnation (Jude 4). But God's people are blessed with peace (Eph. 1:2,3), a peace which passes all understanding, which the world can neither give, take away nor have, and which arises from the blood and righteousness of Christ.

(To be continued, D.V.)

PROTESTANT REFORMED EDUCATION—A UNIQUE ENTERPRISE

by PROF. H. HANKO

At this time BEACON LIGHTS presents the second half of Prof. H. Hanko's lecture, sponsored by the P.R. High School Circle, at Hope P.R. Church.

We have noticed in our former article in the Beacon Lights that Protestant Reformed education has a unique basis. We turn now to a consideration of the fact that Protestant Reformed education is unique in character. When we speak of the character of Protestant Reformed education, we speak, first of all of the goal of educa-
tion; that is, the aim of education in our schools; the reason why we want to give our children this king of education. There are, of course, many possible kinds of goals, and it is well that we refer to some of them briefly. One goal, which is proper to consider as a proper goal for education, is the goal which our government sets up. The government says that education must be provided our children in order that they may be good citizens and contribute something toward the good of this commonwealth. Education, therefore, from the point of view of the government, is for the benefit of the state. But this goal we must reject. Not because we do not want our children to be good citizens, for they must indeed be good citizens, but rather because even while they are citizens of this country, they must, above all else, be citizens of the kingdom of Heaven. And if they are citizens of the kingdom of heaven and live as such in the midst of the world, they will also surely be good citizens of this country. So this is an option to possible goals of education which we must emphatically reject.

In the second place, it is possible as the present Christian schools have it, to educate our children because it is our calling to subdue the earth. But this, too, is a goal which we cannot accept. Not because it is not our calling to subdue the earth, for that it surely is, but this calling to subdue the earth is not a goal but a means to the attainment of the goal. It is not the end of the journey, but the road we must take to arrive at the end. While it is indeed true that we are called to subdue the earth, we must subdue the earth for yet a higher purpose and a more lofty aim. The subduing of the earth cannot ever be an aim in itself.

There are some who claim that the goal of education must be to prepare the Christian to take an active part in every sphere of life. That is, it is the calling of the Christian to busy himself in the sphere of politics, in the sphere of economics, in the sphere of labor and management relationships, etc. This is becoming a rather unusually popular goal in education today, and is even hailed as being truly Calvinistic. But I think it is best to reject this goal as well as an altogether unsuitable alternative. It is not my purpose at this time to get into the reasons why this is true, or even into the question of whether this is even a legitimate calling of the Christian. This would be beyond the scope of our present discussion. It is sufficient to say for now that there are grave objections to this entire idea. It is, to say the least, of very dubious Calvinism.

There is one more point that we can make, perhaps, and that point is whether or not it is our calling to provide our churches with professional men as doctors, dentists, and lawyers. It is, to my mind, a debatable question whether we, who live in the end of the ages, have need of doctors, dentists, and lawyers, at least as far as the church of God in concerned, and the kingdom which we are called to seek here below. This does not mean that to be a doctor, dentist, or lawyer, is in itself sin, and indeed if our churches all had ministers of their own and shepherds to lead them, and if there were sufficient teachers to staff all our schools and our educational system was complete, there could not possibly be any objection to making this the profession of the immediate goals of education. But the fact of the matter, nevertheless, is, that as long as our churches are so desperately short of ministers, and as long as our educational system is not complete, there is a far greater need for ministers and teachers within the church of Christ than there is for doctors, dentists, and lawyers.

In as much, then, as we must reject all these other options as proper goals for education, what ought, then, to be the goal of distinct Protestant Reformed education?

It is necessary, in the first place, to make a few remarks concerning the goal of education from the viewpoint of education being instruction of the knowledge of God. We have said in our previous article, that all revelation is God speaking to his people concerning himself in his love toward them in Jesus Christ. If this is true then, it seems to me, that we ought to notice that the knowledge of God is an end in itself apart from anything else. In other words, if we want to discuss what the goals of education ought to be as they are determined by the unique basis of our Protestant Reformed schools, then, surely in the first place, that goal of education is the knowledge of God in itself knowledge for knowledge sake. The knowledge of God apart from any other consideration. In fact, this ought to be considered the chief goal of education than which there is none more im-
portant. Let me use an example to illustrate this. Think, if you will, of a man and a woman who have been recently married. Supposing that soon after their marriage, he is called to leave her and to serve in the armed forces of this country. Of course, if they love each other, as they ought to, they will write to each other. And in the letters which the bride sends to her husband, she will ask him to tell her everything he can about himself and about his life. She will want to know all the details. If he should respond and say “Why do you want to know all these uninteresting and routine details of my life”, her answer will be - she wants to know them simply because love prompts her to want to know as much as she possibly can about his life and about himself. The fact that she loves him moves her to seek from him as much knowledge as she can possibly gain. In other words, the knowledge that she desires to have of her husband is, in as much as it is prompted by love, simply knowledge for knowledge sake. If you asked her why she wants to know the answer will be “Because I love him, that’s all.” It would seem indecent, at this point to interject any other consideration. Supposing, for example, that a bride, when asked concerning the reason why she wants to know as much as she can about her husband, would say, “I want to know about him because I want to know whether or not he will be able to provide me with new dresses.” “I want to know as much as I can about my husband because when he returned again, I want to know whether or not he will be able to buy me a new house.” If those were her reasons for wanting to know about her husband, her love would surely be suspect and rightly so, and you could well ask whether or not her love was sincere.

In a much higher sense of the word is this true of our relation to God. It is true, of course, that we also often times interject all kinds of ulterior motives. In our desire for education, we are told sometimes that the goal of education must be the attainment of financial security. We are told that we can only earn a good living and compete in modern society and attain financial security in this day of vast knowledge if we acquire an education. But surely this means, to put the matter bluntly, that we define the goal of education as being this: we want to know more about God in the hopes that God will give us bigger paychecks. Is there not something indecent about all this, making our love of God suspect?

The fact of the matter is, therefore, that the goal of education must be, first of all, and basically, the knowledge of God as an end in itself. If all that we study in school is the revelation of God, then the reason why we study all these subjects is simply because we love God, and because we want to know about him as much as we possibly can. God has shed abroad his love within our hearts, and, in that way, he has given us the indescribably blessed privilege of loving him, and love wants to know. Let us not prostitute this love by bringing into it evil and ulterior motives.

This leads me to the second point I wish to make about the unique goals of Protestant Reformed education. Although, what I have to say now is really closely connected with what we just discussed.

The love of God for his people and the love of his people for God is a unique relationship. It is not a love between equals, as that love exists mutually between earthly lovers. It can never be this, for God is the adorable God, who is highly lifted up, transcendent above all the works of his hands. This means that our love for God must always be of a very special kind, simply because it is not love which exists between equals, it must be a love which is always praise, always giving glory to God. It must be a love that is always an acknowledgment of God as highly exaltant above the Heavens. This love therefore must always be a doxology, a hallelujah. And this love, therefore, must always be a perpetual hallelujah in our entire life. It is and it will be when our lives are constantly lived in praise to God in everything we do. With all that God has given us, our lives will be such a hallelujah when we seek perpetually the kingdom of God and its righteousness with all we are and with all we have. Education in our schools must have as its goal to teach our covenant youth to do this.

There are a couple of more points that must be made in connection with this matter of the unique character of Protestant Reformed education. In the first place, all this means that we have a unique view of the pupils who attend these schools. In this respect, also, our schools differ radically from all schools that are in existence. Consider the
following: on the one hand, we do not say along with the government that the pupils in our schools are nothing more than potential contributors to the well-being of the great society. Nor yet do we say, as it is so often maintained in the existing Christian Schools that our pupils are mission prospects who must be lead by the means of the school to make a personal commitment to Christ. This, of course, is based upon the fact that the covenant God established with his people is an agreement. And if the covenant is an agreement, then it stands to reason our little children cannot enter into such an agreement. And, therefore, on the basis of such a view of the covenant, our children are considered nothing more than prospects for conversion on the mission field. And the purpose for education becomes then to lead these mission prospects to accept Jesus Christ. This also we must emphatically reject.

On the other hand, we consider the pupils who attend our schools to be covenant children with whom God is pleased to establish his everlasting covenant. They are children who are objects of God's eternal and unchangeable love. They are the objects of a very great and wondrous mercy. They are children who are purchased through the precious blood of the cross of Jesus Christ. In them is performed the glorious work of God's grace. They are destined, presently, to live in the new Heavens and in the new earth. In short, they are God’s chosen and beloved children. We have them only for a few moments entrusted to our care to take care of them until God takes them again unto himself. It ought to be evident, therefore, that even the view that we hold of the children who attend our schools is unique in Prot. Ref. schools. In the second place, this unique approach of Protestant Reformed education is unique also with respect of our consideration of the teachers who staff these schools. I don’t want to say very much about this, only, in brief, I want you to consider that the teachers which we have in our schools today are totally unlike any other teachers which can be found in any other educational institutions. And the difference between them and other teachers consists in this, that they not only know what I have just been trying to say, but they have dedicated to all this with a passionate dedication that arises from the very core of their being. And the teachers, after all, make the school.

There is one other way in which our schools are unique, and that is that our schools provide for our children unique advantages.

A few remarks ought to be made by way of introduction to this point. If you have caught the gist of what I have been saying so far, and if you have seen some of the vision of this unique character of Protestant Reformed education, then there is no need for me to spell out in details the advantages. You will readily be able to see them for yourself. There are, of course, many advantages - some great, and some of lesser significance. I shall not weary you with spelling them out in detail. However, the advantages are of such a kind that they not only cannot be obtained anywhere else in this sorry world, but that they are also of unestimable worth. There is no single price too great to pay to attain them. There is no single obstacle too high to overcome, to lay hold upon them.

Only one of these advantages do I want to mention. And this one I pick out of all possible advantages because to my mind this is the key of it all. This advantage of which I speak is the advantage that Protestant Reformed education makes our children wise.

There is a difference, you know, between knowledge and wisdom. Although it ought to be added that true knowledge such as we have been speaking of is very closely connected to wisdom as Solomon so often points out to us. But in general, wisdom is the spiritual ability to make use, proper use, of proper knowledge. In the natural world, wisdom is the ability to leave agricultural school and to apply the knowledge attained there to grow corn. Wisdom is the ability after having received a diploma from medical school, to establish an office and diagnose and cure disease. Wisdom is not simply to understand the functioning of an internal combustion engine, but it is the ability to start your car on a cold winter morning when it won’t run. Wisdom is, therefore, the practical application of knowledge. In the spiritual sense of the word, wisdom is the ability to make proper use of the knowledge of God. Wisdom is, therefore, a Heavenly gift. It is a gift earned on the cross. It
is a gift given of grace. It is a gift which belongs only to God's elect. And let it be understood that here too lies an absolute antithesis. Just as there is an absolute antithesis between the knowledge which the world has and the knowledge which we have, so also is this antithesis carried over into this matter of wisdom. With all the knowledge which the world possesses the world is nevertheless still nothing but a vast army of fools. They attain knowledge of many, many things. Their knowledge sometimes even startles us. But, nevertheless, in as much as all the knowledge which they attain is divorced from the knowledge of God, it is not true knowledge and in as much, therefore, as it is not true knowledge, they cannot possibly possess wisdom. The evidence of this is in the fact that with all their knowledge presently they die, and the world and all their knowledge is destroyed, and the end is hell. But true knowledge which is taught in our schools leads to wisdom. Indeed, it is essential for wisdom and it produces through God's grace a marvelous gift of wisdom.

So you see what all this means - in every respect our schools are unique. Our schools teach our children to be wise, to make use of the knowledge of God that is given to them through the revelation of God in creation. It teaches them to use this creation in the service of God and in seeking the things of the kingdom of Heaven. It teaches them that they are loved by God and are given the blessedness of loving him. It teaches them that they are lovers in the intimacy of the marriage of God's covenant. And in the creation they walk as God's lovers then, that is, they walk wisely. These saints, nurtured in our schools, walk as redeeming the times, as pilgrims and strangers, as possessing nothing, yet owning all. As those who seek the city which hath foundations but with the things of this city which shall presently perish while they wait the return of their lover. This is the unique characteristic of our schools. Go into the halls of our educational institutions once, if you will, and, although you see there little boys with faded bluejeans and dirty faces and tousled hair, and little girls with scrappy pigtailed and eyes brimming with tears, and sagged stocking, these children are nevertheless God's chosen possession - covenant children, the objects of his love and of his grace. And in these schools where teachers are dedicated to the cause of education according to the scriptures, these covenant children are taught the truth, taught to be wise. And presently from these halls of learning shall emerge these same children, gifts of God, elect people, who take our place in his church when it is time for us to depart and who will, as we have, walk in all their life on a journey that ends in the arms of their God.
great danger is that we quench the pure
guidance and testimony of the Spirit as He
leads into the truth of the Word of God.
For the work of the saints in the church
is particularly that of “prophesying” whether-
ance this be in song or in spoken word.

Hence, all prophesying must be tested,
tried, proved. Every sermon must be tried
and proved by the elders. It must have the
“Amen” of God in it. To that Paul ex-
horts the church in our text. All things must
be tried not as a drunkard drinks the dregs
of wine, but as a taster of wines distinguishes
the good from the bad wine. All the prophes-
sying in the church must be tried. All, that is
evil must be cast out and rejected and only
the good is to be retained. Writes the apostle
“hold fast to that which is good.

Druggists write on their medicines “keep
away from children”. The church has always
been very careful what is sung. For singing
is the fruit of the lips which must be placed
as an offering and sacrifice upon God’s altar.
No strange fire may be on the altar. That was
an abomination to the Lord. Hence,
prove all things; hold fast to that which is
good! We must abstain from every form of
evil.

We cannot take this injunction to seriously.
Sometimes the words “prove all things” is
so construed to man’s own destruction that
he makes of it a license to walk in sin. He
then has to taste the “depths of Satan” in
order to reject it. God forbid that we should
ever reason thus to our own destruction. That
is not fighting against sin with a good and
pure conscience.

It is for good reason that our churches
have an approved Psalter for the singing in
the congregational service on Sunday. Our
Psalter has in it “prophesying” which must
not be despised. Not the music is the impor-
tant thing in the song, but what is said is of
paramount importance. That is the “fruit” of
the lips. Singing is saying “I believe; there-
fore I sing”. Singing also is in the category of
“rejecting all heresies repugnant” to the true
doctrine. The evil that would come into the
singing as an evil leaven is that of doctrinal
error. It has been said that if the Devil can-
not “preach” error into the church, he will
“sing” it into the church.

When error is sung in the church, the
Spirit’s testimony is “quenched”. This was
being done in the church at Thessalonica.
This they must stop doing! They must not be
in the habit of doing this! We must not by
false “prophesying” put out the fire of the
Holy Spirit in the church. Then the hearts
become cold for God; we no longer comfort
one another with spiritual songs, but the
singing becomes mere “spirited” singing, poss-
ibly like the off-beat, syncopated Jazz of the
world. Let us beware of all such lissy drivel-
ing! To such we say: quench not the Spirit by
des-pising prophesying which is according to
sound doctrine.

The Lord has prepared Himself praise.
For this He has prepared Himself a people.
And all such singing is therefore God-ent-
erred, standing in the promises of God which
cannot lie. One shudders at such words as
found in the American version (not transla-
tion!!) of Johan Sebastian Bach, which jingle
“In the darkness, in the darkness I am lost,
For I know not, I know not how to find
What I search for, what I long for
What I search for, what I long for
As a sacrifice I bring to Thee
Let my heart this day be Thine
O my Lord, this day be Thine
O my Lord, this day be Thine
O my Lord, this day be Thine"

Definitely the very element of “prophes-
ying” is entirely lacking in this little excerpt
from Bach’s aria in his Cantata “For us a
Child is Born” (Uns ist ein Kind geboren).
Great as Bach was a writer of music for or-
gan and orchestra so little was he great in
the field of “prophesying”. He was a child of
Lutheran theology. A careful reading of the
German text shows that Bach’s song is look-
ing for a “Birthday present” for God. (Welche
dir zum Angebiente als ein heiliq Opfer tut)! It
is the Lutheran Jesus-Motif which is ex-
pressed in this song, mixed with the flavor of

SPECIAL NOTICE

Georgia Hendricks, formerly of our Ed-
gerton Protestant Reformed Church, has
accepted the position of News Editor for
Beacon Lights. We heartily welcome her to
our staff. Please send all bulletin and other
news items to her.

Miss Georgia Hendricks
1137 Fuller, S.E.
Grand Rapids, Michigan
mystical feelings of the soul. But these are not according to the Scriptures. In vain does this song look in our repertoire for a proper birthday-gift. The word of prophecy says we have none. But God gave us a song to sing!

Paul writes to us today too: quench not the Spirit!

Despise not prophesyings!
Prove all things; hold fast that which is good!
Abstain from all appearance of evil!

Then the prayerful blessing of the Lord will be ours which reads: And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Faithful is he that calleth you, who will also do it!

ERRATUM

Rev. G. Lubbers did not write Bible Outlines for chapters 37-41. This work was done by Rev. C. Hunko.

ANNOUNCING

THE 26th ANNUAL
PROTESTANT REFORMED
YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONVENTION

To be held from August 19 through August 22, including an entire weekend, at Southeast Protestant Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan. This convention features the theme “Faith” and will strive for more personal participation and interest.

Make Plans to Attend

Sixteen