



Reveille Winter
Edition 2019

PROTESTANT
ASSOCIATION
OF SOUTH AFRICA



REFORMATION
— 500 —

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Why 'Reveille'?

The word is derived from the French réveillez (wake up) / réveiller (to awaken). In general usage, it carries the meaning of 1) A signal at military installations (typically a bugle or trumpet) to wake up in the morning, 2) Any signal to get out of bed, or 3) the hour at which a wake-up signal is sounded (<http://wordsmith.org/words/reveille.html>). Linked with the general definition is the idea of "awakening" in the church – for example, the so-called Swiss Réveil in the early 1800s.

The purpose of Reveille is to propagate the teaching of the Bible and sound a clarion- call to the people of God to seek Him and His ways as he has revealed in the Bible.

A word from the Protestant Association of South Africa (PASA)

It has been just over a year since the previous Reveille was distributed. We would have liked to send one sooner, but due to a reduction in manpower and other changes it was unfortunately necessary to delay this. Some of you have no doubt made use of the Protestant Book Centre in Mowbray over the years. It was opened in mid 1945 (with a start-up capital of £ 100!) and has been providing Christian literature for more than a half century. In recent years book sales have increasingly dwindled despite greater efforts on our part to improve sales, and in 2018 we made the difficult choice to sell the building. As of the end of May 2019, we have ceased all book sales. God willing, we are intending to be more involved in teaching and training going forward, through training events linked with limited distribution of books. We are still shaping and discussing this at present.

This Reveille addresses the state of our church and nation; some critical events in our country; the importance of God's will; and a brief look at one of the Lord's servants from the past. We trust that you will be encouraged, challenged and informed by what you read, and that you will be driven prayerfully to the Bible – the ultimate authority in all matters.

I would like to thank Craig Hounsom and Ben Booyens for their work on Reveille and the time and effort that they devoted to their role as the previous chairmen of the Protestant Association.

K. Allen

"If religious books are not widely circulated among the masses in this country, I do not know what is going to become of us as a nation. If truth be not diffused, error will be; if God and His Word are not known and received, the devil and his works will gain the ascendancy; if the evangelical volume does not reach every hamlet, the pages of a

corrupt and licentious literature will; if the power of the Gospel is not felt throughout the length and breadth of the land, anarchy and misrule, degradation and misery, corruption and darkness, will reign without mitigation or end." (Daniel Webster – senator and Secretary of State in the United States, died in the 1850's).

The State of Our Nation and Church

"Why do the nations rage ... against the Lord and His anointed?" (Ps 2:1)

So wrote the psalmist three millennia ago, and nothing has changed in that regard. The nations that now exist are mostly raging against the Lord – some more obviously than others. Our country is no exception and is energetically following world trends, though thankfully not as far as some other nations are. Prayer and Bible reading have been almost effaced from government schools, and biblical morality has to a large extent been removed from the nation's law. Who now can imagine a time when public Scripture reading and prayer were to be found in many public occasions? Freedom of Christian religion is increasingly restricted; many underpinnings of society – including biblical marriage – have been targeted and are rapidly disappearing. Injustice, incompetence and dishonesty is rampant at all levels, and often it seems as though little is being done to reverse these trends. The effect of this is showing in the moral collapse of society and the associated failures of infrastructure and economy.

"Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." (Prov 14:34)

Our nation is in dire straits – and we should be praying earnestly that God would give wisdom and uprightness to our leaders and that he would turn the heart of the nation back to Him. "I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercession, and giving of thanks, be made for all men: for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty" (1 Tim 2:1-2; cf Rom 13).

However, we would be remiss to focus only on the state of the nation, for there are other matters that urgently need attention.

"Judgment is to begin with the house of God" (1 Pet 4:17)

When Solomon dedicated the temple, the Lord spoke to him and declared: "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." (2 Chron 7:14)

God frequently warns His people of the seriousness of straying from His ways and turning from His Word. Despite these frequent warnings, the church has repeatedly stumbled and erred. The present is no exception. Our nation and the world is desperately in need of our prayer and action, but the need in the church is even more desperate.

"... because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold" (Matt 24:12; NKJV)

God is angered by wickedness in a nation, but make no mistake: He is swift to act when His church strays from His ways and brings shame to Him. Ananias and Saphira were put to death by Him for lying (Acts 5). Members of the Corinthian church were struck with illness or even death because they partook of communion unworthily (1 Cor 11:30). God threatened to remove the lampstand of the church of Ephesus because they had left their first love, despite the fact that they laboured with patience, could not bear those who were evil, and all for the sake of Jesus' name (Rev 2:1-7). The Laodiceans were lukewarm and were called to rapid repentance unless they wished God to spew them out of His mouth. He does not condone half-heartedness or disinterest on the part of His people.

What does God require of us? Amongst other things, that we are good citizens: "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men ..." (1 Pet 2:13-15).

"If you love Me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15)

Too often professing Christians are found amongst those that decry the keeping of the nation's laws because it is an inconvenience. God does not give us an option – He commands obedience. The only exception is when the laws of the state are in direct opposition to God's law. There, and there alone, do we have the freedom to reject the state's laws because to obey them would be to disobey God, and we must obey God rather than men (cf Acts 4:19). We do not have the freedom to reject the laws of the state because they are onerous, costly or unwanted – and that includes such things as speed restrictions, anti-piracy laws, and TV licences.

Let us turn to God and examine our hearts and lives by the light of His word – and repent as His Spirit convicts us. Let us turn to God in earnest prayer for the growth and maturity of the church, and strive to have lives that are a witness calling for the repentance of our nation at large.

K. Allen

The Death of Freedom of Conscience

One of the most hard-won religious freedom rights is in imminent danger of being fundamentally undermined in South Africa. The Civil Union Amendment Bill (due to be passed early in the new Parliament), is setting a dangerous trend because it removes State marriage officers' rights to object, on grounds of conscience, to performing a ceremony to solemnize a same-sex relationship.

The political party COPE, whose MP Diedre Carter proposed and motivated this Bill,

were not prepared to consider the practical alternative solutions available, such as the preferred hiring of persons who do not have such conscientious objections, or even the provision of “roving marriage officers”, who would have been available to officiate same-sex ceremonies where no local State marriage officer was available. Instead they pushed for a “winner takes all”, where LGBT rights trump freedom of religion and conscience, despite the fact that both rights are contained in the “Equality Rights” clause of the South African Constitution. All political parties – except the ACDP – supported the Bill.

More concerning is that in pushing for this clause to be struck down, everyone ignored the judgment of the Constitutional Court in the **Fourie** case (which ruled that same-sex couples had the same right to enter into unions as heterosexual couples). The Court specifically stated that *“the principle of reasonable accommodation could be applied by the State to ensure that civil marriage officers who had sincere religious objections to officiating at same sex marriages would not themselves be obliged to do so if this resulted in a violation of their conscience”*. However, neither common sense, nor respect for the Constitutional Court’s judgment, prevailed.

This removal of the freedom to conscientiously object gives little or no consideration of the societal consequences that will inevitably result. For example, every magistrate is a *de facto* marriage officer, so all magistrates will henceforth be forced by law to officiate same-sex marriages. This will clearly be a deterrent to those whose conscience and/or religious belief would prohibit them from doing so, with the result that they are effectively barred from this career. Given that becoming a magistrate is often an entry point to a career in the judiciary, with the potential career path towards becoming a judge in the different levels of the court structures, over the next 10 – 20 years this “amendment” will skew the value systems of South African judges against those of conservative religious convictions.

To take things to their logical conclusion, since the option of a conscientious objection has been removed from magistrates, what is to prevent it from being removed from health practitioners? Surely respecting the current right of doctors and nurses to say “No” to performing abortions means that patients are suffering from the lack of pregnancy termination services to which they are entitled? This is precisely the same argument that was used to remove the conscientious objection clause in the Civil Union Act. Are we really saying that, as a pre-requisite to a career as a doctor in South Africa, you must be willing to perform a procedure which many people with religious convictions and beliefs see as the murder of a human being? The logical, though chilling, response would be “Yes!” – and with it dies the rights of conscientious objection.

Michael Swain

Executive Director of FOR SA

Freedom of Religion South Africa (FOR SA) is a non-profit, legal advocacy group

dedicated to the protection and promotion of our Constitutional rights to enjoy religious freedom. For more information, please visit their [website](#) or follow the Freedom of Religion SA Facebook page.

Teach me to do thy will...

(Psalm 143:10)

“Thy will be done”. Thus did our Lord Jesus Christ teach his disciples to pray. And we have the assurance from the apostle John: “...this is the confidence that we have in [God], that, if we ask any thing *according* to his will, he hears us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him” (1 John 5: 14, 15).

Yet, so often when we pray, we desire that God should hearken to our “greater familiarity” with circumstances, to substitute our wishes for his eternal purposes.

“Thy will be done”. Here is no mere fatalistic capitulation before the inevitable, no “It is the will of Allah”. These words, presenting an attitude of the heart, involve absolute dedication to the will of the utterly righteous, just and loving God, trusting implicitly in “him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will” (Eph 1:11) and in whom “is no darkness at all” (1 John 1:5).

“Thy will be done” – a *devastating* petition! Just how truly is our will, in all tastes, desires, hopes, longings genuinely committed to the will of him “that filleth all in all” (Eph 1:23)? Do we pause to consider just some of those scriptures which teach plainly of “disturbing” things revealing aspects of God’s will? For instance, of Pharaoh, before the exodus from Egypt: “...in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth” (Exodus 9:16), quoted by Paul in Romans 9:17. Of the man blind from birth: “...that the works of God should be made manifest in him” (John 9:3). Of Lazarus, seriously – terminally – ill; when Jesus said: “This sickness is...for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby” (John 11:4) and he deliberately “abode two days still in the same place where he was” (John 11:6) until Lazarus was dead (John 11:14,15).

Above all, consider the One who was longed for, prayed for, throughout the Old Testament dispensation: the Messiah, the Christ of God; he who truly could say: “...I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me” (John 6:38). Read that peerless chapter, Isaiah 53, which so graphically displays the cross: “...he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief:...thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin...” (Isaiah 53: 9,10).

Behold him, born into his own world, the work of his hands, not as mighty King and

Creator, but as one of humble origin, excluded even from the inn – “no room”! – and laid in a manger. Behold him, at the age of twelve years, not in carefree play with his peers, but in the Temple, the centre of sacrifice, with all its graphic testimony to his own life’s work displayed before him; and after his final entry into Jerusalem, how he entered “into the temple: and...looked round about upon all things” (Mark 11:11). Behold him, spotless Lamb of God, “who knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth” (1 Peter 2:22), surrounded, inundated by the foulness of human sin and its effects, weeping over the unbelieving distress of those who mourned so hopelessly for Lazarus; weeping over Jerusalem, yet with the prospect of his own ordeal looming crushingly over him. “Thy will be done”?

Behold him, in Gethsemane, bearing the appalling weight of the guilt of all his lost sheep from the beginning unto the close of history; facing the coming, not merely of extreme physical suffering, but of being forsaken by his heavenly Father, exposed to the very essence of hell: “Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done...And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground” (Luke 22:42-44). “Thy will be done”?

Behold him, silent before Pilate, at his scandalous “trial”: though perfectly innocent, submitting to condemnation, then degrading indignities on behalf of his guilty people. “Thy will be done”?

Behold him, on the cross at Calvary, when darkness veils the face of the earth for those three dreadful hours; and at the ninth hour, as the Father turns his face from his wellbeloved Son, in whom he is well pleased, hear that cry of anguish: “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” And before he dies, taking care to fulfil the scripture, saying: “I thirst”. “Thy will be done”?

*Silent through those three dread hours,
Wrestling with the evil powers,
Left alone with human sin,
Gloom around thee and within,
Till the appointed time is nigh,
Till the Lamb of God may die.*

(J. Ellerton)

How easily, how glibly do those words roll off our tongues: “Thy will be done”! Our sanctification, which is part of the will of God for each one of his own (1 Thess. 4:3) involves absolute self-denial, an on-going struggle on our part, to that point of having perfectly his laws written upon our hearts and minds – the centres of affection and direction (will) – pressing towards the mark when each truly may say: “I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart (Psalm 40:8), and may echo the words of the Lord himself: “My meat [sustenance] is to do the will of him that sent me

and to finish his work” (John 4:34).

Do we count the cost of being his, of taking up our cross daily and following him (Mark 8:34)? And do we rightly proclaim this to others whom we would reach for him? Only in this struggle after absolute dedication to him can we honestly utter those words: “Thy will be done”. May he grant us strength by his Holy Spirit to run and to finish the course.

P.J. Allen

A voice from the past: Catherine Parr

When the Reformation started 500 years ago, the king of England was the famous (or infamous) Henry the Eighth, who had no less than six wives, though thankfully not all at once. Their names were: Catherine of Aragon, Anne Boleyn, Jane Seymour, Anne of Cleves, Catherine Howard and Catherine Parr. Catherine Parr – a truly remarkable woman – was the wife who survived Henry.

First, it's important to know that, although some reform had been taking place during Henry's reign – particularly the introduction of English Bibles in the churches – Henry, theologically (though not politically), remained a staunch Roman Catholic all his life. Whilst Henry had, on one side, Archbishop Cranmer pressing for reform, on the other side he had Cranmer's arch-enemy Bishop Stephen Gardiner totally opposed to it. Cranmer seemed to have lost the fight when, in 1539, Henry passed an act called the "Six Articles" in order to stem the tide of the Reformation. It prescribed such harsh penalties that it became known as the 'whip with six strings'. So isn't it surprising that Henry's last wife, Catherine Parr, was in fact a Protestant!

Catherine was 31 and twice widowed when she married Henry in 1543. A vivacious, tall woman with an endearing personality, she gained the affection of all who got to know her. She was the most intellectual of Henry's wives, highly educated and enthusiastic to learn as much as possible. She even took up studies in Greek and Latin in her thirties in order to understand the Bible better. But lest you get the wrong idea, I hasten to add that she also enjoyed less intellectual pleasures – dancing, music and banquets. A sinner like all of us, she was also known to over-indulge in a love of clothes and jewellery. But she had a genuine love of scholarship and her rooms became famous for theological debates, attracting scholars such as Miles Coverdale and Archbishop Cranmer who became a close friend, much to the anger of Stephen Gardiner. Her growing love of evangelical religion caused her to write devotional books and this almost cost her her life. Stephen Gardiner persuaded Henry to issue a warrant for her arrest on a charge of heresy. Thankfully, however, Henry relented and was reconciled to her.

In spite of the danger, she remained true to her faith. Perhaps the biggest contribution that Catherine made was the great influence she exercised in the religious and secular education of her step-children Edward and Elizabeth. As Edward VI and Elizabeth I they both served as Protestant monarchs of England. Under Edward and later Elizabeth, the Reformation took root and flourished.

Catherine was the first woman to publish books in English under her own name. One of her books, 'The lamentation of a sinner', is a clear statement of the Protestant faith. In it she indeed laments her own sinfulness and she describes how she came to a true knowledge of Christ through His Word and the Holy Spirit. To end off, we read these words she wrote: "I felt, as it were, clothed in a new garment before God, to be accounted just and righteous, whereas without his mercy I was sinful and wicked ... Let us therefore by faith behold and marvel at the great love and goodness of God in sending his Son to suffer death for our redemption when we were his mortal enemies."

Though now dead, Catherine Parr still speaks.

Edited from a short article by A. Beckman

Watch this space

Upcoming events of interest:

Skogheim Evangelical and Reformed Conference - date and details to be announced soon.

For updates visit this website: <https://www.erc.za.org/index.php>

What does PASA stand for?

Our objectives are:

1. To expound the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.
2. To expound the biblical doctrines of the Protestant Reformation, particularly emphasising:

[a] that our Lord Jesus Christ who in His own body bore the guilt of human sin, and purchased our redemption with His precious blood, is our only Saviour, Mediator and High Priest, and that through Him and Him alone can the sinner draw nigh to God;

[b] that the sacrifice of Christ “once made is that perfect redemption, propitiation and satisfaction for sin” and there is none other satisfaction for sin but that alone;

[c] that man is justified in the sight of God not by any human merit but by grace through faith in Christ Jesus;

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[d] that the only confessional is the throne of grace, the only confessor is the Lord Jesus Christ, and that the only true absolution is that granted by our great High Priest, Jesus, the Son of God;

[e] that Holy Scripture which we receive as the very Word of God, fully inspired, is the supreme and final authority of the Christian Church in all matters of faith and practice, and that the Christian ought so to order his life and govern his conduct as to conform to its holy teaching.

3. To address departures from biblical Christianity.

We believe:

1. in the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, and we accept them as of supreme and final authority in faith and life;
2. in one God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit;
3. in Jesus Christ, Son of God, begotten by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, true God and true man;

4. that man was created in the image of God; that he sinned and thereby incurred not only physical death, but also that spiritual death which is separation from God, and that in consequence of “the fall” all human beings are born with a sinful nature;
5. that our Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, as our representative, and as a substitutionary sacrifice, and that all who believe in Him are justified freely on the grounds of His shed blood;
6. in the corporeal [bodily] resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, in His ascension into heaven, and in His present life there for us as High Priest and Advocate;
7. in “that blessed hope” the personal return of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.
8. that all who receive by faith the Lord Jesus Christ are born again of the Holy Spirit, and thereby become children of God to be conformed to the image of His Son.
9. in the bodily resurrection of the just and the unjust; the judgement of the living and the dead; the everlasting blessedness of the saved, and the everlasting punishment of the lost.

If you would like a copy of our constitution, please feel free to contact us.

PASA details

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Thank you!

Remember Reformation Sunday - 27th October 2019

