

## **REFORMATION 500 WEEK 36 ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND**

When Luther died in 1546, Calvin was busy reforming Geneva, and answering the official Roman Catholic counter reformation in progress since 1545 at the Council of Trent (northern Italy). This Council lasted until 1563 (a year before Calvin's death).

Meanwhile the reformation was spreading in England and Scotland. "Patrick Hamilton, a student of Martin Luther who was the first to bring Reformed preaching to Scotland, was burned at the stake for his faith in 1529" (DeMar, *Reformation to Colonization*, 229). Later, some young men from Scotland, after visiting Luther's university at Wittenberg, returned to their native country to spread Luther's doctrines. "The transition from Lutheranism to Calvinism took place under George Wishart" (Kuiper, *Church in History*, 216). A priest by the name of John Knox served as Wishart's bodyguard. But "Wishart wouldn't let Knox come with him to his trial and execution" (reformationhistory.org). Wishart was hanged and burnt at the stake in 1546.

"Wishart's other followers, retaliated by murdering Cardinal Beaton, Scotland's supreme Catholic official. For nearly a year those espousing Reformed principles made some headway in Scotland from their base at the castle at St. Andrews. With the help of French forces, Catholics regained the upper hand, taking the castle and sending its Protestant inhabitants, John Knox among them, to the galley ships as prisoners" (Nichols, *Reformation*, 96). For nineteen months, Knox "toiled as a galley-slave. Day after day he had to ply the oars in the hot, smelly hold of a French ship," constantly "pestered with suggestions that he should pray to the image of Mary" (Kuiper, 216). After his release in 1549, "Knox went to England where he preached and eventually became chaplain to Edward VI" (DeMar, 230).

Also in 1549, Calvin's wife, Idelette, died. "Calvin was devastated. Writing to his friend and fellow Reformer Pierre Viret, he declared his grief: 'I have been bereaved of the best companion of my life.' To Farel he stated, 'I do what I can to keep myself from being overwhelmed by grief'." (Nichols, 119).

When King Henry VIII died in 1547, his nine-year old and sickly son Edward VI (by his third wife Jane Seymour) came to the throne. At his coronation, Archbishop "Cranmer referred to him as the second Josiah, as a king who would restore England to the true faith" (DeMar, 226). Calvin dedicated several of his commentaries to Edward and wrote several letters to him. "Under Edward's leadership, a number of important changes took place: religious services were conducted in English, the Catholic Mass was abolished [images were also removed], clergy were permitted to marry, and English Bibles were freely printed" (DeMar, 226). Distinguished Protestant refugees, Martin Bucer, Peter Martyr, Jan Laski, and John Knox were also helping with reform efforts. Bucer worked with Cranmer to improve the *Book of Common Prayer* (a service book still used today for use in worship). John Knox helped Cranmer formulate the Church of England's official creed, the *Forty-Two Articles*.

"The Reformation in England seemed to have complete victory within its grasp." But "Edward [only 16] died of tuberculosis in 1553" (Kuiper, 227). The "young king died, praying, 'My Lord and God, save this realm from popery, and maintain it in true religion" (DeMar, 226). His Catholic sister Mary succeeded him to the throne.

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## **REFORMATION 500 WEEK 36: HEIDELBERG CATECHISM QA'S 99-100**

**Question 99: WHAT IS REQUIRED IN THE THIRD COMMANDMENT? That we must not by cursing, or by false swearing, nor yet by unnecessary oaths, profane or abuse the name of God; nor even by our silence and connivance be partakers of these horrible sins in others; and in summary, that we use the holy name of God in no other way than with fear and reverence, so that He may be rightly confessed and worshiped by us, and be glorified in all our words and works.**

God has many descriptive titles (such as Almighty, Most High, the Holy One, Sovereign), and one primary name: Jehovah or Yahweh – the equivalent of **I AM** (Ex. 3:13-14). In the English Bible, God's primary name is translated LORD. “I am the LORD, that is My name” (Isaiah 42:8). “God’s name stands for all that God is. . . to profane (despise or take lightly) the name of God is to blaspheme God Himself (Leviticus 24:11, 15)” (Jones, *Study Helps*, 241). The word ‘vain’ means ‘frivolous, insincere, thoughtless.’ To take the LORD’s name in vain is to take His name upon our lips irreverently, insincerely, rashly, lightly, or thoughtlessly: “Oh my God, Thank God, Good Lord, Hallelu-jah, Jesus Christ.” God’s name is abused in the following ways: (1) by cursing. “All cursing which proceeds from hatred, and from a desire of private revenge leading to the destruction of our neighbor, is . . . wicked; because it desires that God should be made the executioner of our corrupt wishes and passions” (Ursinus, 538); (2) by false swearing: lying after swearing to tell the truth; “you shall not swear by my name falsely, nor shall you profane the name of your God: I am the LORD” (Lev. 19:12); (3) by unnecessary oaths (explained in Q&A 101); (4) by our silence (explained in Q&A 100); (5) by our disobedience (Prov. 30:9; Rom. 2:24). We must use the holy name of God *only* with fear and reverence. “O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is Your name!” (Psalm 8:1; cf. 100:4-5). “Hallowed by Your Name.”

**Question 100: IS THE PROFANING OF GOD’S NAME, BY SWEARING AND CURSING, SO GRIEVOUS A SIN THAT HIS WRATH IS KINDLED AGAINST THOSE ALSO WHO DO NOT HELP AS MUCH AS THEY CAN TO HINDER AND FORBID IT? Yes, truly, for no sin is greater and more provoking to God than the profaning of His name; wherefore He even commanded it to be punished with death [Lev. 24:15-16].**

It “is not enough merely to keep our mouth shut and not utter profanity, but we have to open them and defend the name of God when others profane it... As Christians, we are prophets (see Question 31 and 32) and must ‘confess His name’ to the world [*especially* when it is profaned]” (*Study Helps*). By our silence and connivance (acting as if nothing happened) we give the impression we approve of blasphemy: if a person “hears the voice of swearing, and is a witness, whether he has seen or known of it; if he does not tell it, he bears guilt” (Lev. 5:1). “The partner of a thief hates his own life; he hears the curse, but discloses nothing” (Prov. 29:24). Would we be silent if our mother’s name was cursed? Jesus said, “He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me” (Matt. 10:37). “For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, . . . the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes” (Mark 8:38). With respect and wisdom, we must show our disapproval of blasphemy (Matt. 7:6; Col. 4:5-6).

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