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MEDITATION

Revelation

And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel.

I Kings 18:36 38.

Let it be known!

O, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, let it be known!

We beseech Thee O, Jehovah! let it be known that Thou art God, and that we are Thy servants, and that we have said and done all these things in Thy name, and according to Thy word!

Always, throughout the ages, this is the earnest supplication of the Church in the world. The predeluvian saints cried for it; the prophets of Israel looked forward to it; the inspired psalmist sang of it; the Anointed of God Himself longed and prayed for it; the souls under the altar grow impatient as they wait for it; the Spirit and the bride would hasten the day of it.

Let it be known that Thou art God, and that we are Thy servants!

It is the cry for the theodicy, for the justification of God, His cause, His covenant, His servant, His people in the world.

For frequently, in this world, judged by the criterion of things that are seen, the cause of the Son of God suffers defeat. Many are the false gods, and the powers of darkness increase. And they occupy positions of power and influence, and are strong and prosper. And they that stand for the name and covenant

of Jehovah, the servants of the Most High, are persecuted and killed all the day long. The name of the Lord is a reproach and shame, and there is no avenger. And so they, the servants of Jehovah, who are His witnesses and representatives in the world, long and yearn, pray and cry out for the day of perfect justification when "their innocence shall be known to all, and they shall see the terrible vengeance which God shall execute on the wicked, who most cruelly persecuted, oppressed and tormented them in this world...and their cause which is now condemned by many judges and magistrates, as heretical and impious, will then be known to be the cause of the Son of God." (Conf. Belg. 37).

Let it be known!

Such was the prayer of Elijah on Carmel. It was but an instance of, a strong expression of the longing that is always in the hearts of the witnesses of Jehovah in the world.

A special reason there was for this fervent prayer.

The covenant of the Lord was trampled under foot and His glory was trodden in the dust by the very people that had been called and formed to proclaim His praises. The wicked violators of God's precepts were in power, and a foreign God had been introduced into the land of Jehovah by a cruel and hateful foreign woman. The priests and prophets of Baal were in honor, and filled the land with their abominations, and the prophets of the Lord God of Israel were persecuted and killed. The whole land appeared to have apostatized from the living God and to have turned after the foreign idol, for even those that did not bow the knee to Baal were fearful, and dared not openly protest against the abounding wickedness.

And in the wilds of Gilead, Elijah, that stood before God, had kneeled down and earnestly prayed that God might shut the heavens and withhold the rain, in order that it might be known that He, and not Baal, is God.

And Jehovah had heard. For three years and six months the windows of heaven had been shut, and the

hand of the Lord had been heavy upon the worshippers of false gods.

Had it become known that Jehovah is God?

The word of the Lord had commanded Elijah to return, and to show himself to the wicked king of Israel, for God would send rain again. Had the judgment of the drought, then, borne fruit?

The prophet had met the king, and he had revealed himself as being only embittered and hardened by the stripes which the scourge of Jehovah had laid upon his back. And he had commanded the wicked sovereign to gather all the people and all the prophets and priests of Baal to Mount Carmel, a rugged range in the northern part of the land, stretching in a north-westerly direction to the Mediterranean Sea. There the people were gathered. There also the representatives of the opposition were present in force, although the four hundred prophets of the groves that ate at Jezebel's table had been kept at home by the wily queen, who, no, doubt, foreboded only calamity for them if they should attend.

Had the people turned back to Jehovah?

Had it become known, then, that the Lord is God and that Baal is nothing but vanity and deceit?

Solemnly and definitely the challenge had been presented to them by the servant of the Lord: "If the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him."

But the people had answered not a word! O, God! let it be known!

But how shall it be made known?

How shall it be shown convincingly, so that all must admit that Jehovah is God, and all the mouths of the opposition are stopped?

Shall the prophet preach and testify? Shall he demonstrate to them from Moses how the Lord had delivered them with a mighty hand from the power of proud and wicked Egypt, how He had led them through the Red Sea on dry ground, and, in the very path of their salvation had destroyed the enemy behind them, how He had led them into and through the wilderness, had made His covenant with them, chastised them for their rebellion in the desert, but fulfilled His promises unto them, nevertheless, and had given them this land of Canaan for an inheritance? Shall he preach to them the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, their fathers?....

But why should he? Did they not know?.... With them, surely, their rebellion and apostacy was not a matter of mere ignorance.

Shall he, then, enter into a dispute with the four hundred and fifty priests of Baal, that were present? Shall there be an open debate between them and himself on the proposition that Jehovah is God alone, and shall he logically demonstrate the proposition before all the people, and refute all the arguments of his opponents in favor of Baal, that their mouths may be stopped, and they be forced to admit that the Lord is God?

But how would such a thing be possible?....

Does not the question concern GOD? And is not God the Invisible? Does He not dwell in Eternity? And is not the Eternal beyond the reach, always exactly beyond the reach of time? Is not the Infinite outside of the scope of the finite? And is, for that very reason, the attempt to demonstrate and prove the existence of God not doomed to failure? Baal could be demonstrated, indeed, and by that very fact would fall within the scope of things vain and finite. But how could man demonstrate the living God?...

And, if possible it were, how futile would be the attempt!

For when was ever the mouth of the enemy stopped by logical argument? Were even these prophets of Baal, these sons of iniquity, ignorant of the fact that Baal was a vanity, and that he had not created the heavens and the earth? Did they not worship Baal because they loved darkness rather than light? Did they not serve him because they delighted in the pleasures of iniquity? And can logical refutation ever have the result of turning the wicked from their evil way? Are not the invisible things of God, from the creation of the world, clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made? And do not wicked men hold the truth in unrighteousness?

O. God! let it be known!

Let it be known that Thou art God, that I am Thy servant, that I have done all these things at Thy word, and that Thou has turned the hearts of this people back again!

Yes, indeed, if it is to be known to friend and foe that Jehovah is God, so known that the mouths of the enemy are stopped, and that all acknowledge His sole Lordship, then He must reveal Himself from heaven, and that, too, at the word of His servant, in all the majesty of His power!

Revelation of the terrible majesty and power of the living God!

That is Carmel!

Not logical demonstration, but manifestation. On Carmel God is not the subject of a cool and philosophical round table discussion, in which men all the time speak about Baal, never of the living God; nor is He the proposition of a public debate for the entertainment of an audience.

It is the revelation of the living God, the Friend of His own, the terror of the wicked.

And that, too, as an answer to the prayer of His servant.

It is judgment!

Let it be known!

And let it be known precisely in the way of my

prayer, and through the visible means I have prepared as Thy servant!

Such is the meaning of Elijah's supplication.

For the prophet had, indeed, presented a definite proposition to the people, by which not he, but the Lord Himself would show that He is God, and would expose the vanity of Baal.

A sacrifice they would prepare, both he and the priests of Baal, each to Him whom they professed to be their God. Thus they would express their acknowledgement of Him as God. They would confess Him, express their desire to glorify Him as God, declare that they would consecrate themselves and their all to Him, and beseech from Him a token of His favor towards them. For such was the meaning of the sacrifice they would offer. Only, they would present the sacrifice without bringing it; they would prepare their offering without really offering it; they would leave it to whomever is God to take His own sacrifice from their willing hands. For this purpose they were to build their altars, kill their bullocks, lay their wood in order upon their altar, but refrain from putting fire under it. And He that would accept the sacrifice by sending fire to light and burn it, would be God!

Such was the prophet's proposition.

And the priests of Baal had accepted! They had taken the prophet's proposition, not, indeed, because they felt any measure of assurance that their God would answer by fire from heaven, for well they knew that their cause was vain, but because they were compelled and could do naught else. No doubt, they hoped to gain time, and would watch for an opportunity secretly to carry their own fire to the offering. And they had been given the first opportunity, for they were many, so the prophet had said somewhat ironically, while in reality it had been his purpose that they, and the vanity of their idol, should be exposed, a purpose that could not have been attained if Elijah's prayer had been heard before they had had their opportunity.

And they had prepared their altar and their sacrifice.

And they had prayed. . . .

Prayed they had as all the wicked pray. All day long they implored their god, as if they might move him by their vain repititions, him that had ears but could not hear. Frantically they prayed, leaping on the altar, cutting themselves with knives, as if their god could be moved to pity them by their sufferings. And vainly they prayed.

And Elijah, standing near and watching, lest as they leap upon the altar they carry fire to the offering, mocked.

"Cry aloud, for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he is sleeping, and must be awakened!"

And beware, lest you sympathize with these sons

of the devil, and condemn the prophet of Jehovah for his cruelty! Indeed, many might be inclined so to judge in our God-forsaken age with its show of religion, its supercillious piety, and its love of the world rather than of the living God! But rather remember that these crying and wailing and leaping hypocrites were haters of God and His people, had lived upon the fat of the land and flattered the pride of a wicked queen, and had persecuted to the death the prophets of the Most High. . . .

Let them be mocked that their hypocrisy may be exposed!

Till the time of the evening sacrifice, and till there was no breath left in them to cry, they prayed.

And now it was time for Jehovah's servant to act. An old altar of Jehovah on which the faithful were wont to bring their sacrifices to God, but that had been broken down, he boldly restored in protest. With equal boldness, and before the face of the king, he protested against the schism between Judah and the ten tribes, by building his altar with twelve stones, and by pouring twelve barrels of water into the trench he had dug round about the altar, and on the sacrifice and on the wood, to remove all possible suspicion that somewhere there was a hidden coal glowing among the wood.

Then he prayed. . . .

Quite in contrast to the vain and frantic repetitions of the priests of Baal, in the calm assurance that he acted as the servant of Jehovah, and that he prayed according to the will of the Most High, knowing, therefore, that Jehovah was not only able to grant his petition, but that He would surely hear his prayer and fulfill his request, briefly, yet earnestly, he prayed: "Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their hearts back again."

And the answer comes at once!

Fire flashes from heaven, consumes the sacrifices, the wood, the stones, everything; and licks up the water in the trench!

God let it be known!

And struck to the ground by the revelation of His terrible majesty in this hour of judgment, all the people fall on their faces, and acknowledge that Jehovah is God. Elijah and the seven thousand are vindicated. The priests of Baal are slain. . . .

And He will let it be known!

For He raised up the Lord Jesus from the dead, and exalted Him at His right hand!

Through Him He will let it be known to all that He is God!

Till all shall bow the knee and every tongue confess!

Come, Lord Jesus!

H. H.

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EDITORIALS

Hertrouwen Van Gescheidenen

Van Mr. J. R. VanderWal van Redlands, Calif. ontvingen we het volgende schrijven:

"Waarde Ds. Hoeksema:-

"Gaarne zag ik de volgende vraag in de Standard Bearer beantwoord.

"Mag een vol lid van eene zuivere Gereformeerde kerk hertrouwen, als hij of zij op bijbelsche gronden zijn gescheiden. Indien wel, mogen ze dan ook deel nemen aan het heilig avondmaal?

"Er is verschil van gevoelen in dezen; daarom zou ik gaarne deze vraag door U zien beantwoord."

De tweede vraag van Mr. VanderWal staat natuurlijk met de eerste in onafscheidelijk verband. Als het naar de Schrift in orde is, dat een op bijbelsche gronden gescheiden broeder of zuster hertrouwt, dan ligt het wel in den aard der zaak, dat de hertrouwde ook deel mag nemen aan het heilig avondmaal des Heeren. Ik kan mij althans geen geval denken, waarin een kerkeraad wel de hertrouw zou goedkeuren, en toch de aldus hertrouwde broeder of zuster zou afhouden van het avondmaal.

De vraag is dus of iemand, die op bijbelsche gronden gescheiden is, weer trouwen mag. En over deze vraag is er metterdaad verschil van gevoelen. En ik moet bekennen, dat ik zelf langzamerhand door onderzoek der Heilige Schrift op dit punt in den loop der jaren van overtuiging ben veranderd. Vroeger deelde ik, zonder veel persoonlijke studie van de kwestie te maken, het meest algemeen gevoelen, dat de onschuldige partij in eene echtscheiding ook weer trouwen mocht. Ik meen, dat dit het standpunt is, dat door de meesten wordt ingenomen. Het berust op de veronderstelling, dat echtscheiding de band des huwelijks volkomen verbreekt, zoodat de gehuwde partijen vrij zijn van elkander, en dus ook het recht hebben om een ander huwelijk aan te gaan. Dit is ook het standpunt, dat door de meerderheid van mijn eigen kerkeraad, en dus door mijn kerkeraad, telkens werd ingenomen, zoo dikwijls als er in het verleden een concreet geval zich voordeed in onze gemeente. Maar ik deel dat gevoelen niet meer. Ik ben hoe langer zoo meer in de overtuiging versterkt geworden. dat hoererij wel aan de onschuldige partij in den echt het recht geeft om de schuldige partij te verlaten (ofschoon dit ook dan niet altijd behoeft te geschieden, en ook dan zelfs vergeving en verzoening allereerst plicht is), maar dat daarmede de band des huwelijks, zoolang beide partijen leven, niet verbroken is. En als dit het geval is, dan light het wel in den aard der zaak, dat geen der gescheidenen partijen mag hertrouwen met een ander.

En ik heb voor deze overtuiging ook mijne gronden. In de eerste plaats meen ik, dat in het algemeen de Schrift het huwelijk voorstelt als eene reflectie van Gods verbond met Zijn volk, dat Hij nooit verbreekt. Dat volk kan in dat verbond zondigen, geestelijke hoererij bedrijven, maar het verbond ligt absoluut vast in God, en nimmer geeft Hij Zijn volk een scheidbrief. Daarom leert dan ook de Schrift in Rom. 7, dat een man aan haren wettigen man verbonden is, zoo lang als hij leeft, en eerst door den dood vrij kan worden om een anderen te trouwen. Trouwt zij, terwijl de man nog leeft, dat bedrijft ze overspel.

Maar ik heb toch in het bijzonder het oog op die bepaalde uitspraken in de Heilige Schrift, die rechtstreekts van de onderhavige kwestie spreken, zooals Matt. 5:32; 19:9; Mark. 10:11, 12; Luk. 16:18. Vooral de teksten uit Mattheus en Lukas werpen licht over deze kwestie. Ik wil ze hier daarom overschrijven.

Matt. 5:32: Maar Ik zeg u, dat wie zijne vrouw verlaten zal, anders dan uit oorzake van hoererij, die maakt, dat zij overspel doet; en zoo wie de verlatene zal trouwen, die doet overspel.

Matt. 19:9: Maar Ik zeg u, dat zoo wie zijne vrouw verlaat, anders dan om hoererij, en eene andere trouwt, die doet overspel, en die de verlatene trouwt, doet ook overspel. (Hier moet worden opgemerkt, dat het niet zeker is, dat de laatste zin: "en die de verlatene trouwt, doet ook overspel" in den tekst behoort. De beste oorspronkelijke handschriften laten deze woorden weg. Wezenlijk maakt dit echter geen verschil, daar deze gedachte wel is uitgedrukt in Matt. 5:32, en ook in Luk. 16:18. Ze is dus zeker Schriftuurlijk).

Mark. 10:11, 12: En Hij zeide tot hen: Zoo wie zijne vrouw verlaat, en eene andere trouwt, die doet overspel tegen haar. En indien eene vrouw haren man zal verlaten, en met eenen anderen trouwen, die doet overspel.

Luk. 16:18: Een iegelijk, die zijne vrouw verlaat, en eene andere trouwt, die doet overspel; en een iegelijk, die de verlatene van den man trouwt, die doet ook overspel.

Nu hebben we met den tekst uit Markus niet rechtstreeks te maken, daar deze niet spreekt over het weer trouwen der verlatene of onschuldige partij. Maar de andere plaatsen spreken zich hierover niet onduidelijk uit. En op deze zullen we eenigszins in het bijzonder de aandacht moeten vestigen.

Er is zeer veel over deze plaatsen gesproken en geschreven. En ook is het waar, dat men, dikwijls om in de praktijk aan den klem dezer Schriftuurplaatsen te ontkomen, zoo vreemd soms met deze woorden heeft

omgesprongen, dat men precies de tegenovergestelde beteekenis er aan heeft ontleend van hetgeen ze werkelijk en met nadruk leeren. Ik meen mij te herinneren, dat de Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken synodaal deze teksten zoo hebben verklaard (althans de synodale commissie ad hoc verklaarde ze zoo), dat alle drie partijen, waarvan de Heiland hier zegt, dat ze overspel doen, als ze trouwen, geen overspel bedrijven, en het recht hebben om met een ander te trouwen!

Want let er op, dat deze teksten, tezamen genomen, gewag maken van drie partijen, die overspel bedrijven. Daar is in de eerste plaats de man, die zonder oorzaak van hoererij zijne vrouw verlaat en eene andere trouwt. Hij doet overspel, omdat hij nog altijd beschouwd wordt als in den echt te staan met zijne verlatene vrouw. In de tweede plaats is daar die andere man, die de aldus verlatene vrouw, de onschuldige trouwt. Die doet overspel, omdat de verlatene vrouw nog altijd wordt beschouwd als in den band des huwelijks verbonden te zijn met den man, die haar verlaten heeft en met eene andere is getrouwd. En in derde plaats is daar de verlatene vrouw, die, zooals wel vanzelf spreekt, om dezelfde reden overspel bedrijft door met dien tweeden man een huwelijk aan te gaan.

Op het laatste komt het natuurlijk aan. In weerwil van deze uitspraak des Heilands zijn er altijd nog, die meenen, dat de onschuldige partij met een ander trouwen mag, nadat zij door den man verlaten is en deze een ander heeft getrouwd. En wat van een verlatene vrouw geldt, geldt natuurlijk ook van den man, die onschuldig is in de scheiding van zijne vrouw. Ik ben echter overtuigd, dat deze verklaring der woorden onhoudbaar is.

Laat ons het geval, dat de Heiland stelt in de woorden uit Mattheus en Lukas, helder voor de aandacht houden. Een man verlaat zijne vrouw, en hij trouwt Een andere man trouwt de aldus verlatene vrouw, en door dat aangaan van een huwelijk met deze vrouw bedrijft hij overspel. De vrouw bedrijft dus door dat huwelijk ook overspel. Men heeft de woorden "die de verlatene trouwt" willen vertalen door "wie haar trouwt wanneer zij verlaten is, en er dan stilzwijgend aan toegevoegd: "eer haar man nog met eene andere getrouwd is". De zaak is dan, dat de man haar wel verlaten heeft maar nog geen hoererij bedreven heeft door met een andere vrouw te trouwen. Doch in de eerste plaats spreekt de tekst ook in het oorspronkelijke eenvoudig van "de verlatene." En ook al zou men mogen vertalen: "wanneer zij verlaten is," dan is dit in de eerste plaats nog geenszins hetzelfde als "onmiddelijk nadat zij verlaten is," en dan heeft in elk geval zeker niemand het recht om daarbij te denken: "eer haar man nog met eene andere getrouwd is." Dit is zeker inlegging, geen uitlegging. En dit heeft temeer klem, als we bedenken, dat de Joden het eene inzetting hadden gemaakt, dat een man, die zonder oorzaak van hoererij zijne vrouw verliet, en haar

een scheidbrief had gegeven terstond weer mocht trouwen met eene andere vrouw, maar dat de vrouw drie maanden moest wachten. Er is dus niet veel grond voor de bewering, dat de Heiland in Zijne uitspraak het geval voor de aandacht had van eene vrouw, die verlaten was door haren man, maar wier man nog niet weer getrouwd was. Hij mocht immers, naar der Joden inzetting terstond weer trouwen! Integendeel, Hij spreekt van eene vrouw, wier man haar niet slechts verlaten heeft, maar die ook eene andere vrouw heeft getrouwd. Dit alles heeft plaats "anders dan uit hoererij." De vrouw is dus onschuldig. Maar nu bedrijft de man hoererij, door met eene vrouw in het huwelijk te treden. Zij heeft nu dus bijbelsche grond voor echtscheiding. Als iemand ooit het recht kan hebben, om weer te trouwen met eenen anderen man, dan is het zeker deze vrouw. Haar man heeft, voorzoover dit aan hem stond, de band des huwelijks met zijne eerste vrouw totaal verbroken, leeft in overspel. En toch heeft die vrouw niet het recht om weer te Integendeel, wie haar trouwt, ook nadat haar man een ander huwelijk heeft aangegaan, die wordt gezegd overspel te bedrijven. Waarom? Er kan slechts één antwoord zijn op deze vraag: in weerwil van de zonde des mans, en in weerwil van haar verlaten zijn, is deze vrouw nog altijd voor God aan den levenden man verbonden!

Daarom is mijn antwoord, dat er wel bijbelsche gronden bestaan voor echtscheiding door de wet, zoodat man en vrouw gescheiden van elkander leven, maar dat dit nooit kan worden beschouwd als zulk eene verbreking van den band des huwelijks, dat een der beide partijen, schuldig of onschuldig, het recht kan hebben om met een ander te trouwen, totdat de dood tusschen beide treedt.

Н. Н.

"In The Midst Of Death"

The above is the title of a book by the undersigned that should have left the press and be ready for distribution by the time the present issue of The Standard Bearer reaches our readers. It is a first volume of a proposed exposition of the Heidelberg Catechism, and covers the first part of that well-known part of our Forms of Unity, the part that treats of sin and misery.

The book will contain about two hundred and twenty five pages, is printed on good paper, and has a neat cloth binding.

The volume is published by the Eerdmans Publishing Co. However, a committee of my consistory, supporting this publication financially from the fund that was collected on my anniversary three years ago, is re-

sponsible for a number of copies. The cooperation of all our people, therefore, is necessary to make this enterprise possible with a view to future volumes, the Lord willing.

Order a copy by Mr. A. Doezema, 819 Dunham St., S. E. Grand Rapids, Michigan.

The price of the book is two dollars.

Н. Н.

The Triple Knowledge

An Exposition Of The Heidelberg Catechism

PART TWO
OF MAN'S REDEMPTION
LORD'S DAY VII

Chapter 1. Salvation For Believers Only. (Cont.).

Radically opposed to all these universalistic and semi-universalistic theories of salvation stands the answer of the Catechism: "No; only those who are ingrafted into him, and receive all his benefits by a true faith." This answer is worthy of our closest consideration especially for two reasons. First of all, by the expression "ingrafted into him" it presents faith, not as an act on the part of man, but as a gift of God, a means whereby God saves the sinner through Christ. And secondly, by the same expression, as well as by the clause "and receive all his benefits by a true faith" the Catechism opposes all intellectualistic and philosophic conception of saving faith, and presents it as the spiritual bond by which the believer is united with Christ.

As to the first point of interest mentioned above, the rather precise and exact expression "ingrafted into him," was, no doubt, intentionally employed by the authors of the Catechism, in order to convey accurately their conception of the importance of saving faith. How easily might the answer be cast into a different form, which apparently would express the very same truth, but which would actually deprive it of its real meaning and force! In answer to the question: "are all men saved?" the majority of evangelical Christians of our own day would most probably say: "No; all men are not saved; but only those that believe in Jesus Christ, and accept Him as their personal Saviour." To many a Christian, unskilled in

the discernment of the true doctrine and the detection of errors, it would seem as if this answer, though different in form, expresses exactly the same truth as that of the Heidelberger. And the advantage of this form is that it is very popular, and if you say no more, all orthodox Christians will agree with you. In fact, you may go a step further, and insist that faith is a gift of God, without causing any serious disagreement. Nay more, in answer to the further question: to whom does God give this faith? you may even appear to be very Scriptural and Reformed, and maintain that this gift of grace is bestowed only upon God's elect, and no Arminian will differ with your statement, as long as you only leave room for the answer to the original question: "Only those are saved that believe in Christ, and that accept Him as their personal Saviour." For the Arminian would say that the elect are those that are willing to believe in Christ and to accept Him, and upon those that so reveal their willingness God bestows the gift of faith. O, it is granted, it is even emphasized that salvation is only of grace. But whether the sinner will receive this grace depends in last analysis upon himself. All men are not saved, but God is willing to save all. And you must leave room for the well-meaning offer of salvation to all, for the "altar call" from pulpit and radio. Faith, therefore, though it is a gift of God, must be presented as an act of man, an act whereby the sinner accepts Christ. But notice, now, that the Catechism uses an entirely different terminology in its answer, a terminology that leaves the sinner entirely passive in the hand of God: "No, but only those that are ingrafted into him." One must be ingrafted into Christ before he can accept Him, even before he can be willing to accept Him. And the ingrafting into Christ is an act of God, never of man. As long as the sinner is not ingrafted into Him, he is dead in tresspasses and sins. And he cannot, he will not, and cannot will to come to Christ. As sinner, indeed, he is very active. He will resist and reject the gospel in unbelief. But with a view to salvation he is wholly passive. Christ must come to Him, before He can come to Christ. Salvation is of the Lord. It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. Rom. 9:16.

Viewed in this light, this question of the Catechism and its answer becomes very serious. They speak, not of man, but of God. Are all men saved? No; but only such as it pleases God, and that in absolutely sovereign grace, to graft into Christ by a true and living faith.

As to the second point of importance mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, the Catechism here offers a profound spiritual conception of saving faith: it is the means whereby we are united with Christ, the spiritual bond whereby we are made one body, one plant with Him, so that by faith we may live from Him, draw our all from Him, and thus receive all His benefits. We shall have more to say about the character of faith in the next chapter. But here we must briefly call attention to this essential nature of faith as our union with Christ.

Faith is not another work by performing which we become worthy of salvation. All the work that makes us worthy of righteousness and eternal life and glory has been performed and completely finished by Christ. Even the gift of faith He merited for us by His perfect obedience. Nor is faith a condition upon our fulfillment of which God is willing to give us the salvation merited for us by Christ. There are no conditions whatsoever unto salvation. It is free and sovereign. Nor is it the hand by which we on our part accept the proffered salvation. Often it is presented thus. Salvation is compared to a beautiful gold watch which I freely offer to someone. I hold it in my extended hand and beg the person upon whom I would bestow this gift to take it. It is his for the accepting. But he will never actually possess that watch unless he will extend his own hand to take it from mine. Thus, it is alleged, faith is the hand whereby we take hold of the salvation proffered in the gospel. But also this is not true. For first of all, the reception and appropriation of the benefits of Christ is by no means such a mechanical and external transaction as taking a watch from a man's hand. It is a profound spiritual activity of the entire soul. And, secondly, the natural man has no hand whereby he is able to accept the salvation of God in Christ, were it merely offered him. No, but faith is a bond, a spiritual bond, whereby we are so united with Christ that by it we live out of Him.

That is the meaning of the figure that underlies the expression: "ingrafted into Him." It is the figure of a twig or scion of one tree that is ingrafted upon another. That ingrafted branch becomes one organism with the tree upon which it is grafted, so that from it it receives all its life-sap. The figure is thoroughly Scriptural. The Saviour compares the relation between Himself and believers to that between the vine and the branches. "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. . . . I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." John 15:1-5. The apostle speaks of the olive tree and of branches that are grafted into it. Rom. 11. And he speaks of being planted together in the likeness of Christ's death, and in the likeness of His resurrection. And the spiritual bond that so makes us one plant with Christ that we live out of Him is faith.

One might use other figures to illustrate this same

truth. You can put a dead stick in the ground, but it will never show signs of life, nor do you expect it to sprout into foliage and bear fuit. On the contrary, it will rot. And the richer the soil, the faster will be the process of decay. But plant a little tree in that same soil, and it will strike its roots into it and draw its nourishment from the soil, and grow and bear fruit. This may illustrate the difference between the unbeliever and the believer. You may bring the former into contact with the Christ through the preaching of the gospel: it will only harden him in his unbelief. And the richer and stronger the gospel that is preached to him, the more he will hate it and rebel against it. But let the wonder of grace be performed upon a sinner and let the power of faith be implanted in his heart, and he will strike the roots of his soul into the Christ that is presented to him in the gospel, and from that Christ he will draw his life. A more mechanical, and for that reason less suitable figure, is that of the relation of your lighted home to the central power plant in your city. In that central power plant there is, so to speak, the power that is able to light your home at night. But if your home is not properly wired and connected with that central plant, so that the current is carried right into your home, your rooms will remain dark. So there must be a living connection between Christ and your heart, if you are to partake of the light of life. And that connection is saving faith.

The truth is, that all our salvation is in Christ. In Him is our redemption, the forgiveness of sin. the adoption unto children, eternal and perfect righteousness, knowledge of God and wisdom, freedom from the dominion of sin and sanctification, eternal life and light and joy,—all the blessings of salvation are not only merited by Him, but they are in Him. He is our wisdom and knowledge, our righteousness and holiness, our eternal life and peace. In order, therefore, to obtain these blessings of salvation we must first become one plant with Him. We must be united with Him in a spiritual-organic sense of the word. And the bond whereby we are united with Him is faith, a gift of God, a means whereby God joins us for ever to Christ. And when we are so united with Him by the power of faith, we become active, and by that faith we receive Him and all His benefits. By that faith whereby we are ingrafted into Christ, we appropriate Him unto ourselves so that His righteousness and holiness, His life and peace become our own, and we rejoice in the God of our salvation!

Chapter 11.

The Nature of Faith.

In the preceding chapter we already touched upon the character and significance of saving faith and its relation to salvation through Christ. The believer is saved through faith. Without faith he is not saved for a moment. If it were conceivable or possible that he should ever, even for a moment, lose his faith, that moment he would be lost, and again he would be dead in tresspasses and sins. For all his life and salvation are in the Lord Jesus Christ, and by faith he is joined to that Christ, ingrafted into Him, and receives all His benefits.

But now the Catechism calls special attention to the nature of true, saving faith. In answer to the question: "What is true faith?" it points to the following elements: 1. Faith is both a certain knowledge and a hearty confidence. 2. This knowledge concerns all that God has revealed to us in His word. 3. The confidence of faith is trust concerning my personal salvation as being freely given me of God by grace, and that only for the sake of Christ's merits. 4. With respect to this confidence of faith, it is said that it is wrought in the heart by the Holy Ghost through the Gospel.

The answer places all the emphasis on the element of confidence. It is the peculiar property of saving faith, that distinguishes it from all other kinds of faith. All other kinds of faith are also a "certain knowledge," but saving faith is not only this, but also a hearty confidence that I have a personal part in the salvation God has wrought in Christ. In fact, the answer leaves the impression that not the element of a "certain knowledge," but only this hearty trust is wrought in our hearts by the Holy Ghost through the gospel. The "certain knowledge" of faith is not the special work of grace that is wrought in our hearts through the gospel by the Spirit of Christ.

That this is, indeed, the meaning of the answer is corroborated by the explanation Ursinus gives of this part of the Catechism. We read: "The justifying faith is described in the Catechism. In this description of faith "knowledge and holding for truth" are mentioned as characteristics of faith in general. Faith does not exist in a doctrine which is not known; one must necessarily know the doctrine before he can believe it. For this reason, we reject the 'implicit faith' of the Romish Church (i. e. believing what the church teaches, regardless of the question whether or not one is acquainted with it). This description of faith differs from the general definition in that it speaks in addition of confidence, and of application of the forgiveness of sins through and for the same of Christ. The peculiar characteristic of faith is: to rest and to rejoice in God on account of so great salvation. The efficient cause of it is the Holy Ghost. The means whereby He works this: the gospel, implied in which is also the use of the sacraments. And it is the will and the heart of man that experiences this operation.

"This justifying or saving faith differs from the other kinds of faith in this, that it is a firm confidence, whereby we appropriate to ourselves the merits of Christ, i. e. are firmly convinced that the righteousness of Christ is given and imputed also to us. Now, confidence is an inclination of the heart and of the will; this inclination has regard to some good, rejoices in it and relies on it; also in our language (German) it denotes 'a complete reliance on something.' The Greek word for faith is derived from a root which implies the idea of confidence. In this sense even profane authors, like Phocylides and Demosthenes, already used the word." 1, 147.

It is plain, then, that according to Ursinus, the knowledge of saving faith is the same as that of all other kinds of faith. It is simply the intellectual apprehension and assurance of a certain truth or doc-There is knowledge in so-called historical All men believe in their deepest heart that God is. Even the devils believe that God is one, and they tremble in this knowledge. Jas. 2:19. There is knowledge in the general faith in the objectivity of the world according to the testimony of our senses. The same is true of "miraculous faith," or the assurance that some wonder will be performed by us or upon us. And even what is called "temporary faith," and which is nothing but a temporary stir of the emotions, is not possible without knowledge. Now, this element of knowledge these other kinds of faith, according to Ursinus, have in common with true, saving faith. And it is also wrought by the Holy Ghost, but not by the Spirit of Christ, and not necessarily through the gospel. There is a general revelation of God, and there is also a general operation of the Holy Spirit, whereby every man is assured of certain truths, e. g. of the existence of God. But it is the element of confidence that distinguishes saving faith from all other kinds. And this confidence of saving faith it is that is wrought by the Spirit of Christ, and through the gospel, as a special work of grace.

We call special attention to this part of the answer of the Catechism, and to its explanation by Ursinus, because we cannot accept this exclusive emphasis on the confidence of faith, as if it alone were the work of grace by the Spirit through the gospel. And no one does. Not only the confidence of saving faith, but also its certain knowledge is peculiar to itself, and is wrought by the Spirit through the gospel. Even though usually attention is not called to the somewhat strange separation between the knowledge and the confidence of faith the Catechism makes, the answer is always explained as if it presented both elements as the fruit of the special operation of the Spirit of God in Christ. Dr. A. Kuyper Sr. writes (E Voto, 1, 129, 130):

"This 'certain, secure knowledge' does not consist in a further development of a knowledge which in part we already possessed, nor in an unfolding of a knowledge that was hid within us. One does not make any headway in this knowledge, though he would finish the courses in all the schools. Even if one would do nothing else all his life long than read the Bible, and compare Scripture with Scripture, he would not even advance one step toward the knowledge that is here meant. No, here a new knowledge is meant, which you did not possess as a sinner, and of which you received the power in regeneration. kind of knowledge this is, comparable to the original knowledge which Adam received in Paradise, and which is given us of God in Christ 'our wisdom.' He that receives this knowledge, knows differently, sees differently, touches differently. That which before he could not discern, he now perceives, and it becomes life to him. 'Enlightened eyes of the understanding' the apostle therefore calls this knowledge; and they are eyes too, that gaze with such uncommon accuracy, that they afford immediate and complete certainty and assurance concerning those things that are perceived by them: so clearly, so lucidly, so sharply this knowledge defines the things before your consciousness. The natural man does not see anything of this, but the spiritual man that has the gift of faith discerns all things. On the other hand, if one is not born again, he cannot even see the kingdom of God.

"Without the implanting of this saving faith, one may, therefore, indeed, commit the Bible to memory, and accept its contents historically, but this does not help him. He may also work himself into it by the spur of the emotions, and for a time rejoice in it, but neither this 'historical' nor this 'temporary' faith has anything in common with the faith whereby we are ingrafted into Jesus. Even 'miraculous' faith has nothing in common with saving faith, for although you had a 'faith to remove mountains' (and that is miraculous faith) and love was not infused into your heart, you still would be nothing.

"Disputations, therefore, do not help. We must have *testimony*, the Word must be administered, because usually it pleases God to use the Word as a means for implanting of faith; but even though you talk day and night to someone, as long as his sour cannot see through the eye of faith, you cannot show him the glories of God."

H. H.

NOTICE

The Consistory of the First Protestant Reformed Church wishes to call to the attention of our churches that Synod will meet D. V., on Wednesday June 2, 1943 in the parlors of the Fuller Ave. Church. This is to be preceded by a prayer service on Tuesday evening, June 1 at 8.00 in the Roosevelt Prot. Ref. Church. The President of the former Synod, Rev. B. Kok, will preach the sermon on this occasion.

Consistory of the First Prot. Ref. Church.
H. Meulenberg, Clerk.

The Levitical Cities

Before turning to our subject, we must first take notice of the order of instructions which God gave to Moses for the establishing of the Israelitish commonwealth in Canaan. Chapter 33:52-56 (of the book of Numbers) contains the directions for the purifying of the holy land from all heathen defilement. The inhabitants of the land are to be driven out, all their pictures and molten images destroyed, and their high places plucked down. Next in order are the instructions for the division of the land among the people of It shall be done in a just and equatible manner. (33:54). The lawgiver now passes to define the boundaries of the holy land, within which they shall not rest until all the territory within them has been acquired, chap. 24. We here learn that the area of the land, which the Lord gave to His people, extended southward to the wilderness of Zin, was bordered on the West by the Mediterranean Sea, reached to the Western crest of the Lebanon on the north, while its eastern border rested on the north-eastern shore of the sea of Galilee and then ran down the Jordon. These bounds did not include the heritage of the two tribes and a half east of the Jordan. West of the Jordan there were regions that may never have been permanently occupied. In this strip of land, approximately 160 miles in length and whose greatest width measured but 40 miles (the territory of the two and a half tribes is not included in these divisions) the Lord planted His people. The share of the earth that He gave them was but little.

The directions for purging the land of all heathen idolatry, and its just apportioning among the people, are now followed by directions for the consecration of the land to Jehovah by the distribution of the Levitical cities (35:1-6). This light of levitical holiness over the land becomes brighter through the sancturies for fugitives, who were pursued for unintentional shedding of blood; places of refuge, selected from among the levitical cities and placed under the jurisdiction of the Levites (35:6-34).

The regulations concerning these cities are found in Nu. 35:1-5. "And the Lord spake unto Moses in the plains of Moab by Jordon near Jericho, saying, Command the children of Israel, that they give unto the Levites of the inheritance of their possession cities to dwell in; and ye shall give also unto the Levites suburbs for the cities round about them. And the cities shall they have to dwell in; and the suburbs shall be for their cattle, and for their goods, and for all their beasts. And the suburbs of the cities, which ye shall give unto the Levites, shall reach from the wall of the city and outward a thousand cubits round about. And ye shall measure from without the city on the east side two thousands cubits, and on the West side

two thousand cubits; and on the south side two thousand cubits and on the north side two thousand cubits; and the city shall be in the midst: this shall be to them the suburbs of the city."

The tribe of Levi the Lord seperated to bear the ark of the covenant, stand before the Lord to minister unto Him, and bless His name. Wherefore Levi has no part or inheritance with his brethren; their lot and inheritance is Jehovah. Deut. 10:8, 9. But the tribes shall give them cities, to the number of 48 (Nu. 35:7), out of their inheritance, and in addition pasturage for their cattle. The pastures lay around their cities, for their cattle, flocks and herds, and animals generally. The clear conception of the location of the pastures which were given to the Levites in the surroundings of their cities is regarded as very difficult by interpreters in general. But the description is The original text reads: "And the entirely clear. suburbs (or surroundings) of the cities. . . . (shall reach) from the wall of the city and outward a thousand cubits round about (the city). And ye shall measure from without (the thousand cubits, that is, beyond the thousand cubits) to the city on the east side two thousand cubits" etc. The thought conveyed is that the suburbs should extend three thousand cubits beyond the wall of the city round about on all sides of The only question left unanswered is why, since this whole space was suburb, the text speaks seperately of the thousand cubits and of the two thousand cubits beyond this length. It has been conjectured that the thousand cubits were for gardens or also for the cattle of the strangers in the cities and that in the space beyond this length, in the two thousand cubits round about, the Levites pastured their flocks and herds.

Their might be danger, especially with the irregular forms which the cities might assume, and with the physical obstacles encountered in the surrounding ground, that neighboring landowners would deem the suburb sufficient, if it measured three thousand cubits in some directions and not in others, in which case it might be restricted to a very small area. To prevent this, it was commanded that the suburb should extend three thousand cubits' distance from the wall alike on north, south, east, and west.

So was the tribe of Levi scattered in Israel as broken up into a number of distinct communities each with its own place of abode. This had its advantages. Although this is nowhere expressly stated, certain it is that the common Levites, as well as the priest, were assigned to the task of teaching the people of Israel the law as the priests' assistants. Their disintegration was great enough to allow them to contact, as teachers of religion, the whole nation in all its branches; and yet not so great as to result in the loss of their power. Segregated in cities of their own, they lived alone in the midst of their people. They could thus main-

tain the proper balance between the kind of familiarity that breeds contempt and the aloofness that estranges the pastor from his flock. They lived within easy reach of those whom they had to instruct yet without being exposed to the corrupting influences of the broad country. And the whole nation could contribute to their support, viz., by the payment of the tithes that could not be carried far. Thus they did not become burdensome to individual tribes by too great a concentration. It was an ideal arrangement.

Their dispersion was the fulfillment of prophecy uttered by the dying patriarch Jacob. "I (mark you I, the dying prophet here introduces Jehovah as the spacker) will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel "Gen. 49: 70b). Levi, the patriarch (Simeon need not be considered here) had distinguished himself by treachery and violence and intense wrath against man and beast. His anger is cursed but not he, personally; and in his generations he is broken up and scattered. This dispersion is the specific remedy against his violence. Thus Levi (and also Simeon) lacked the external independence of the other tribes and were thus at the mercy of these tribes for their life's support. As this support was not always forthcoming, the Levites suffered privations and on this account yielded themselves sometimes, as individuals, to the priestly service of Idolatry.

A rather difficult question is: was the dispersion of this tribe a visiting of Levi's sins upon his offspring and thus a curse or is it to be regarded as a blessing? Otherwise said: in declaring, "I will scatter them in Israel," was the Lord cursing Levi in his generations or blessing him? If words have meaning, then the announcement, "I will scatter," does have an ominous meaning. Yet the Levi according to the election was the blessed of the Lord.

Now according to the plain teachings of Scripture (Ex. 20:5), the Lord does indeed visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Him. This refers not to the imputation of guilt from the fathers to the children, as in the case of Adam with respect to the human family (Adam's guilt was imputed to his offspringthe guilt incurred by his first disobedience and none other) but to the accumulation of guilt in the wicked generations of godless men, whose reprobated offspring, as sovereignly hardened by the Lord, walk in their sins—the sins of the fathers— and on this account share their guilt; and upon whom, therefore, is visited, as punishment, in the day of reckoning, the filled measure of iniquity, the measure as filled by both the fathers and the children. Said Christ to the reprobated Israel: "Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of the righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias. . . ." (Matt. 23:34), that is, 'that upon you may come all the punishment incurred by all the guilt of your godless antecedents—at once your fathers according to the flesh and your spiritual forebears—in whose footsteps ye follow'.

When children love and practice the sins of their fathers, they are thereby partners to these sins in the eyes of God; and the guilt that accumulates in the race is communal. In all such cases, therefore, the punishing of the children is a visiting of the sins of the fathers upon the children. Yet, it is not correct to speak here of imputation of guilt from fathers to children. What we here have to do with is one great sin and one enormous guilt common to the whole race of such godless men, because all kill God's prophets. Thus, the punishment is also communal and is visited on each member of such a race that does not repent, visited in its full fury upon the children. To be freed from this communal guilt, the individual member of the race must denounce and forsake the sins of his fathers and turn to the Lord. Doing so, he saves himself. Failing in this, he perishes with his family. Thus, no sinner who repents, finds himself, despite his penitence, under the necessity of perishing on account of the sins of his forebears. A man dies because of his own sin, because he follows in the steps of his wicked fathers and thus makes their wickedness his own instead of repudiating it and turning to God.

It is this truth that the people of Israel, the contemporaries of the prophet Ezekial, denied. said: "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge," (Ezek. 18) meaning: "The children, despite their righteousness, must perish on account of the sins of their wicked forebears." This slander and slander it is, drew forth from the prophet a reply that reads in part: "Yet ye say, Why? doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father?" Not so, says Ezekial: "When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, and hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them he shall surely live. The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son—the rigteous son—shall not bear the iniquity of the father. . . ." The sole point to the prophet's argument is that God is gracious to the penitent, loves the righteous, saves His people, irrespective of how their fathers have walked. To say that what the prophet here teaches is that the Lord takes no delight in the death of the reprobated wicked but is determined that he also repent, is to miss the whole point in his argument.

Was now the dispersion of the Levites another case of a visiting of the sins of a father upon the children? Was it, in a word, punishment, a curse? It was this certainly in so far as it concerned the apostates, the men of violence, in the tribe. Already in the days of the judges we find the sons of Eli making "themselves

fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of the people" (1 Sam. 2:29). In after centuries the entire priesthood, with the exception of a faithful few, was yielding itself to the service of sin, profaning God's sanctuary and collaborating with the apostate princes and rulers in killing and robbing the people. The priests said not. Where is the Lord and they that handle the law knew Him not, Jer. 2:8. They said to a stock, thou art my father; and to a stone, Thou hast brought They turned their back upon the Lord, me forth. Jer. 2:26; and joined the false prophets and the princes in demanding the death of Jeremiah, Jer. 26:11. They violated God's law profaned His holy things, put no difference between the holy and the profane, showed no difference between the clean and the unclean, hid their eyes from the Lord's Sabbaths, and profaned Him among the people, Ezek. 22:26. Their cities were dens of corruption. As troops of robbers wait for a man, so they murdered in the way by consent Hos. 6:8,9. They taught for hire, Mic. 3:11; They polluted the sancturay, done violence to the law, and despised the name of the Lord, Zech. 3:4; Mal. 11:6.

So were these apostates practicing the very violence that had been cursed in the father of the tribe. It was upon this seed of evildoers that God visited the sins of Levi the patriarch, doing so through His scattering it in Israel. Thus the divine utterance, "I will scatter," was a curse indeed, pronounced upon Levi as to this offspring. And its execution, the actual scattering, preindicated the dispersion of the nation as a whole over the face of the earth in afteryears. That the prediction was punishment, curse, becomes plain the moment we get before our mind the plight of the Levites in times of apostacy, when the law of God was despised. In such times the Levites were for-Then they were poor and needy and homeless and as vagabonds roamed the broad country in search of bread. This was their lot usually. And this was the real scattering. It all comes down to this that the dying patriarch Jacob, in foretelling the future of his sons, gave utterance to cursing as well as to blessings. Simeon and Levi were the two tribes selected to represent the curse in its working. They were singled out, were these tribes, to serve as a perpetual reminder that the Lord indeed visits the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and forth generation of them that hate Him. is especially evident from the history of the tribe of Simeon. The tribe was eventually absorbed in Judah. In the blessings of Moses, Simeon is not mentioned at all, nor in Judges 4 and 5. Their inheritance "was in the midst of the inheritance of the children of Judah" (Josh. 19:1); this is accounted for (ver. 9), "for the portion of the children of Judah was too much for But the very cities which were apportioned to Simeon were allotted to Judah (Josh. 15: 21-32).

It is suggested, in 1 Chron. 4:13, that the independent possessions of these cities by Simeon ceased in the time of David, 1 Chron. 4:42, 43 makes mention of certain exploits of Simeonites at Gedor against the Amalekites, and at Mt. Seir. To this they must have been driven by dire necessity. The references at 2 Chron, 15:9 and 34:6 associates certain Simeonites with the norther kingdom, thus indicating their dispersion in Israel. Finally, there is no mention of the return of any Simionites after the captivity; and their cities fall to Judah (Neh. 11:26).

But there was also a Levi (and a Simeon) according to the election, formed of children who were the blessed of God, loved His law, walked in the way of His commandments and denounced and repudiated the violence of the patriarch Levi. They were not cursed. The dispersion, to which they also were subjected, was to them a blessing on the ground that to them who love God all things work together for good. And the token of God's favor toward them was the appointment of the tribe to the office of priests and of teachers of religion, their material prosperity and physical well-being, when they dwelt securely and contentedly in their cities, with all their needs fulfilled by the generous contributions of other tribes. But this was their lot only in times when the nation as a whole kept covenant fidelity.

The presence of God-fearing men in a tribe—the tribe of Levi—selected to exhibit the curse in its working, the appointment of this tribe to the office of priests, was calculated to demonstrate before the mind of the church in that day certain vital principles of truth; these truths: 1) the (righteous) son shall not bear the iniquity of the father; 2) whether a man is blessed or cursed, appointed to death or to life, depends not on racial or tribal descent, on whether he be a Levite or a Simeonite or a Jew but solely on the good-pleasure of the God Who hath mercy on whom He will and hardeneth whom He will.

The appointment of Levi to the office of priest was not properly the fulfillment of the prediction: "I will scatter." If it were this, the tribe of Simeon would have been similarly honored. The singular favor shown to Simeon was his being attached to the tribe of Judah. The appointment to the office of priests was a special honor bestowed upon Levi.

That the Lord should have recruited his ministers of religion from this tribe—a tribe under the ban of God—had significance also for these ministers. The consideration of this circumstance was assuredly calculated to keep them humble.

It is plain that the dispersion of Levi was *in itself* neither a blessing nor a curse. This must be said also of his elevation to the priesthood. They were blessings only to the Levi according to the election. To the others both were made to work only for evil. The dispersion of the Levites must not therefore be

contemplated—and so it is contemplated by interpreters—as in itself a curse but a curse that was converted into a blessing for the whole tribe through its elevation to the priesthood.

When the Levites kept covenant trust, feared the Lord, and with diligence and perseverance taught the people the law, their 48 cities were so many seats of religion in Israel, centers of pious influence. As such, they contributed mightily to the conversion of Canaan into a type of that land—the heavenly Canaan—where the knowledge of God covers the earth as the waters cover the bottom of the sea—a land where men say not to one another, "Know the Lord," in that all know Him.

G. M. O.

The Cities Of Refuge

Selected from among the 48 Levitical cities were the 6 cities of refuge, 3 on each side of the Jordan, and placed under the jurisdiction of the Levites, to serve as places of retreat and security for such as might shed blood unwittingly, without foresight or design. East of the Jordon they were Bezer in Reuben, Ramoth-Gilead in Gath, and Golan in Manasseh. On the West of the Jordan they were Hebron in Judah, Shechem in Mt. Ephraim, and Kadesh in Judah.

The purpose of the appointment of the Cities of Refuge was to prevent the shedding of innocent blood, i. e., the blood of one who had killed his brother unintentionally and ignorantly. The need of such cities rose from the following circumstance: If a man were slain the duty of avenging him lay upon the nearest relative, upon one therefore who, as blinded by passion, might do a man to death in revenge for what was the purest accident. To prevent such a thing and to ensure a right administration of justice, these cities were instituted. From time immemorial and thus not by any law given to Moses the duty of avenging a man who had been slain rested upon the nearest kin, —from time immemorial, before the appearance of the public magistrate, thus when the sword was still born by the father of the family or clan. Instead of abolishing the practice the Lord, by stepping in with His law, humanized it and made it serve the ends of justice.

The three cities on each side of the Jordan were equally distant from each other, lest the avenger of blood pursue the slayer while his heart was hot and overtake him because the way was long and slay him (Nu. 35:6). The escape to these cities was thus possible to all.

The judicial procedure was as follows: "(Then)

the congregation shall judge between the slayer and the revenger of blood. . . . and the congregation shall deliver the slayer out of the hand of the revenger of blood, and the congregation shall restore him to the city of his refuge, whither he was fled. . . . "(vers. 24, 25). This is not very explicit. Doubtless this is what took place: On reaching the city the fugitive was received by the elders (Levites), secured admission, and was given asylum until his case could be tried. The clause: "And the congregation shall restore him to the city of refuge," plainly indicates that the trial took place in the district from which he had fled and to which he was therefore conducted to be tried. There the witnesses were examined. If it could not be proven that he was an intentional slayer, that he hated the person slain, he was declared innocent and led back to the city to which he had taken refuge. On the other hand, "if any man hate his neighbor, and lie in wait for him, and rise up against him, and smite him mortally that he die, and fleeth into one of these cities: then the elders of the city shall send and fetch him thence, and deliver him into the hand of the avenger of blood, that he may die. Thine eye shall not pity him, but thou shalt do away the guilt of innocent blood from Israel, that it may go well with (Deut. 19:11, 12).

This scripture throws some additional light on he transaction. It seems to imply that there were cases in which the fugitive, from fear of the revenger, could not be induced to return to the scene of the slaying to be tried, that, in this event, the trial took place without him, and that, were he found to be a willing slayer, the elders of the city, where he had taken up his abode, would surrender him to the manslayer, that justice might take its course. There are still other conjectures. According to some, we are to suppose a preliminary trial by the elders of the refuge city. If this was satisfactory, the fugitive was given a temporary asylum until a regular trial could be carried out in his place of residence. If unsatisfactory, i. e., if guilt were immediately established, no second trial was necessary, and the culprit was set at large to be hunted down and slain. If this is the view to be adopted, the witnesses must be imagined to have followed the fugitive to the city, to be on hand at this preliminary trial. According to others there was but one trial—the trial that took place before the gates of the refuge city, where the fugitive stood and stated his case to the elders of the city in the presence of witnesses. This view collides with the statement: "And the congregation shall restore him to the city of refuge" (Nu. 35:25). The congregation is plainly the residents of the place where the fugitive lived, assembled not before the gates of the refuge city but in their own district. Finding the fugitive innocent, they restored, i. e., led him back, to the city to which he had fled.

Thus did the law of God step in between the avenger and his victim and restrain him in the exercise of his right and duty by the trial and verdict of the unimpassionate congregation in order to free this primitive form of revenge from the barbarisms and injustices inherent in blind passion. So did the institution of the Cities of Refuge aid in converting Canaan into a land where righteousness and praise sprang forth before all nations (Isa. 61:11) and thus into a type of that country—the new earth—the righteousness of whose redeemed inhabitants goeth forth as brightness and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth (Isa. 62:1).

The intentional killing had its signs by which it could be recognized. "And if he (the slaver) smite him (the victim) with an instrument of iron, so that he die, he is murderer: the murderer shall surely be put to death. And if he smite him with throwing a stone, wherewith he may die, he is a murderer. . . . Or if he smite him with a hand weapon of wood, wherewith he may die, he is a murderer. . . . If he that thrust him (the victim) of hatred, or hurl at him by laying in wait, that he die; or in enmity smite him with his hand, that he die; he that smote him shall surely be put to death, for he is a murderer: the avenger of blood shall slay the murderer when he meet him" (Nu. 35:17 scq.). The use of such weapons—iron or a stone, if heavy enough to cause death or a heavy piece of wood—would imply some evil intent, and was proof of a malicious purpose, yet not, of course, invariably so. Other factors would needs have to enter in, if the presence of these objects in the hands of the slayer could be taken as certain indications of his guilt. The slayer might have killed his neighbor with any of these objects unintentionally. Therefore it is added: "But if he thrust him suddenly without enmity, or have cast upon him anything without laying of wait, or with any stone, wherewith a man may die, and was not his enemy, neither sought his harm. . . . then the congregation shall deliver the slayer out of the hand of the revenger of blood" (Nu. 25:22scq.). Thus, what had greatest weight is how the slaver was disposed toward his victim previous to the time of the slaying. If he was known to have hated and threatened him, then, having been armed with any of the aforesaid weapons at the time of the slaying, he would naturally experience much difficulty in satisfying his judges that the killing had been purely accidental.

The slayer, declared innocent had to stay in the refuge city until the death of the high priest, 'the priest who has been anointed with the holy oil." Until that event he must not on no account pass beyond the boundaries of the city. If he did, the revenger of blood might slay him with impunity. But when the high priest died, the slayer might return to his inheritance. This could only be because the death of the high priest

had (symbolically) atoning virtue and covered with respect to God a multitude of sins which had risen from ignorance and mistakes and thus formed a bound beyond which even the avenger of blood might not go. Thus, with the death of the high priest, the priest and the sacrificial victim appeared as united in one person as they actually were in the person of the true high priest, Christ Jesus, whose blood wrought out eternal redemption only, because through the eternal Spirit He offered Himself without spot to God.

From this circumstance it follows that the slaying, though unintentional, had nevertheless involved the slayer in guilt before God. With his guilt atoned through the dying of God's priest, he was set free.

The manslayer could be convicted by the testimony of several (Deut. 2 and 3) witnesses only. The testimony of a single witness was not valid.

No satisfaction, i.e., money paid in compensation for the murder, in settlement of the avenger's claim, might be taken for the life of the murderer, who was found guilty of death (Nu. 35:31). The permission to make compensation for murder sacrifices the principle of justice that lies at the basis of the divine command, "Whosoever sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." Moreover, it allows the kindred of the murdered man to make gain out of murder.

G. M. O.

Door Lijden Tot Verblijden

(Psalm 66)

Het is niet met zekerheid uit te maken wie dezen psalm gedicht heeft, noch ook in welke periode van Israel's bestaan dit lied valt. Er zijn wel gissingen gemaakt, doch uiteraard kunnen zij nooit voorwerp zijn van het geloof der gemeente van Christus. God heeft het ons niet geopenbaard.

Toch is zulks niet een beletsel om door dezen psalm geestelijk gebaat te worden. De inhoud is van toepassing op het Israel aller eeuwen, zoowel globaal, collectief, alswel persoonlijk. Het is een van de lievelings-psalmen der kinderen Gods van alle eeuwen. In de Grieksch-Roomsche kerk werd hij voorgelezen op den Paaschmorgen. In den Griekschen Bijbel werd hij geheeten den psalm van de verrijzenis des Heeren.

Zijn thema is de verlossing van Gods volk door de verschrikkelijke en wondere daden des Heeren. Zijn begin tot het 12de vers beschrijft die uitredding van Israel collectief; doch van het 13de vers tot het einde past de dichter het op zichzelf toe en is daarom persoonlijk van aard.

Ge vindt in dezen psalm hetzelfde thema als van

den Heidelberger: ellende, verlossing en dankbaarheid.

Het begin is hartverheffend en zeer schoon.

Men kan bemerken, dat de dichter vol is, dat zijn hart overloopt van den ijver om toch God maar te loven. Het is hem niet genoeg, dat hij zelf vervuld is met den overvloeienden dank des Heeren. O neen! Hij wil, dat de geheele aarde zich nederbukke voor het aangezicht des Heeren, om Hem met luider stemme op 't hoogst te prijzen.

"Juicht Gode, gij gansche aarde!" Zoo begint hij. Men is het er niet over eens wat de dichter bedoe!t met "gansche aarde". Sommigen denken, dat hij er de geheele wereld, alle volken der aarde mee bedoelt. Anderen denken, dat hij het "land", d.w.z., Israel, er mee beduiden wil. Ik ben geneigd om voor het laatste te kiezen. Gods Woord is altijd particulier. Het gaat altijd om het volk, het land, Israel-Jakob. Het is de Heilige Geest er om te doen, dat het erfdeel des Heeren, hetzij in Oud Testamentischen of Nieuw Testamentischen zin, den Heere loven zal.

Voor mijn neiging om het alzoo te verklaren vindt ik vooral steun in het 16de vers. Daar staat toch: "Komt, hoort toe, o gij allen die God vreest; en ik zal vertellen wat Hij aan mijne ziel gedaan heeft."

In allen gemoede vraag ik U: Indien de dichter de geheele aarde wil opwekken om God te verheerlijken, waarom dan zoo particulier gehandeld in het 16de vers? Hoe zullen zij die God *niet* vreezen Hem ooit loven, indien hij hun niet vertelt, wat God aan zijne ziel gedaan heeft?

Daar komt nog bij, dat het 3de vers zelf scheiding maakt tusschen menschen en menschen. Het 3de vers spreekt ook de gansche aarde toe; en dan beveelt hij die "gansche aarde" om tot God te zeggen: "Hoe vreeselijk zijt Gij in Uwe werken! Om de grootheid Uwer sterkte zullen zich Uwe vijanden geveinsdelijk aan U onderwerpen!"

We besluiten dus door te houden, dat "gansche aarde" beteekent het geredde menschdom, de kerk van Christus, het volk Gods aller eeuwen.

Trouwens, alleen dat volk kan doen, hetgeen het opgedragen wordt de doen door den dichter, beter, den Heiligen Geest.

Zij moeten psalmzingen den Heere: geeft eer Zijnen lof!

Ziet ge, God is vol van schoone, schitterende deugden. Hij is goed en trouw, heilig en rechtvaardig, almachtig en wijs. Dat is Zijn eer.

Die deugden, al die deugden, heeft Hij openbaard in de natuur, in de historie en in de Heilige Schrift. Dat is Zijn heerlijkheid. Heerlijkheid is uitstraling van deugd Gods.

Die uitstraling, die openbaring der deugden Gods worden opgevangen door het hart en het verstand van hen die wedergeboren en bekeerd zijn. Dat is genade. Zulk volk heet voorts begenadigd. Dat volk wordt dan voort vol van de afstraling der deugden Gods. Zij leeren Hem daardoor kennen.

Daardoor wordt dat volk overstelpt in het binnenste van hen. Indien ze niet zouden zingen en spreken, jubelen en psalmzingen, zoo zouden ze bersten. Ze moeten zich uiten. Dat is lof. De lof is betamelijk. Ze is schoon. Ook is het de hemel.

Vrage: Kunt ge dan de wereld der goddeloozen, kunt ge het de vijanden Gods opdragen om Hem psalmen toe te zingen? Ze kunnen het wel doen met den mond; doch dan zegt God: "Doet het getier van uwe liederen van Mij weg!"

Neen! Het gaat hier weer om Gods volk.

Zegt het dan, geliefden! Zegt: Hoe vreeselijk zijn Uwe werken!

Psalm 66 spreekt ons luide toe in deze dagen. Ziet om U heen en aanschouwt de verschrikkelijke werken des Allerhoogsten rondom U. Alle hemelen daveren van Zijn kogels en bommen; alle velden worden gesteld tot slagvelden; alle zeeën zijn bevracht met slagschepen, terwijl haren boezem de duikbooten doet schuil gaan. Er is groote benauwdheid der volken. Een groote oceaan van droefenisse. Alle geslachten der aarde weenen. En het lasteren van den Algoeden God wordt schrikbarend erger.

Zegt het dan: Hoe vreeselijk zijn Uwe werken, O God!

Hij wil door U erkend worden.

Ja, psalm 66 past vandaag nog meer dan in den tijd dat het gedicht is. Let maar eens op vers 5: "Komt en ziet Gods daden: Hij is vreeselijk van werking aan de menschenkinderen!" Neen, Hij is nooit vreeselijker geweest in Zijn oordeelen. Jezus kan niet heel lang meer wegblijven.

En dan maakt de geïnspireerde dichter ons attent op de groote daden Gods in het schoone verleden. "Hij heeft de zee veranderd in het droge; zij zijn te voet doorgegaan door de rivier; daar hebben wij ons in Hem verblijd."

In die weinige woorden hebt ge de veertig-jarige wonderen Gods bij de uitredding Israels uit het diensthuis van Egypte en den ingang in het beloofde land. Bij het begin werd de Roode Zee opgedroogd; en bij het einde wandelde men Jozua achterna door de drooggemaakte rivier, door den Jordaan.

En ook daar werden de vijanden Gods vernederd. De Egyptenaren verdronken in het Roode Meer en de Kanaanieten werden door Gods volk verdelgd.

En dat heeft Israel genoopt om den Heere te psalmzingen. Mozes heeft toen zijn psalm gedicht en de mannen met de vrouwen hebben het hem nagezongen. "Daar hebben wij ons in Hem verblijd."

Ook heeft dat lied een eeuwig thema. Straks hooren we Johannes op Patmos getuigen van het lied van Mozes en het Lam. Doch dan is het doorluchtige einde gekomen en ligt Farao, i.e., de duivel in de put die brandt van vuur en sulfur.

Daarom past het U niet om nu bevreesd te worden, mijn broeder! Al werden dan ook de bergen verzet in het hart der zee. Zingt slechts Uw lied, o Israel. Jezus zingt het nu in den hemel in voorloopige melodiën van verlossing. En de veelheid der zangers die het lied met Hem zingen neemt gestadig toe.

Ge moet vooral niet bang worden in deze bange dagen, want "Hij heerscht eeuwiglijk met Zijne macht; Zijne oogen houden wacht over de heidenen!" Ja, er is een krijgsraad bij de goddeloozen. Een ieder heeft zijn beraadslagingen in alle kampen der worstelaars. Doch Hij belacht hun raad. Zijn oog ziet alles reeds vooraleer het geschiedt. Denkt het eventjes in: God festuurt alle volken. Deze gruwelijke oorlog der geheele wereld wordt door den hemel bestuurd. Voor God bestaan er geen verassingen.

En daarom: Looft gij volken Israels, onzen God! Laat hooren de stem Zijns roems!

Dat is de opdracht van de kerk van Christus aller eeuwen.

Geduriglijk moet ge het elkander en de geheele wereld vertellen, dat Gods werken vreeselijk zijn. Dat Hij alles doet naar Zijn vrijmachtig welbehagen. Dan wordt het stille in 't hart. Dan geniet gij de rust. Dan gaat ge in in het volbrachte werk van God.

O, ge zult aan den vleesche wel geteisterd worden. Doch geen nood.

Het einde van de Goddelijke beproeving en loutering is dat Uwe ziel in het leven gesteld zal worden. Door lijden komt verblijden.

Waarom denkt ge, dat de zilversmid het zilver-erts in den smeltkroes werpt, om dan voorts het vuur tot zevenmaal toe heet te stoken?

Hij doet het om alle schuim, onzuiere elementen en alle tin af te zuiveren..

Ja, Israel wordt door alle eeuwen heen in den smelt-kroes der ellende geworpen. En dat doet God omdat Hij U zeer bemint. Gij allen zijt gelijk aan het zilver-erts. Er is een weinigje zuiver zilver in U, mijn broeder. En dat weinigje heeft God er in gelegd in het uur der wedergeboorte. Ook ging dat zilver werken. Van uit het diepe hart, waar gij wedergeboren werd, kwam er de werking, door geloof en bekeering en heiligmaking, om toch den Heere welbehaaglijk te zijn. Doch als die werking haar einde vond in gedachten, woorden en werken, zoo herkendet gij het zilver niet meer. "Hetgeen ik doe, dat ken ik niet!" Dit is een angstkreet!

Daarom werpt God Zijn volk in de smeltkroes om het te louteren.

Hij brengt ons in het niet; Hij legt een enge band om onze lendenen; Hij doet den mensch op ons hoofd rijden; Hij brengt ons te water en te vure! Altemaal sprake der beelden. Hij gebruikt duivel en wereld en de boosheid des vleesches om Zijn zilver te zuiveren en te louteren. Uwe beproeving is kostelijker dan die van het goud, dat door vuur beproefd wordt.

Het einde is dat Uwe ziel in het leven gesteld wordt. Of, om een ander woord van dezen psalm te gebruiken, hij voert U uit in een overvloeiende verversching.

Dat is vreemd en moeilijk te verstaan. Door lijden tot verblijden; door het kruis tot den kroon; door de hel tot den hemel.

Doch ziet het in Jezus.

Daar staat Hij in de volheid des tijds.

Hij heeft alle schuld der zonden van de milliarden der kinderen Gods of Zich. Doch daaronder is het zilver van Zijn onschuldige hart en ziel en geheel oprechte geest.

 E_{n} als dezelve schuld geëischt werd, zoo werd $\mbox{\rm H{\sc ij}}$ verdrukt.

God heeft Hem in een smeltkroes geworpen. Voorts stookte God Zijn vuur. Het vuur van Zijn vreeselijken toorn. En vanuit de verte des eeuwigen doods hooren we Jezus brullen: Wat hitte doet Mij branden! Mijn hart is week, en smelt in d'ingewanden, als was voor 't vuur!

Doch op den Paasch-morgen komt Jezus uit dien vreeselijken smeltkroes en is schitterende en blinkende van schoonheid. Alle onzuivere bestanddeelen van Israel's zonden zijn vernield. Het zilver van Zijn hart heeft zich geopenbaard in alle deugd van liefde en gehoorzaamheid tot den Vader.

Doch zoo kan het bij ons niet.

Hij doet het plaatsvervangend, actief en passief. 't Was niet Zijn eigen schuld waarvoor Hij overgegeven werd. Hij deed het Zelf. Wij worden geheiligd.

Doch wij worden gelouterd door God, op grond van wat Jezus geleden en gewrocht heeft in dat vreeselijk uur der eeuwigheden voor God.

En het is de overvloeiende verversching.

En dat is de hemel bij God.

Hier in beginsel. Er zijn dan oogenblikken, wanneer we op mogen staan en de liederen der verlossing zingen. Gereinigd en geheiligd door lijden.

Dan spoedt zich het Israel der eeuwen naar het Huis Gods. En dat is de aanraking van den hemel en de aarde. Dat is Jezus. Want in Hem hebt ge de gedachte van 't eeuwig verbond: God en mensch vereend in het bloed der volmaakte liefde en gehoorzaamheid.

En in dat Huis gaan we in met brandofferen en zangen van verlossing. Daar zal men U, o God, betalen geloften dag bij dag.

Toen we nog in den smeltkroes lagen hebben wij die geloften geuit. We zullen ze dan ook betalen door den roem des Heeren te verhalen.

Dat is de hemel der zaligheden in 't diepe hart, 't welk popelt van geluk en zaligheid.

Al die brandofferen van mergbeesten met rookwerk van rammen, de runderen met de bokken tezamen—ge vindt ze allen terug in de verzen 16 tot 20. Het is het grootmaken van God.

Geheel Israel zal er aan te pas komen: luistert toch toe, gij Godgezinden! Ik zal U zeggen wat Hij aan mijn ziel gedaan heeft. En dan komt het lied, dat oude lied van Mozes en het Lam. Want mijn uitredding rust op Golgotha!

Ik had een gruwen van ongerechtigheid in het hart: wilde ze niet zien zelfs. Want anders had de Heere niet naar mij gehoord. Doch nu heeft Hij mijn smeeken niet afgewend. Hij hoorde mijn brullen en klagen. Zijn goedertierenheid heeft mij omhuld als een gewaad. Ik mag mij baden in de groote goedheid van mijn God.

Voorts prijs ik Hem tot in eeuwigheid! Hallelujah! En alle volken zeggen: Amen!

G. V.

The Limits of Israel's Inheritance

As has already been pointed out, Canaan, not including the area occupied by the two and a half tribes east of the Jordan, was a small strip of land, approximately 160 miles in length and whose greatest width measured but 40 miles. It extended to the wilderness of Zin on the south, was bordered by the Mediteranean Sea on the West, reached up into the region of the Anti-Lebanon on the north, while its eastern border rested on the north-eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee, skirted this sea and so on down the Jordan (Nu. 34).

However, according to other passages contained in the Old Testament Scriptures, the territory, which God gave to His people was much larger. It was an immense region that extended to the Euphrates and thus included the whole of Arabia and to the Nile River.

"In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abraham, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates" (Gen. 15:18).

The River of Egypt is the Nile, because, as Keil remarks, it is nather and not nachal. The latter was not a river or brook of Egypt at all but a little desert stream that formed the dividing line between Canaan and Egypt. Nachal is used five times in the Old Testament; that it does not occur at Gen. 15:18 can only mean that the river referred to in this passage is not the so-called brook of Egypt but the river Nile. Some interpreters hold that the passage is rhetorical and that thus its sense and meaning is not that of the form of its words. But it is certain that we

have not to do here with oratorical hyperbole but with fact, with definite bounds of the land for the race of Aloraham. This is clear from the following: In its best days, the Israelitish dominion did reach to the Euphrates. That there is no record of its extention to the Nile must be ascribed to the failure of the people of Israel to carry out the orders of God. Further, in communicating his promise to Abraham, the Lord named the tribes to be extirpated and those to be subjected. The number enumerated is ten. As there dwelt many more than ten tribes in a region so vast, the purpose of the enumeration was to fix the impression of completeness, of which the number ten is the symbol. The Kenites, who are also named. were not a Canaanitish but an Arabian tribe,—thus a tribe that dwelt outside the borders of Canaan proper and was not under the ban of God. Finally, the promise given to Abraham was repeated in afteryears in substantially the same form. "And I will set they bounds from the Red Sea even unto the Sea of the Philistines (the Mediterranean) and from the Arabian desert unto the river." (Euphrates. Ex. 23:31). This was the promise of God as it came to Moses: "Turn you and take your journey. . . . by the sea to the land of the Canaanites, and unto Lebanon, unto the great river, the river Euphrates" (Deut. 1:7). And again: "Every place whereupon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours: from the wilderness and Lebanon, from the river, the river Euphrates, even unto the uttermost sea shall your ceast be" (Deut. 11:34). And to Joshua: "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given to you, as I said unto Moses. From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast" (Jo. 1:3, 4).

It cannot be, certainly, that in all these scriptures we deal with hyperbole. What is also against this view is that, as already has been pointed out, a clear line of demarcation is drawn between the doomed tribes infesting Canaan and those races "dwelling afar off," beyond the limits of the territory in which God planted His people. The former—the Canaanites—were under the ban of God. They had to be wholly destroyed, both male and female, in a word, everything that breathed. Deut. 20:10 scq. The craft of the Gibeonites proves conclusively that Joshua might not attempt to save these tribes from the sword of the Israelites by overtures of peace. As sovereignly hardened by the Lord, through the witness of His servants who had dwelt in their midst and through the speech that had risen from the salvation which he had wrought out for His people, they had filled their measure of iniquity, and therefore had now to be destroyed. But to thecities of the tribes who dwelt "afar off." who lived in the region that lay outside the boundaries of Canaan proper, Joshua had to proclaim peace before unsheathing against them his sword. But the city that was worthy—the city that surrendered and expressed a willingness to become tributary to the people of Israel and to own Jehovah as the God in heaven and on earth and thus to put away their idols—was spared.

Thus the question that now confronts us is how to harmonize Nu. 34—the one scripture that narrows down the inheritance of God's people to a strip of land 160 miles in length and 40 miles in breadth with those passages in which the boundaries of this inheritance are defined as extending to the rivers Euphrates and the Nile. And the answer. By perceiving that a distinction is to be made on the one hand between Canaan proper, the land divided among the tribes of Israel by the lot of God, thus the only territory which the people of Israel had to acquire for their actual habitation—the land where God tabernacled with His people —and, on the other hand, that vast region inhabited by tribes not under the ban of God, tribes that had to be spared alive if ready to come under the dominion of Israel and Israel's God and subject themselves to His rule. Thus the inheritance included Canaan proper—the land of Israel's abode and the tribes that dwelt in the regions beyond, who were not dispossessed but instead, brought under the dominion of the people of Israel.

As was said, many of these tribes were subdued by kind David in afteryears, who through these conquests laid the foundation of the peace that characterized the reign of Solomon. In subduing these tribes, David was acting under orders of God given to Moses and Joshua. Solomon had dominion over all the region on this side of the Euphrates, over all the kings this side the river; and they all paid him tribute. 1 Ki. 4:22. To David the surrounding countries had become subject from the Mediterranean Sea to Hamath, and from the territory of the Lebanon to the borders of Egypt, the inhabitants of which assumed a friendly attitude and recognized the new rule. Under Solomon the kingdom of Israel was a power so great as to rank beside Assyria and Egypt.

It is this universality of the kingdom of Israel during the reign of these two theocratic kings that stood out in the minds of the prophets of God as prophetic of the coming of the blessings of Abraham upon all the nations of the earth, and the universal sway of the kindgdom of Christ. "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance and the uttermost part of the earth for thy possession." (Ps. 2:8). "And the gentiles shall come to thy light and kings to the brightness of thy rising. . . . the forces of the gentiles shall come to thee. The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall shew

forth the praises of the Lord. All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory" (Isa. 60:3 scq).

G. M. O.

Federal Solidarity and Personal Responsibility

Federal Solidarity and Personal Responsibility are Scriptural conceptions. The first term refers to the oneness of the human race. The word "federal" signifies a league or contract, derived from an agreement or covenant between parties, particularly between states or nations. Theologically this word refers to the covenant idea as pertaining to the human race with Adam as its head. "Solidarity" refers to a solidarity of interests, a communion of interests. Hence, "federal solidarity" is the conception which refers to that which all mankind has in common because of the covenant relation in which Adam stood to the entire human race. All men are objects of wrath and are conceived and born dead in sin and trespasses because of the sin of the one man. Of course, the idea of guilt stands upon the foreground. All men do not become guilty because of their sins (pelagianism). but we all sin because we are guilty. Guilty we are because of the one sin of Adam, our judicial representative head.

Scripture teaches this doctrine of "federal solidarity," particularly in Rom. 5. In verse 15 we read that through the offence of one many are dead. In verse 16 we are taught that the judgment was by one to condemnation. In verse 18 Paul declares that by the offence of the one judgment came upon all men to condemnation. And in verse 19 we are told that by one man's disobedience many were made sinners. One man sins, commits one offence. Thereupon all are guilty of death. That one offence is sufficient to place all men upder condemnation. We are all dead because of the one sin of Adam.

On the other hand Scripture also teaches the doctrine of "personal responsibility." In connection with the subject which we are treating in this brief essay "responsibility" is referred to from the viewpoint of our being held accountable by God for our sins.

Man's personal responsibility is taught in Scripture throughout. We read in Ezek. 18:20: "The soul that sineth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the

iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." Moreover the parable of the talents and the description of the judgment day in Matt. 25 surely proceed from this Scriptural truth. In Rev. 22:12 we read that Christ comes quickly, and that His reward is with Him to give every man according as his work shall be. Besides, does not Scripture abound in admonitions, commanding man in general to forsake his evil way and His people in particular to put on the new man and to put off the old? All men are personally responsible and are held accountable by God for their actions.

Federal solidarity and personal responsibility—how must we conceive of these conceptions in their relation to one another. It is in this light that I understand this subject which has been assigned to me. How can a man be held personally responsible when he is a member of an organism which is characterized by federal solidarity? In answering this question we do well to bear in mind that it is of the utmost importance that both concepts be maintained.

The pelagian's explanation of this problem is rather simple. He simply denies the federal solidarity of the human race. Pelagianism denies original guilt and pollution. His conception is strictly individualistic. Every man, in his opinion, is born good and upright. Man is the victim of his own environment. Viewed superficially this view is very simple. Viewed realistically, however, this conception involves us in a hopeless predicament. This is true of every conception which deviates from the Word of God. We deny that arminianism, in distinction from the Reformed conception, is easier to understand. We maintain that palagianism and arminianism involve us in hopeless conceptions which can never satisfy the human mind. For, apart from the fact that this pelagian conception presumptuously opposes the teaching of Holy Writ as in Rom. 5, it certainly gives no answer to the amazing question, "Why, then are all men victims of evil environment, and whence this evil environment?"

The Christian Reformed Churches, in their explanation of man's personal responsibility, fail to do justice to the federal solidarity of the human race. Fact is, this federal sodidarity of the human race implies that every man, himself personally responsible, is condemned to death because of the sin of another. I do not mean to say that these churches deny the headship of Adam. But I will maintain that their conception of personal responsibility is individualistic. And we must also bear in mind that one hears more and more nowadays. of that rather convenient explanation of difficulties, summed up in the term: apparent contradictions. Is it not true that, when we would maintain the doctrine of the absolute sovereignty of God, and that the gospel is not a general offer of salvation, but is preached as a savour of life

unto life for some but also as a savour of death unto death for others, we are accused of denying the responsibility of man? Does this objection not imply that only then can the responsibility of man be maintained if he be presented as one who can either reject or accept this "offer of salvation?" And is this view not a denial of the truth that because of the sin of the one man all men are conceived and born dead in sins and trespasses, unable by nature to do any good and inclined to all evil? Surely, the doctrine of a free offer of salvation implies that man is also able to accept this offer. Hence, I maintain that also their explanation of personal resposibility is principally pelagian and maintains the sovereignty of the individual.

Of course, man's personal responsibility must never be confused with moral sovereignty. His moral freedom is not sovereign freedom. Never does man act independently of the Lord. It is surely not necessary to quote from Scripture to prove this point. Are not the hearts of kings in the hands of the Lord as water-courses, which He turneth whithersoever He will? Was not Shimei's cursing of David of the Lord, and was it not of Jehovah that Joseph was sold by his brethren into Egypt? And was not Christ taken, crucified, and slain by wicked hands, delivered into these hands, by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God? Consequently, the personal responsibility of man is never to be viewed as sovereign, as independent of God, as sovereignly determining his own eternal lot. God is and remains God also as far as all the moral acts of man are concerned.

Yet, man is personally responsible, also as a member of the human race which is characterized by federal solidarity. He is personally responsible also for the sin of Adam. This means, of course, in the first place, that he is held accountable by God for the sin of Adam in the sense that, because Adam is the judicial head of the human race, his sin is imputed to all and all men are held accountable for that one sin. That one sin is laid to the charge of all. All men stand condemned before God, worthy of eternal death and subject to spiritual darkness because Adam partook of the forbidden fruit.

However, man is personally responsible also in the sense that he himself always assumes personal responsibility for that one sin of Adam. Man is a morally free agent. Sin is always the object of his own choice. He sins because he chooses to sin. He is never driven to do iniquity. Although God is sovereign and therefore the eternal Cause of all things, also of the moral actions of men, He is never the Author of iniquity. Having willed sin He also willed it as being performed through man as a morally free agent. God eternally willed a sinner who would voluntarily choose iniquity which the Lord hates. As that morally free agent man always assumes full responsibility

also for Adam's sin. By nature we approve of our first father's action in Paradise. Man's objection to the doctrine of federal solidarity, that because of the sin of one man all should be subject to death, is very hypocritical. He himself chooses Adam's sin in every moment of his existence. If man by nature were asked whether he would have followed a different course than Adam, or whether he is in any sense of the word sorry for the sin of pride of his first father, he, if he be honest, must needs answer in the negative. Man may be sorry because of the results of sin but he never experiences any grief because of sin itself.

Yet, even so, the question is not fully answered. In the final analysis only one answer is possible. It remains an incontrovertible fact that my spiritual agreement with the sin of Adam is due to the federal solidarity of the human race. I agree with the sin of Adam because I am wholly corrupt. I may choose to do iniquity and perform deeds of darkness as the object of my own free choice. However, I must choose the evil, I cannot choose the good. I am become a slave of iniquity, am bound in the service of darkness with fetters of iron and steel which reign over me even in the very depths of my spiritual being. I am not subject to the law of God, will not be subject to that law, but neither can I be subject to it! This, I say, is due to the federal solidarity of the human race. And this, of course, is to be ascribed only to the alone sovereign God. Why did God impute the sin of the one man unto the whole human race? And we answer, of course: Because God conceived of that human race as an organism with Adam as its head so that the sin of the one would be imputed to all, and all would be held accountable for the sin of the one. Why did God conceive this? Because He sovereignly willed it God is the Potter and man is the clay. This is the only possible final answer.

What, then, shall man say? What must be his answer as far as mankind's federal solidarity and his personal responsibility are concerned? What shall be his answer when every vile mouth shall be stopped, and every knee shall bow? Why does he now object to this Scriptural presentation of the truth? Is it not because the clay refuses to be clay and would be the Potter? And shall he not forever acknowledge this sovereignty of the Lord? Let that man, also today, who objects to this truth, confess his sin of pride and humble himself before the living God.

What shall we say? Firstly, if it pleased God to call us out of darkness, who also by nature are included in that condemnable human race, only because He sovereignly decreed a place for us among those of whom Christ is the Head, we shall render Him eternal thanks for a salvation which is so exclusively Divine in order that no flesh should boast. And, secondly, we shall confess that God willed the human race as an organism in Adam, because He willed

the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we must maintain Christ as the Head of His eternal covenant. The headship of Adam is but a divinely willed symbol of the headship of Christ. Was not Adam a figure of Him Who was to come? All men, in Adam, are condemnable because of the sin of the one, in order that all men, in Christ, should be rendered righteous because of the righteousness of the One Who died that we might live, and that the more abundantly.

H. V.

The Time Element and the Fourth Gospel

When you read this subject you may be inclined to ask whether time element is different in the Fourth Gospel from that in the first three gospels? And when you ask this you undoubtedly ask with the correct view in mind, that the four Gospel narratives are together the one Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. We believe and can maintain that there is inner harmony between these four gospels. If the four secondary authors give us the revelation of Jesus Christ through that there can be no contradictions, no real difference between them. Therefore we must explain the reason for the significance of the subject, "The Time Element and the Fourth Gospel."

We know of course that the four Gospel narratives are not identical. If they were there would be no real reason for keeping them all in the canon. Though we can point to many things in which they are alike we all can point to differences between them. That is true of the time element also. From a certain point of view the reference to the time element is the same. And yet we notice distinct differences between them in this respect. Because of this difference there arises the problem of the time element in the four gospels, and especially in the fourth gospel because it is distinct from the first three.

With respect to that which is common to all four gospels in their historical reference you will notice that none of the four gives us a chronological table of the life of Jesus Christ. In our New Testament there is no biography of our Lord. Attempts have been made to construct a "life of Jesus" from the data given in the four gospels, but these attempts fail because there is not sufficient material from which to complete the entire life of Christ; and because Christ cannot be limited by this time—He is eternal and so also beyond time and space. The result of such

effort is always more fiction than fact. We know, to make this plain, very little of the early life of Jesus. And of the three years of His ministry the events are not all given. And those that are given are not given to serve as a chronological time-table. We read in John that these things were written which were for our faith, "that we might believe." And that all the words and deeds of Jesus are not given. "If they should be written," John writes, John 21:25, "I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written."

Although we do not have a time-table in the gospels of the work and words of Jesus, we do have an important reference to time. We cannot change or distort the chronology which is given us. The time element is very essential for our understanding of the revelation of Jesus Christ. For that reason a sermon on a Word of Jesus usually contains the important point, the occasion upon which Jesus spoke or performed a miracle. The Gospel narratives often begin with such expressions as, "Now when", "in those days", "and it came to pass", "at that time".

Now the chronology or the reference to time is not always the same in the four gospels. But we notice immediately that there is much more from the same viewpoint in the first three gospels than in the Fourth Gospel. For that reason the first three, Matthew, Mark, and Luke are called the Synoptic Gospels. The word synoptic means viewed together. Although there is a difference of viewpoint among the three they are much more alike when compared to the Gospel according John.

There are several main differences which we can mention. The Synoptists, for example, write about Jesus' activity in and around Galilee, while John limits it to Judea and Jerusalem. John therefore omits long periods which are accounted for in the first three gospels. In the fourth Gospel much more attention is given to the Word of Jesus. There is, to be sure, always an historical reference, the time element, but then John devotes the major portion to the words of Jesus upon each occasion. This is to be noticed immediately when we read of His discourse with Nicodemus, with the Samaritan woman, with the Pharisees, and His last discourse with His disciples before the crucifixion which takes up chapters 14-17. Because of this difference and because John devotes more space to the words than to events, the question arises what is the significance of the time element in John?

With respect to the question there are some who become higher critics and say that the time element in John proves that it is not the true Gospel. The following statement is made in *The Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, edited by James Hastings, "The comparison of the Synoptic narrative with that of John is an old and very simple study. It is a matter of historical discrepancy in two perfectly clear and

definite accounts. (He means that of Mark and John, The fact is the narrative in Mark cannot be made to agree with John, except on the supposition that one or the other is, as regards objective facts, inaccurate and misleading. For example, it is impossible to insert the story of the raising of Lazarus in the historical framework preserved by Mark. And if the narrative of the Passion in Mark and the events leading up to it in Mark 9:30-12 be historical in general outline then it is impossible to regard the story of the raising of Lazarus as in any way a narrative of This is an example of the attitude of higher critics. If something does not fit into their assumptions they reject it. In this case the assumption is that omission, on the part of John of the historical references in Mark and the other synoptists, makes John's chronology not only incorrect but his whole account false.

For our own satisfaction we can explain that because in the Gospel according to Mark we have many more happenings given us in that period before and during Jesus' stay in Bethany than in the Fourth Gospel, and because Mark and the other Synoptists make no mention of the mighty miracle of the raising of Lazarus, that therefore we cannot conclude that one record is untrue. We cannot prescribe how one narrative must fit into another and contain the same events. The assumption that if a record is true, for example, the record of the raising of Lazarus, it would be mentioned in the other records is a false assumption which the four Gospel narratives do not permit. We must maintain the principle that although it is the same Jesus and the same time concerning which they write, and the same Holy Spirit who inspired them, their viewpoint is nevertheless different. We may not fit the four viewpoints into one made by us, but from the four we receive the one Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. In their differences we have the riches of the Gospel. If one contradicted the other we would have reason to reject the testimony of one or both, but you notice even from the criticism made that no contradictions are found.

Another answer to this question admits of the inaccuracy of the time element of the Fourth Gospel but concludes that it was not intended to be accurate history. Bousett says that John's Gospel is literary and not historical. J. A. Robinson in his Study of the Gospels says in answer to the idea of higher critics as quoted above, "It is the Gospel of the Christ of Christian experience. Because he views the Gospel history from the subjective standpoint, he allows himself freedom in remodelling the external events."

This answer is also an impossible view to take. The time element in the Gospel of John as well as in the Synoptic Gospels is an integral part. Not one of the Gospel narratives can be received without the time element. It stands to reason that the historical

element is not referred to as often in John because he records fewer events.

In the Gospel according to John there are specific references to time and place. If you peruse the gospel you will notice some of the following expressions which show how John connects his narrative with time. Chapter 1:28, "These things happened in Bethany where John was." 1:35, "Again the next day." 2:1, "The third day there was a wedding in Cana." 2:12, "After this He went down to Capernaum. And it was near the passover of the Jews." 4:43. "Now after two days He departed thence and went into Galilee." 5:22, "The hour cometh and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and they that hear shall live." 7:3, "His hour was not yet come." This is a familiar reference to time in connection with Jesus suffering in the Gospel according to John. We have such general references such as the foregoing and the expression, "After these things;" but we also have a very specific reference to time which shows how very observant the apostle John really was. (In chapter 1:39 there is this reference to the extra hour: "And it was the tenth hour." Again in connection with the cross in 19:14, "And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour."

We must remember the deeply profound character of the Gospel according to John. John points us to the Person of the Mediator as the Son of God. He explains his own viewpoint, which is, "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name." John 20:31. He is deeply profound because he refers to eternity from the beginning of his narrative and throughout. He begins with eternity. "In the beginning was the Word. . . ." And with all His discourses, with Nicodemus, with the Samaritan woman, with the Pharisees, and with His disciples, he amazes and baffles His hearers with His divine and eternal nature.

Though John gives the Christ from the point of view of the profound eternal, and incomprehensible, he nevertheless refers to the historical, to time. The eternal touches time, 1:14 "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." And that is so with every part of John's record; it has an historical reference, a necessary time element, and "his record is true". The time element is necessary for without it the writing would not be the Gospel, the "glad news" from heaven which touches our time. It would lack reality. Salvation is realized in time and space, is historically real, and based upon undeniable evidences. If we fail to see the importance of the time element in the Fourth Gospel we fail to see the marvelous evidence of the Incarnation. L. D.

Contribution

Esteemed Editor of the Standard Bearer:

May I have a small space in the Standard Bearer?

Rev. Hanko has in a private conversation expressto me the wish that I write again on the strike problem. And I told him the title of my next assigned article does not lend itself to that subject but that I would try to write a little contribuion.

First, then, I want to state that it is a pleasure to discuss with Rev. Hanko. His tone makes it easy to keep the issue to the fore and to come close together, and should also make it very easy to concede a point to him. I want to express my appreciation for this tone of Rev. Hanko. For I believe that also in this little discussion some have revealed that it is hard to remember that the fight for Christian meekness and long-suffering, must also be a fight of christian ditto.

To begin, I would like here to reassert a couple of my contentions against the first article of Rev. Hanko. 1. If we are not very sure of our judgments also re the strike clause of the CLA., charity dictates a favorable interpretation. Z. Further, I felt strong-opposed to the statement: "And another question arises, what must be the attitude and action of his church in the matter of discipline in such a case (i. e. in case he partakes in a CLA strike)?

For in this second point lies the assumption that a strike is per se wrong. And an assumption is even stronger and bolder than an assertion. Assumption implies that it is all well established, known, and accepted and needs no express statement. And with respect to our Christian life I am afraid of such assumptions, which easily acquire the power of decrees and shibboleths. If our people shall be guided by principles they must as much as possible see the principles, and not say "we all believe," or "the Standard Bearer has written," or "the Synod has decided." I feel that such things are very impotent especially with the view to the dark future that awaits us as churches, and a consistory armed with such assumptions, would stand very weak in its guidance and discipline of its members.

Therefore, I believe and take the stand that until some one can produce evidence from Scripture either that a strike is per se inconsistent with the meekness of the Heavenly Kingdom, or that it is an absolute transgression of a clear-cut well-known boundary between the sphere of function of the citizen and of the government, we shall have the continual task of judging each case by itself.

For this last assumption of Rev. H. I find his appeal to the fifth commandment too precarious. An employer of the present-day free laborer surely does not have the same authority over his employee that a

slave-owner held over his slave who was bought and paid for and woven into his enterprise and the fabric of society, as at the time of the apostles Tegen de Revolutie het Evangelie, said Groen van Prinsterer.

I do not write in defense of the strike, but for the right of the strike to be honestly judged. This is no 50-50 debate, but the burden of proof is wholly with Rev. Hanko. As long as he does not remove the last reasonable shred of evidence he may not ask us to adopt his assumption. When he does I shall concede the point to him for his tone has not made that unpleasant. And then I will stand with him on it.

We cannot develop a healthy Christian life under the suggestive power of a facile dictum, and until we can make a pronouncement that is well grounded on Scripture and makes its appeal to the Christian conscience we will have to judge every case by itself. Agreements and policies can be decided by vote, but principles must rest on God's Word alone.

> Your Brother in Christ for the Truth, Rev. A. Petter.

Ingezonden

Eerwaarde Redakteur:

In de Standard Bearer van 1 Januari verheft Broeder H. De Jonge zijn stem tegen hetgeen ik geschreven heb in de Standard Bearer van 1 December. eerste zegt broeder De Jonge dat hij van de zelfde gevoelens is als A. Folkertsma, hoewel dat hij het misschien een beetje anders gezegd had. Nu dat is waar, hij zegt het wat anders, maar hij strijd met dezelfde wapenen, onder dezelfde banier, en voor hetzelfde doel, en dat is om Christen arbeiders af te leiden tot een union, een union die gaat onder de naam van C. L. A. Welke van die twee broeders nu het gevaarlijkste is in zijn schrijven laat ik aan de weldenkende lezer over. Niet een van beide heeft getracht om een enkel bewijs uit Gods Woord bij te brengen tot staving van hunne beweering. Ten tweede zegt broeder De Jonge dat Hirdes niets afweet waar de C. L. A. eigenlijk voor staat; maar een ding weet ik wel, en dat is dat zij niet staat op den weg van Jacobus 5. Ten derde zegt de broeder "het is ook mijn plaats niet om op al die punten in te gaan die de broeder er bij sleept, waarop ik antwoordt dat het wel terdege uw plaats is om op die punten in te gaan, maar u kunt geen grond vinden in Gods Woord om er tegen op te komen. Ten vierde, zegt broeder De Jonge "Neutraal bestaat er niet" en dat is zeker waar, weest dan voorzichtig op welken weg gij u begeeft. Ten vijfden zegt De Jonge, "het schijnt met broeder Hirdes te wezen als met velen en dan bedenk ik in 't bijzonder aan velen

onder ons volk die zich schijnbaar blind staren op een artikel in de C. L. A. handelende over strikes als uiterst middel tot het verkrijgen van billijk recht, alsof dat het hoofddoel van de C. L. A. ware." Het is waar daar wordt duidelijk gezegd dat strikes als uiterst middel moeten gebruikt worden tot verkrijgen van billijk recht; maar als strikes zich opdoen in het leger van ons land, of op zee, dan worden zij met de dood gestraft, want dat is muiterij. En hoe wordt muiterij behandeld op het terrein van het kerkelijk leven? Ook daar roept de wet om belijdenis van zulke zonden, óf afzetting. En dat is daar het eind van strikes; voor billijk recht!(?) Ten zesde, weet de broeder niet waar ik het vandaan haal dat wij persoonlijk wel naar lotsverbetering mogen streven, maar dat wij dat niet mogen doen als een georganiseerde groep. Wel broeder, er was toch zeker niets op tegen toen u van Byron Center naar Grand Rapids verhuisde, en nu ook niet als u als persoon naar een ander arbeid uitziet.

Ten zevende weet de broeder ook niet waar ik het vandaan haal dat wij als Christenen alle onrecht maar moeten verdragen. Wel, dat heb ik van Jacobus, en waar die het vandaan haalt weet broeder De Jonge ook wel. Ten achste, broeder, u leest niet goed, ik doe de C. L. A. nergens uitkomen, dat is Gods werk. Maar ik heb op het gevaar gewezen om op iemand dan God te vertrouwen, en dat durft u niet ontkennen. Ten negende wenschte de broeder wel dat ik mijn stuk maar in de pen had gehouden. Ja, broeder, dan had u misschien ook geen moeite gehad met Jacobus 5, en Matt. 20, 21. Maar als wij ontevreden zijn in ons lot, en zoeken hulp bij een C. L. A., dan leven we een ondankbaar leven, en dat is arm.

En nu word ik aangeraden om een beetje inlichting te winnen bij hen die meer ervaring hebben in fabrieks arbeid. Nu broeder, inlichting behoef ik in deze niet, en ervaring heb ik in dezen in overvloed. Ik heb jaren gewerkt in de 'brick yard', die in dien tijd Farao's tichel ovens werd genoemd, en dan 6 dagen 10 uur per dag, en somtijds nog drie nachten om ovens te stoken. Ook heb ik als 'basket-maker' en 'cabinet-maker' gewerkt in de fabriek, en dat voor 10 tot 12 cent per uur.

Ten elfden zegt broeder De Jonge, "ik denk het zou heel wat beter zijn waneer onze christen arbeiders zich aansloten bij de C. L. A., en helpen degenen die staan voor een rechte verhouding tusschen werkgevers en werkman, en dit trachten te bewerken in een weg gegrond op Gods Woord." Broeder, dat luidt mooi, maar wacht even op wat er volgt: "en wanneer het onze overtuiging is dat er dingen zijn in de C. L. A. die niet goed zijn, zou het dan niet beter wezen te trachten het te verbeteren." Zich maar eerst aansluiten, overtuigd zijnde dat er toestanden zijn die niet goed zijn, en dan maar trachten die te verbeteren? Nu, broeder, als dat uwe redenen zijn waarom gij christen arbeiders aanspoort zich aan te sluiten bij de C. L. A.

dan noem ik het schrikkelijk. Dan kan men zich overal wel bij aan sluiten. Wat een heerlijk zendingsveld. Gedenkt hoe dat in 1924 gegaan is.

Ten twaalfde over die samenwerking van christelijke scholen en in Army Camps, etc. En als wij dan in al die samenwerking eerst lid moesten worden, dan zou ik er voor bedanken. U niet? En verder spoort de broeder nog eens aan om maar lid te worden van de C. L. A. Maar Jacobus verbiedt het! En ten slotte, het zou veel helpen als onze leiders eens wat konden helpen. Maar broeder, helpen de leiders dan niet? Dat zou vreeselijk zijn. Maar dat doen ze wel. Nogmaals wijs ik u op de Standard Bearer van 15 December, vraag en antwoord over het gebed. Alsook de meditatie in de Standard Bearer van 1 Januari, en zelfs ook de preeken van uw eigen leeraar zooals wij die gehoord hebben Januari 10. Zie ook de meditatie in de Standard Bearer van 15 Januari. Zie het geloof van Elias, maar ook van die arme weduwe. En dan zegt Ds. H. H. zoo schoon, "Yes, the test is severe It was so for the woman. It is for us. But severe for the flesh only! For faith embraces the promise, the promise of the wonder! The never failing promise! The bread of life! Heavenly Manna! Satisfying forever!"

Zie de leiders helpen ons wel!

A Hirdes, Zeeland, Michigan.

Ingezonden

Geachte Redakteur:

Omtrent het debat, Christian Labor Association, heb it tot nog toe weinig gezien wat mij bevredigt.

De Bijbelsche gronden bijgebracht zijn isms als Jakobus op de voorgrond komt. Ik denk Jakobus leert niet wat men tracht er van te maken door isms.

Ik zie Jacobus dat het boek is als een preek geschreven en gericht in zijn tijd tegen de toestanden, zooals ze toen waren.

Het was Rome en haar coloniën. Rome exploited haar colonies en haalde er uit wat ze kon op alle mogelijk manieren.

Zoo, om een vergelijking te krijgen, wij kunnen de latere coloniale politiek bezien van Spanje, England en Holland, die werkten als Rome deed.

Toen Koningen Wilhelmina hier kort geleden sprak vertelde zij, dat de Nederlandsche coloniale politiek gewijzigd was omstreeks 1900. Die wijziging was een verlaten van de politiek van Rome in Jakobus' dagen. In het parliament spraken onze vaders, de Christen leiders, het uit dat Holland Indië gezegend had als Rome in Jakobus' dagen zoodat de rijke en de

overheid tezamen het volk verdrukten op een schandalige manier. Holland was schuldig en de zonde was groot en schreide ten hemel.

In 't kort de overheid van God ingesteld u ten goede was veranderd in u ten kwade. Wat leert nu Jakobus omtrent deze overheid u ten kwade? De rechtvaardige wederstaat u niet.

Over de overheid hanndelt Jacobus 2:6, Hoofdstuk 5:6 zegt duidelijk dat de rijke tegelijk de overheid was als een eenheid. Het is duidelijk daar was geen recht bij de wet; het was alles onrecht, zoo zelfs dat de gewillige man werd gedood.

In deze verschrikkelijke toestand zegt Jacobus: verdraagt, berust, geen revolt, geen opstand.

Als wij nu naar een beginsel zoeken in Jacobus het is zekerlijk deze: geen revolution tegen de overheid is geoorloofd, omdat de rijken en de overheid één zijn.

Als wij Amerika vergelijken met Jacobus' dagen, zie ik geene gelijkheid of overeenkomst. De werkever is niet de overheid en de overheid is niet de werkgever zooals in Jacobus' tijd.

Zooals ik het zie moest de discussion van de C L A en Jacobus gaan over dit beginsel: revolution. Dan hebben wij een Scriptural lijn.

Het is geen Bijbelsche lijn van Jacobus als wij de rijke werkgever nemen en zien zonder de overheid, die strafte en doodde, en zooals met Jezus. Zooals in de tijd der vervolging Rome als kerk één was met de overheid, zoo is het hier in Jacobus: de rijke en de overheid zijn één. In de geest van Jacobus zie ik niet eenige grond tegen de C. L. A. of het moet zijn revolutie tegen de overheid als beginsel.

U vooruit mijn dank betuigende als het geplaatst wordt.

K. Heersema, Redlands, Calif.

(Note:—Dat de "rijke" in Jacobus de overheid is, zooals broeder Heersema wil, kon wel wat meer bewijs staan dan de broeder ons levert. H.H.)

NOTICE

Young men desiring to prepare for the ministry of the Word in our Churches and therefore seeking admittance into our Theological School are requested to appear at the next meeting of the Theological School Committee on the evening of June 2 at 8 o'clock in the parlors of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Mich. Applicants must present a certificate of membership and recommendation from their own consistory and a certificate of health from a reputed physician. Application for financial support must be made directly to the Synod.

The Theological School Comm.

Rev. C. Hanko. Sec'y.