

Outline for “CULTURE IN BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE” by Dr. F.N. Lee

[This is a 1976 chronological outline for an expansion of my article *Kultuur en Godsdiens* and my books *Calvin on the Sciences* and *Man’s Origin and Destiny* and *The Central Significance of Culture* - after the latter was approved by Potchefstroom University for my M.A. status in Culture (*Kultuurkunde*) under the direction of Professor Drs. C.N. Venter, E. Botha, and S.C.W. Duvenage. I had envisaged then greatly expanding this outline into a D.Culture dissertation under Professor Venter, but after his untimely death I dropped that project. Now myself retired, I may (Lord willing) yet expand this outline into a book for non-degree purposes so as further to develop the cultural views of Augustine, Calvin, Bavinck, Kuyper, Hepp, Dooyeweerd, Stoker, Niebuhr, Schaeffer, Schilder, A.A. van Ruler, Ellul, Venter, Van Til, Rushdoony, North, Kline, van Riessen, la Rondelle and others in a cosmos-embracing eschatological perspective.]

INTRODUCTION: definitions; statement of problem; delineation of material; chief sources; methodology and structure; presuppositions; importance of subject; and summary.

I. THE TRIUNE GOD: THE REAL FORMER OF CULTURE

God’s *aseitas*; yet not a *Deus otiosus*. Transcendent Creator, yet immanent Maintainer. *Creator inchoans et Formator colens*. Father = Creator-Maintainer of nature (the raw material of culture). Son = Recreator and Maintainer of all nature and (human) culture - Prov. 8, Ps. 19 & 33 *etc.* Holy Spirit = Ruler & Completer of all nature and culture - Pss. 33 & 104, Gen. 1:2, Ps. 33, *etc.* Triune God the Author (Father: Jas. 1:17, John 5:17, ch. 17, Rom. 9:20-23 *cf.* Isa. 63:8, *etc.*; Son-Mediator Gen. 1:26f & John 1:1f; and Spirit-Consummator Rom. 8:14-23 *etc.* of both nature and culture). *Cf.* Gen. 2:3 *l’asoth* (Kuyper); Rom. 11:36; & Isa. 45:18. Summary.

II. THE UNFALLEN ADAM: IMAGE OF GOD AND THEREFORE *HOMO COLENS*

Adam God’s image in every respect - spiritually, materially, culturally: in (w)holiness, in knowledge, and in righteousness. Unfallen man thus law-abiding in respect of the cosmic implications of all Ten Commandments. The covenant of works and the cultural mandate - decalogical, imperative, and comprehensive (Gen. 1:28 *cf.* Hos. 6:7-11). Man created with indestructible continued existence yet losable life, so that by God’s grace he could attain to unlosable life by cultivating and guarding as a developer and protector. Gold and onyxstone imply mining and adorning. Name-giving to animals (*etc.*) implies care, science and poetry. God "to make" (*l’asoth* at Gen. 2:3-25), through man multiplying for the cultural reward especially of everlasting life-and-sabbath after his *diesseitige* cultural labours. Summary.

III. THE SECOND ADAM: HIS COSMIC CULTURAL WORKS

Cultural implications of covenant of grace (Gen. 3:15f). The Second Adam, by His perfect obedience to the covenant of works for those for whom He so worked, graciously enables them to unfold it by way of their sanctification out of gratitude to Him for His justificatory work for them (Rom. 16:20 & Eph. 2:8-10 and WCF 7:1-6 & 16:1-7 & 19:1-7). The Divine *Logos* and the human *logos*. Christ enlightens the Cainites (Calvin’s *Comm* on John 1:4-5 & 8:12 & *Inst.* II:2:12 *cf.* *Comm.* on Gen. 4:20). Christ the ark of the nature-culture covenant (I Pet. 3:18-22).

O.T. theophanies and wisdom literature (John 8:56; I Cor. 10:1-9; Luke 7:35 & 11:49 *cf.* Prov. 8:7 & Eccl.). Cultural implications of Christ's earthly mission and heavenly session (Col. 1 to 2; Eph. 1 to 2; Heb. chs. 2 & 5 & 7; Rev. ch. 1*f*). His future *parousia* from heaven (I Thess, 5; II Thess. 1; Rev. 3:3-11*f* & 22:12 *etc.*). His future *apokatastasis toon panton* (Acts 3:19-21; 23:34*f*; 17:31). Summary.

IV. THE HOLY SPIRIT: ENGINEER OF CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Life spirit of unfallen Adam *cf.* "Us" in Gen. 1:26 & 2:7. *Ruach hayyom* in Gen. 3:8 *cf.* John 16:7-13. Spirit of Cainite culture (Calvin's *Comm.* on Gen. 4:20 & *Inst.* II:2:14-16). The striving Spirit before the Flood (Janssen van Rijssen on Gen. 6:3). Spirit of understanding (Job 34:8 *cf.* Isa. 28:2.3*f*). Spirit of art (Ex. chs. 31 & 35 *cf.* Heb. 9:8). Regenerative and task-enabling Spirit (Ezek. 37 & John 3). Poured-out cosmos-embracing Spirit (Acts 2:4 & 2:17-21). Comprehensive fruitful Spirit (Gal. 5). Gift-giving Spirit (I Cor. 12). All-embracing heavenly Spirit of (re)creation (Rev. 4). Yes, Spirit of culture (Isa. 32:14-18 & 44:1-5)! Summary.

V. THE LOST SINNER - DEPRAVED YET STILL CULTURAL

Cain (a city-builder). Jabal (a cattle-raiser and architect). Jubal (a musician). Tubal-cain (a metallurgist). Nimrod (an imperialist & tower-builder). Tera (an idol-manufacturer). Esau (a hunter); Pharaoh (a treasury-builder and city-constructor). The golden calf. The Philistines (metal-workers). Hiram Abiff (an architect). Sannacherib (a soldier). Nebuchadnezzar (an emperor). The cultural nations Assyria, Egypt, Babylon, Tyre, Sidon, Greece and Rome (Isa. chs. 10 to 23 & 33 & 47; Ezek. chs. 20 to 32; Dan. chs. 3 to 5 & 7 to 11; Nah.; Luke 2:1; Acts chs. 16 & 17 & 23 to 28; I Cor. ch. 6; Eph.; Phil.; Tit. 1:12; Rev. chs. 13 to 18). Cyrus (Isa. chs. 41 & 45 & 48). Idol-manufacturing (Isa. chs. 44 & 46, *etc.*). The antichrist (II Thess. 2 & Rev. 1.3). The false-church (Rev. 17:4 & ch. 18). Any culture in hell?! Summary.

VI. REGENERATE MAN AS THE RENEWED *HOMO (RE)COLENS*

Adam (agriculturalist). Eve (mother and namegiver). Seth & Enosh (cultic worship). Noah (shipbuilder, nature-preserved and vine-farmer). Gen. 9 - renewal of cultural mandate as a natural-cultural covenant. Abraham (shepherd & soldier). Job and Elihu (philosophers). Jacob (geneticist and cattle-breeder). Joseph (statesman and economist). Moses (national leader and writer and lawgiver). Aaron (diplomat). Miriam (poetess). Bezaleel and Oholiab (artists). Joshua (soldier and statesman). Caleb (spy). The judges (politicians). Hannah (poetess). David (poet, soldier, & statesman). Solomon (philosopher, king, temple-builder, & poet). Etham, Heman and the children of Korah (singers). Joash, Hezekiah and Josiah (rulers and culture-reformers). Amos (farmer). Daniel (statesman). Esther (queen). Ezra (lawyer). Nehemiah (governor). Jesus (carpenter). Luke (physician). Paul (scholar and tentmaker). Xenas (lawyer). I Cor. 7 - Christian slaves, freemen, married and unmarried callings. All to be done only to the glory of God (I Cor. 10:31). Summary.

VII. FUTURE CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT: ESCHATOLOGICAL PATTERN & CALLING

Diesseits: subjugation of the entire earth to Christ's glory - I Cor. 15; Eph. 1; Col. 1; Matt. 28:19 *cf.* Gen. 1:26-28. Cultural achievements of the lost are "inherited" and exploited and expanded and differently applied by the saved. Noah "inherits" the achievements also of ungodly antediluvians; Melchisedek, those of the king of Sodom; Jacob, Esau's herds; and Joseph and Moses, the treasures of Egypt (Ex. 11:2*f* & Heb. 11:26). Joshua "inherits" the land of Canaan; Solomon, the cedars of Lebanon for his temple, *etc.* See too Calvin's *Comms.* on Isa. 27 & 28:15-18 & chs. 29 & 54 & 60 and Dan. ch. 2 & 12:4; Am. ch. 9 *cf.* Acts 15; Mic. ch. 4; Rev. 17:4-14 & 18:22*f*. Moreover, the elect are called to do just this. See: Isa. chs. 11 & 35 & 40 & 45:14-18 & 52 & 62; Ezek. chs. 36 to 37 and 40 to 48; Matt. 5:5; I Cor. 7:20-24; Jas. ch. 3;

Rev. 3:18 & 14:13 & 20:4-6 *etc.* All nations thus in time develop cosmos-embracing cultures as they become Christian peoples - Pss. 72 & 87 & 96 to 98; Isa. 2 & 9 & 11 & 49 and 65 to 66; Hag. 2; Zech. 2 & 9; Mal. 1:11 & 4:2-3, *etc.*

Jenseits, while disembodied in heaven. Singing (Rev. chs. 4 to 7 & 5:9 & 7:9-10 & 14:2-13 & 15:3 & 19:2f); worship (Rev. 4:8-11 & 5:11-14 & 6:10 & 15:7f); adornment (Rev. 6:11 & 19:7f); and reigning (Rev. 20:4).

At the parousia. Judgment over world cultures (Isa. 24 & Rev. 18 & I Pet. 3). To be followed by renewed culture on the renewed earth forever - further building on the basis of cleansed cultural work already performed *diesseits* (Rev. 14:13). That everlasting continuation shall then consist of joyful service and rulership (Rom. 8:19f and II Pet. 3 and Rev. 2:7,17,27 & 3:5,12 & chs. 21 to 22 *cf.* Heb. 11:16 & 12:23) - and cosmos-embracing Law-keeping for ever (Rev. 21:2f & 22:14-15) solely to the glory of the Triune God (Romans 11:33-36).

CONCLUSIONS CONCERNING CULTURE IN THE BIBLE. This is to be a summary of the above, also giving further directives and suggestions for implementation now and later.

PARTIAL BIBLIOGRAPHY:

All the relevant works of Augustine, Calvin, Kuyper, Bavinck, Hepp, Stoker, Schilder, and Rushdoony - as well as of Woltjer, Dooyeweerd, Vollenhoven, Taljaard, Kock, Clark, Popma, Zuidema, Van Riessen and Rookmaaker. As well as: Wencelius's *L'Esthétique du Calvin; Koers in die Krisis; Christian Perspectives Series; Koers*; various articles in the *S.A. Bulletin vir die Bevordering van Christelike Wetenskap; Riglyne; Tydskrif vir Christelik, Wetenskap; Woord en Daad; Studiestukke van die Instituut vir die Bevordering van Calvinisme; Mededelingen en Correspondentiebladen van de Vereeniging voor Calvinistische Wijsbegeerte; Philosophia Reformata*; books of Smeenk and Schaeffer; H. van Til's *Calvinist Concept of Culture*; Tillich's *Theology of Culture*; Wielenga's *De Bijbel het Boek der Schoonheid* and *De Civitate Dei I & II; The Word of God and the Reformed Faith* (Philosophy - Stob; Culture - Wencelius; Science - De Vries; Education - Welmers); Ingwersen's *Bijbel en Natuur* and *Bijbel en Cultuur*; S.J. Ridderbos's *De Theologische Cultuurbeschouwing van Abraham Kuyper*; Bettex's *Beschaving*; Schoonmaekers's *Gewijde Wijsbegeerte*; Davidson's *Theism and Human Nature*; Black's *Culture and Restraint*; Van Leeuwen's *Openbaring en Cultuur*; Rispens's *De Geest over de Wateren*; Biesterveld's *Het Echt Menschelijke*; Hanselmann's *Ik, Gij, Wij, en God*; Gregory's *The Unfinished Universe*; Aalders's *Cultuur en Sacrament* and *De Goddelijke Openbaring in de Eerste Drie Hoofstukken van Genesis*; Dearmer's *Art and Religion*; Weiss's *Nine Basic Arts*; Jeans's *Science and Music*; Runes's *Encyclopaedia of the Arts*; Sociaal-Economische Boekery books of Mekkes, Kohnstamm, Los, and Nederbragt; Foerster's *Christus en het Menschelijke Leven* and *Jezus Christus en het Menschenleven*; Le Roux's *Kultuur en Totaliteit*; books by Loen and Van Peursen; Abr. Kuyper Jr's *Het Beeld Gods* and *Van de Heiligmaking, van de Heerlijkheidmaking, en van het Rijk der Heerlijkheid*; Jager's *Tijd en Eeuwigheid*; Wolmarans's *God en Mens*; Niebuhr's *Christ and Culture*; Sayers's *The Mind of the Maker*; Kidner's *The Christian and the Arts*; Kirby's *Christianity and Esthetics*; Ditmansons's *Christian Faith and the Liberal Arts*; Lewis's *The Abolition of Man*; Berkhof's *De mens onderweg*; Heyns's *Die Nuwe Mens Onderweg*; Berkouwer's *De mens het beeld Gods*; Biesterveld's *Christendom en Cultuur*; Knuvelder's *Christelike Cultuur en Techniek*; Kruyswijk's *Ongerepte Orde - Schets van een Christelijke Cultuur*; Lippert's *Evolution and Culture*; Van Andel's *Ethiek van Arbeid en Rust*; works by H. Berkhof and Löwith; Visscher's *Schepping and Paradijs Probleem*; T.S. Elliott's *The Idea of a Christian Society* and *Notes Toward the Definition of Culture*; and A.A. van Ruler's works such as his *Calvinistic Trinitarianism* and his *Theocentric Politics*.