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MEDITATION

Confident Of A Glad Reception

*They that fear thee will be glad when they
see me; because I have hoped in thy word.*

Ps. 119:74.

Tribulation worketh experience!
And that *through patience!*

For thus the apostle Paul writes in Rom. 5:3, 4: "knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience," or rather, more in accord with the meaning of the original: "patience the experienced state."

Perhaps, we may say that the relation between the preceding section of Ps. 119 and the one from which we selected the basis for the present meditation, is somewhat like that between patience and experience.

In the former the poet had written about his affliction, and had even there emphatically testified that through it all the Lord had dealt well with him, and that it was good for him to have been afflicted, for in the way of affliction he had learned to know the statutes of Jehovah. Here, however, he rather speaks throughout as one that has been proved and approved, and now rejoices in hope, while at the same time he deeply feels the need of and longs and prays for Jehovah's mercy, in order that he may steadfastly continue in the way of His statutes.

He prays for understanding, that he may learn the Lord's commandments. He beseeches Jehovah for the continual comfort of his merciful lovingkindness, and for the realization unto him of God's tender mercies, for of those he will have need as he walks in the way of God's precepts in the midst of this world,

In the meantime, there is in his heart a deep realization of the justice of Jehovah's ways, and of His faithfulness to His people even in the midst of and through the affliction of this present time.

He tasted that the Lord is good!

There is a firm conviction that the proud shall be ashamed, and that his enemies shall be destroyed. He commits his cause to Him that judges righteously.

And he carries the joyous testimony in his soul, that he belongs to the people of God, to them that fear His name.

Them he loves!

Their fellowship he seeks!

"Let those that fear thee turn unto me, and those that have known thy testimonies." vs. 79.

And he knows that this love and fellowship is mutual: they, too, give him testimony that he is one of them!

They will be glad to see him!

He is confident that at all times he will find a glad and hearty reception in their midst!

Because he has hoped in Jehovah's word!

Blessed experience!

Wonderful assurance!

They, the people of God, those that fear the name of the Lord, will be glad to see me!

The statement is unlimited and unqualified!

The meaning is not that on a certain particular occasion, or under certain circumstances, such as those that were present with the psalmist at that particular time, they would be glad to see him. The reference is not to the fact that the poet had been afflicted, that his enemies had persecuted him, that he, perhaps, had been in prison, or nigh unto death, and that now he had been delivered, and that for this reason, they would be especially glad to see him at this time, to

have him return unto them in safety.

The implication of his statement is not limited to any special occasion.

On the contrary, he states a general fact.

Always, under any circumstances, they that fear the Lord will rejoice when they meet him. There is a bond of fellowship between them and himself. There is an active operation of love on his part to them, but also on their part toward him. In their hearts there is a deeply rooted and consciously active affection for him, so that they like to meet him, to walk and talk with him, to have him in their midst, to receive him in their company, to open their hearts to him, to discuss with him the things concerning the statutes of the Lord, and concerning the kingdom of God. They give him their confidence, they give him testimony that he is one of them, they recognize him as one of their own, as being of the same Spirit, and of the same mind; as striving with them for the same cause.

Glad they will be to see him!

Of this the poet is confident! For he does not speak of the *fact* that God's people *gave* him a hearty reception, or that they assured him of their gladness to see him, but of his own, personal, spontaneous assurance of this fact. He knows, he is assured, he feels perfectly confident that they will be glad to see him.

We all know what it means *to feel* that with certain people, in a certain company, we are welcome.

With some we never have that feeling. Even though they be ever so profuse and exuberant in their assurances that they are glad to see you; though they welcome you in their home, and do all in their power to make you comfortable, still you do not feel at home.

With others you spontaneously feel that you are welcome, although they never mention that they are glad to see you, and put forth no special effort to make you feel at home with them.

You know they are your friends!

Thus it is with the poet in relation to them that fear the Lord. He knows that they will be glad to see him, and that they are always and everywhere ready to welcome him in their company! Those of whose love he is confident, and of whose hearty reception he is assured, are they that fear the Lord. And therein lies the blessedness of this assurance. Even in a natural sense it makes a world of difference who, what kind of people, are glad to see you. Their joy in your fellowship reflects upon your own character. There is truth in the adage: "Tell me who your friends are, and I will tell you who you are." Here, however, the question is not concerning a natural, but concerning spiritual joy, and spiritual affinity. Not all men will be glad to see him. In fact, there are those that hate and persecute the poet. He has his bitter enemies. Nor is the distinction between those that hate him and

those that rejoice in his fellowship determined by mere character or social position in the world. The matter goes much deeper. The distinction is spiritual. They that fear the Lord, they only, will be glad to see him!

Their fear of the Lord is the sole reason for their joyous reception of him!

As a spiritual principle, the fear of the Lord is the disposition and spiritual attitude toward God of the regenerated heart that is rooted, on the one hand, in a profound acknowledgement of the infinite glory and majesty of the living God, and, on the other hand, in a childlike love of and confidence in Him as the God of our salvation in Christ, from which springs the heartfelt desire to be pleasing to Him, to keep His precepts, and an abhorrence of all that is contrary to His will and displeasing to Him. It is not the fear of "bondage again to fear," the fear of the slave, but the fear of the Lord that is wrought by the Spirit of adoption, crying: Abba, Father!

Yet the psalmist does not refer to the mere principle of this fear of the Lord, but to its manifestation, to the fear of the Lord in action!

They that fear Thee! . . .

Not to those that profess to have the fear of the Lord in their hearts, that say: Lord, Lord! without anything further, does the poet refer. Not even to them that, perhaps, actually are of God's people, but to a large extent fail to reveal it, walk in sin, and in their actual conversation in the world are companions of them that know not God, is the reference. But to those that *actually* fear the Lord the psalmist speaks.

They that have their delight in His precepts, that walk in His way, shall be glad to see him!

They that are strangers in the world, enemies of the enemies of Jehovah, shall rejoice in his fellowship! Of this the psalmist is confident.

Spontaneous assurance!

Well founded confidence!

The psalmist is quite conscious of the ground in which this testimony, this confidence that the confessing believers shall welcome him with joy, is rooted.

He has hoped in the Word of Jehovah; therefore, they that fear the Lord shall always prepare him a hearty reception in their midst.

The word of the Lord is one of the main concepts in this entire psalm. It is considered from various aspects. And hence, it is denoted by different terms. Fundamentally, it is always the same: the Word of the God of salvation to His people, revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord. Yet, that one Word is rich in content and meaning. It is the same as the "law" of the Lord, the "statutes" of Jehovah, the "precepts"

of the Most High, "the Word" in which God causes us to hope. Here, it is simply denoted as "thy Word." But it is evident from the context that also here the poet looks at this Word of the Lord from a specific viewpoint. For in this Word he has hoped! Hence, he considers the Word of God as *the promise*. Always the Word of the God of our salvation is a promise. From the very dawn of revelation in Paradise, even to the fulfillment of the gospel in our Lord Jesus Christ, that Word is a promise. It is the gospel. And even still, though the Word of promise is centrally realized in the incarnation, the death, resurrection, and exaltation of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the outpouring of the Spirit in the Church of the new dispensation, the Word is a promise directing the longing eyes of the heirs of the promise to the ultimate salvation and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ from heaven!

The promise it is of final redemption, but also of present help and deliverance.

I am with thee: fear not!

In that Word the psalmist had hoped!

The Hebrew uses a term that denotes, first of all, *to wait for*. To hope is to wait for, to look forward to, to expect in a waiting attitude. The time may seem long, but he that hopes waits patiently. The waiting may be hard, may demand self-denial: yet, he that hopes continues to wait. To hope in the Word of the Lord, therefore, implies a hearty confidence in that Word, the assurance, not merely that the Word of the Lord is faithful and true, but also that its promise is meant for him that hopes and waits. It is to expect the fulfillment of the Word of promise with certainty, to long for it with all our heart, and to persevere in waiting for its realization, no matter how long and difficult the waiting may become.

I have hoped in thy Word!

Evidently, the reference is to a definite manifestation of this hope on the part of the psalmist.

The fact that he had hoped in Jehovah's Word of promise had become plain in his actual walk and conversation in the world.

It had been put to the test, and it had not failed.

He had been proved, and approved!

This is evident from the very form of the expression: I *have* hoped in thy word. This appears, too, from the fact that this very fact, that he has hoped in the Word of the Lord, is for the poet a ground of the confidence that they that fear the Lord will be glad to see him. This would be impossible if the poet's hope had remained a matter of the heart alone, had been hid from the view of others. They that fear the Lord had been witnesses of his hopes. It had come to definite manifestation.

Now it is difficult to surmise how this hope had been revealed.

In the midst of manifold temptations, surrounded

by furious enemies that persecuted him, the psalmist had remained faithful, and walked constantly in the way of Jehovah's precepts, waiting for the Lord's salvation, and hoping in His Word.

Hope and a sanctified walk and conversation are inseparably connected. The relation is reciprocal. For, on the one hand, only in the way of sanctification is it possible to hope for the salvation of the Lord. When we follow the way of the world, seek the things that are below, are companions of the ungodly, shun the reproach of the wicked and the sufferings of this present time with Christ, and for His sake, we will be accounted enemies of God, and there is no conscious hope in the Word of Jehovah. On the other hand, true hope is a strong incentive to purify ourselves, and to fight the good fight. For, our hope is that we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And every one that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure. I John 3:2, 3.

Of this the psalmist speaks.

Enemies had risen against him, affliction had been his lot, but he had not forsaken the precepts of Jehovah.

He had hoped in His Word!

And thus he had become manifest as a companion of those that fear the Lord.

And in his heart had been born the confidence that they would be glad to see him.

The fruit of an actual hope!

Blessed assurance!

For as a cause of great joy the psalmist speaks of this confidence.

Not as an object of boasting, or as a cause for pride, does he speak of this assurance that the children of God will be glad to see him. He knows that all boasting is excluded, and that it is all of grace. Only in the Word of the Lord does he hope. But the confidence that he has a place among them that fear the Lord is to him a cause of great joy.

Not when the world welcomes us as belonging to its company, but when those that fear the Lord are glad to see us, there is reason to rejoice.

Joy, too, there is in this confidence, because thus the children of God bear us testimony that we, too, are of those that fear the Lord. For, if we are in fellowship with the children of darkness, we receive testimony from them, that we are children of darkness. But if we walk in the light, we have fellowship with one another. . . .

And the joy of God's children to see us confirms our assurance that we are the children of God.

Blessed confidence!

H. H.

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EDITORIALS

The Conference

The inserted photo, is in a sense, a picture of the conference that was held during the latter part of September in Kassel, South Dakota, and the membership of which consisted of some ministers and elders of the *Evangelical and Reformed Church*, and some of our own ministers.

I say, "in a sense," because it is somewhat difficult to determine the exact limits of this conference as far as its membership is concerned.

Strictly speaking, it was a conference of some brethren of the above mentioned church, the synodical committee of our own churches, and undersigned, who had been invited by the synodical committee to attend and to speak on this occasion.

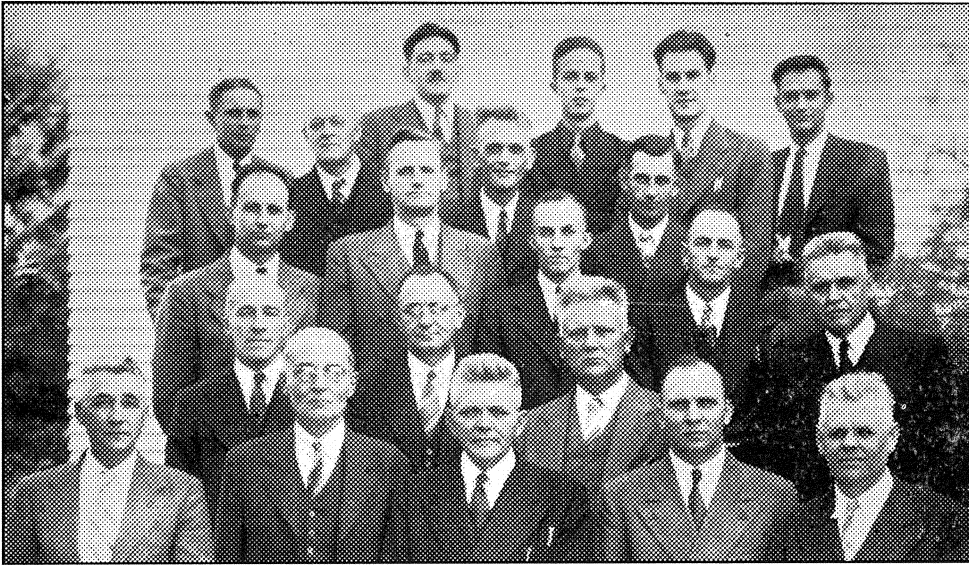
However, one can speak of the conference in a broader, and a broadest sense.

Several of our ministers from Iowa, as well as the Revs. G. Lubbers and A. Petter, also attended the meetings of the conference. Moreover, three of our students showed their interest in the matter by coming from Grand Rapids. It stands to reason that these brethren were all interested in a matter that concerned all our churches. And since the conference had no strictly official character, but was rather informal, there was, of course, no objection to their participation in the discussions. This, then, might be called the conference in the broader sense. It is shown in the photo.

Besides, there were present some elders of the *Evangelical and Reformed Church*, and, on Wednesday of the conference week there were also several elders of our own churches in Iowa and Minnesota. This whole gathering I refer to when I speak of the conference in its broadest sense. Of this, too, there is a photo, which I may, perhaps, exhibit in another issue of our paper.

As to the historical facts and the proceedings of this conference, I may refer the reader to the editorials in *Concordia*. I need not repeat them here.

Rather would I discuss this rather unique conference from the viewpoint of its significance and possible results. What was the occasion, what was the cause of this meeting? What brought us together? What are the present results of it, if any? What may be God's purpose in bringing us into contact with the brethren of a denomination with which we had never had any contact before? And what, if anything, should be done in the future?



In order to accomplish this purpose, the readers should be made acquainted with the brethren with whom we conferred, not, of course, as to their persons, but with a view to their ecclesiastical position, and their doctrinal stand.

To do this, I will have to explain the stand of what is known as the *Evangelical and Reformed Church*, to which the brethren with whom we conferred belonged, though some of them disavowed any connection with that denomination, and claimed to be independent, even to the extent that their churches belonged to an independent classis.

But since the present *Evangelical and Reformed Church* is the result of a merger of two churches, the (German) *Reformed Church in the United States*, and the *Evangelical Lutheran Church*, and the brethren we met at the conference originally belonged to the former, I shall, first of all, have to make a few remarks about this Reformed Church.

H. H.

The Reformed Church in the United States

The origin of this church lies in Europe. It is, in part, to be traced to the Zwinglian Reformation in Switzerland, in the beginning of the sixteenth century, and partly also to some of the followers of the Reformation in Germany, who could not fully agree with all the Lutheran views, but were of a rather Calvinistic type. These instituted the *German Reformed Church*.

Because the Heidelberg Catechism is part of our Confessions, we are, of course, acquainted with the fact that Frederick III, elector of the Palatinate, in-

structed Zacharius Ursinus, and Caspar Olevianus, professors in the university of Heidelberg, to prepare a Catechism for the purpose of setting forth, preserving, and inculcating into the young the true doctrine, and that these two professors composed what is so well known among us as the Heidelberg Catechism.

This Catechism was adopted by the *German Reformed Church* as its only symbol.

As early as the latter part of the seventeenth century, and since then at regular intervals, a considerable number of German emigrants hailing from the *German Reformed Church* in Europe settled in America; and in course of time, they established the (German) *Reformed Church in the United States*. One of their first ministers that settled among them was one Philip Boehm, who came to this country in 1720. Others soon followed. As early as 1747 they organized and held their first Synod. At that time they numbered forty-six churches, served by five ordained ministers. Since then the Church enjoyed a very rapid growth, and became a numerically powerful denomination, organized under a general synod, with several "particular" synods, each comprising several classes.

Like their mother church in the old country the brethren of the *Reformed Church in the United States* adopted the Heidelberg Catechism as their sole confessional symbol and doctrinal standard.

This means, of course, that they embrace the Reformed Faith, and are officially churches of the Calvinistic type.

It also means that their Reformed views are less sharply defined than those of some other Reformed Churches, especially with respect to the doctrine of predestination, and, more particularly, with reference to the truth of reprobation.

In distinction from them, we have also the Netherlands or Belgic Confession, and the Canons of Dordrecht. And especially the latter expresses itself rather fully on the doctrine of double predestination and related doctrines. But the Heidelberg Catechism is less explicit on this truth, hardly mentions the doctrine of election, and does not at all directly refer to the truth of reprobation.

However, the *Reformed Church in the United States* used to attach great value to its doctrinal standard. It was required of the ministry to instruct the young faithfully in the Heidelberg Catechism to prepare them for "confirmation," which usually takes

place when the children reach the age of thirteen or fourteen years.

I may add to this that the brethren we met in the conference, and the people of the community in which we met, generally belonged to a class of later immigrants that had come from Germany in more recent years.

One result of this is that most of them spoke German fluently and preferred it to the American language in teaching and preaching.

Another result of this is that the doctrinal influence of the Rev. Kohlbrügge, a theologian whose name is not strange to those of who hail from the Netherlands, and whose name is usually connected (rightly or wrongly with a tendency to Antinomianism, is more or less clearly noticeable with many of them.

However, our conference would, humanly speaking, in all probability never have been held, if something had not occurred that upset the spiritual equilibrium of some of the brethren in the *Reformed Church in the United States*, even to the extent that they could at least consider the possibility of having to seek another church connection.

This important occurrence was the union of the (German) *Reformed Church in the United States* with the *Evangelical Lutheran Church*, a merger which was proposed and agreed upon in 1934, and accomplished in 1936.

The result of this merger is known as the *Evangelical and Reformed Church*.

About this Church and its basis we must needs write more in order to understand the position of the brethren that sought contact with us.

H. H.

The Triple Knowledge

An Exposition Of The Heidelberg Catechism

PART TWO

OF MAN'S REDEMPTION

Lord's Day XII

7.

Atoned For The Elect (cont.)

It is for the elect, too, that the Lord prays in His sacerdotal intercession. Very clear this is from the Lord's high priestly prayer as it is preserved for us in John 17. Expressly He declares there: "I pray for

them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." It is true, that in the narrowest sense and in the first instance these words have reference to the disciples. But this does not alter the fact that, according to Jesus' own words "the world" is excluded from His prayer. This is evident, not only from verse 9, but also from the whole chapter. In the entire chapter the term "world" stands in sharp antithesis to those whom the Father has given to the Saviour, and must, therefore, be interpreted as referring to the reprobate ungodly. To His own Christ gave His word, and the world hated them, because they are not of the world, even as He is not of the world, vs. 14. Besides, He does not limit His prayer to those that were with Him in the world at that moment, but extends it to all that will believe on Him through their word, vs. 20. Yet, even so, all that will ever believe are those whom the Father gave Him, the elect, and for them He prays: "Father, I will, that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." vs. 244. For the elect then, the Saviour prays, and that, too, for them in distinction from the world for whom He does not pray. But since this sacerdotal intercessory prayer is based on His redemptive work on the cross, on His perfect sacrifice of atonement, it follows that the latter is as limited as the former, and that He shed His life-blood for the elect alone.

Besides, the doctrine of limited atonement is in harmony with the whole Word of God. It is those whom He hath foreknown, and predestined to be conformed according to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren, whom He hath also called, and justified, and glorified. Rom. 8:29, 30. But surely, this implies that it was also for them that Christ offered Himself on the cross, for their calling and justification and glorification rests in the atonement. Accordingly, He hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, and these blessings all have their ground in the perfect sacrifice and obedience of Christ, *according as He hath chosen us* before the foundation of the world. Eph. 1:3, 4. If the elect alone receive the spiritual blessings, it is because they alone are in Christ from before the foundation of the world, they alone were in Him on the cross, and for them alone Christ atoned. He predestinated the elect unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, whereby He has made us acceptable in the beloved, and, therefore, these elect have the redemption in His blood, the forgiveness of sins. Eph. 1:5-7. The blessing of forgiveness, though appropriated by faith, does not rest on faith, but solely on the atoning sacrifice of

Christ. And while this spiritual blessing flows from the eternal good pleasure of God to the elect, it follows that also the atonement was accomplished for them alone. Hence, these also have become an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him Who worketh all things according to the counsel of His own will, Eph. 1:11. Many more passages of Scripture might be added to these to prove that the Word of God does, indeed, clearly teach the truth of limited atonement, the doctrine that Christ died, as far as His intention and the purpose of the Father are concerned, not for all men, but for the elect only.

And even though this truth is bitterly opposed by many, and, especially in our day, the preaching runs generally along boldly Arminian lines, the opponents cannot successfully appeal to Scripture for their view that Christ died for all men.

This does not mean that they do not make the attempt to support their theory of universal atonement by passages from Holy Writ. On the contrary, they point to many texts that, considered apart from their context, and without application to them of the *regula Scripturae*, seem to teach that Jesus died for all.

They reveal special preference for passages that contain the term "world", or the word "all", in connection with God's purpose of salvation. God so loved *the world* that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. God was in Christ, reconciling *the world* unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. And He is a propitiation, not only for our sins, but also for the sins of the whole world. John 3:16; II Cor. 5:19; I John 2:2. And the contention is that *the world* denotes all men and every man. And so, they point out, Scripture frequently speaks of *all men*, or simply of *all*. As by the offence of one judgment came to all men to condemnation, so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon *all men* to justification of life. Rome 5:18. Sound exegesis, they claim, demands that, seeing that the term *all men* occurs twice in this passage, they must be interpreted as having the same implication. And seeing that there can be no doubt about the fact that the first *all men* refers to every member of the human race, the same term must have the same comprehensive meaning in the second part of this passage. And there are many similar passages. God will that *all men* shall be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth, I Tim. 2:4. The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to *all men*, Tit. 2:4. And he is not willing that any should perish, but that *all* should come to repentance. II Pet. 3:9. On the basis of these and similar passages they attempt to gainsay the doctrine of limited atonement, and to maintain that Christ died for every man.

It would require too much space, were we to

examine all these passages in detail. Nor is this necessary. Rather do we point the reader to some fundamental errors in exegesis that must be, and are actually committed by those who elicit from them the doctrine of universal atonement.

The first, and most important, of these is the violation of the rule that words may not be lifted out of their context, but must be interpreted as defined by the context in which they occur.

Thus with respect to the term "world", it should be plain from a comparison of a few passages of Holy Writ: (1) That it does not denote the same concept wherever it occurs in Scripture, and (2) That it never means the same as *all men*. Compare, for instance, John 3:16 with John 17:9, and with I John 2:15-17, and you will see this at once. God so loved the world, to be sure; but Jesus prays not for the world; and in I John 2:15-17 we are told that we must not love the world, neither the things that are in the world; that all that is in the world is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life; that this is not of the Father, but of the world; and that the world passeth away, and the lust thereof. Who does not see that in these passages the same term refers to two entirely different concepts, and that, therefore, you cannot explain the word *world* at random as simply meaning *all men*? Who, moreover, cannot for himself draw the conclusion, that, since both these "worlds" are in our present world as we see it, so that each is but a part of it, neither can possibly refer to all men, but in one instance it refers to the world of the ungodly, in the other instance to the world of the godly according to God's election? John 3:16 refers to God's world, to the world as it is the object of His everlasting love; and the world for the which Christ refuses to pray is excluded from this world of God's love. For the latter God sent His Son, and for the latter He died.

The same is true of the term *all men*, or *all*, or even *every*. These terms dare not be interpreted as referring to all men that ever lived, and shall live, or even to all men that lived in the whole world at a certain period of time. Their content and scope must be determined from the context in which they occur. A few examples ought to make this plain. In I Tim. 4:4 the apostle writes: "For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving." The context, as well as the text, plainly shows that the meaning is: "every creature of God is good to eat." But who would be so foolish as to insist that the apostle here teaches that every existing thing, stone and wood, iron and steel, rats and mice, etc., is good for man's consumption? No one has any objection to limit the term "every creature" to *every eatable creature*. In I Tim. 5:20 we read: "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear." Is

there anyone that has any objection to limit the word *all* in this text to a very limited group? Does anyone insist that the apostle means all men head for head? Or would anyone understand the words of the apostle as meaning that the Church ought to call a meeting of the whole town and all the citizens on the public marketplace, in order there to rebuke the offending church member? Of course not! We understand without difficulty that at most the whole church is meant, or, perhaps, all that are involved in the offense committed. Or consider the text in II Tim. 1:15: "This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me." Does the apostle refer to all the inhabitants of Asia? Or has he in mind, perhaps, all the saints in Asia? No one understands the words in that sense. He refers to a very limited group of men, of coworkers, perhaps. But why, then, should we insist that when the matter of salvation is the subject *all*, or *every*, or *all men*, must needs refer to every individual in the world? Is it not very evident that this cannot possibly be the meaning in Tit. 2:11: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men?" Mark you well, that the apostle here asserts that saving grace had at that time, at the time he wrote his epistle to Titus, already appeared to all men, which certainly implies that the gospel of salvation had already been preached to all. But could the apostle possibly mean that in his own day there was not a single living man that had not heard the gospel? We know better. Thousands upon thousands had never been reached by the preaching as yet. And we have no difficulty to understand the words of the apostle, considered in the light of the context, as meaning that the grace of God that bringeth salvation had appeared to all classes of men, to aged men and women, as well as to young men and young women, to servants as well as to masters. And thus the context must determine the meaning of *all*, or *all men*, wherever it occurs.

But insistence upon finding proof for the doctrine of universal atonement in such passages that contain the word *world*, or the terms *all men*, or *all*, implies another exegetical error, the error, namely, that justice is not and cannot be done to the rest of the texts in which such words occur.

Take, for example, the text in II Cor. 5:19: "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." Suppose that we understand the term "world" in this passage as meaning "all men" in the strict sense of that word. Then what does the text teach? Evidently this, that all men are saved. If all men are reconciled to God, so that God does not impute their trespasses unto them, it follows that all men are saved. Their sins were atoned for nineteen hundred years ago, and they are blotted out for ever. But the Arminian

understands very well that this would prove too much, for as a matter of fact all men are not saved. And so he is compelled to weaken the meaning of reconciliation, and to explain the text as teaching that in the cross of Christ there is a way, a chance, an opportunity of reconciliation, which is to be realized through man's consent to be reconciled. That this is a corruption of the text is evident. For in the cross of Christ, God actually did blot out the sin of "the world," He actually did reconcile "the world" unto Himself, and He nevermore imputes the sins unto that world. It should be evident, then, that by "world" in this text is meant the same as by that term in John 3:16: God's elect world.

The same applies to Rom. 5:18: "Therefore as by the offense of one judgment came to all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men to justification of life." As we already mentioned, those who find the doctrine of universal atonement in this passage insist that the term *all men* must be given the same content and scope in both members of the text. Suppose we give that meaning to this term in both instances, and see what is the result. The second part of the passage would, in that case, signify that the gift of grace unto justification is actually bestowed upon every man that ever lived and will live, which means that all men are actually saved. Now again, this would prove too much even for the Arminian, seeing that all men are not saved. Hence, the attempt is made to explain the text as meaning that, as far as God's intention is concerned, the gift of grace came upon all men, but that the actual reception of this gift of grace depends upon the free will of men. Even if this interpretation were possible, the concept "all men" would still have to be limited, unless it may be supposed that there will be an opportunity to accept this gift after death, for, in the first place, the knowledge of this gift in the old dispensation was limited to very few, and, in the second place, even in the new dispensation millions die without ever coming into contact with the gospel. But apart from this consideration, the text does not allow such an interpretation. We must not overlook that there is a comparison here: "as by the offence of one judgment came unto all men to condemnation, *even so* by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men to justification of life." The question, therefore, must be asked: how, in what way, did by the offence of one judgment unto condemnation come to all men? With their consent? By their own free will? Not at all, but only by God's imputation of the sin of Adam to all. No choice of their free will can undo this fact. But then must the same truth be applied to the second member of the passage: the fact that the free gift unto justification of life comes upon men does not depend upon their own choice,

but is an objective fact: those for whom the gift is intended are surely saved, and that, too, by an act of God alone. If this is true, however, the term *all men* in both members of the text can only mean: all men in Adam. . . . all men in Christ. And the passage cannot be quoted in support of the doctrine of unlimited atonement.

We will examine one more passage that is frequently quoted by those who teach that Christ died for all men, and that God intends all men to be saved. It is the well-known text from II Pet. 3:9: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but he is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." The general meaning of the text is plain. God's people had to endure much suffering for Christ's sake. And in their suffering they looked forward to the realization of the promise, i.e. to the speedy return of Christ their Lord in glory. However, it appeared to them that he delayed His coming, that God was slack in the fulfillment of His promise. He is longsuffering over His people in tribulation, that is, He longs to deliver them, and, no doubt, will deliver them as soon as possible, but, speaking from a human viewpoint, He waits until the time is ripe. And when is the time ripe for the final coming of the Saviour from heaven and the perfect redemption? This is indicated in the last part of the text: God will not that any should perish, but that all come to repentance. The meaning of the text is, therefore, that God's longsuffering must and will endure until this condition is fulfilled, until no one shall have perished, and all shall have come to repentance. For this the realization of the promise and the coming of Christ must wait. But if this is understood, is there any possibility left of interpreting the *all* in the text as referring to every individual man? There is not, for that would mean that the final salvation would never be revealed, that the promise would never be fulfilled, that Christ would never return. Always there are many that perish. All men never come to repentance. That, therefore, cannot be the will of God, nor the meaning of the text. But the text is perfectly plain if to *all* is given the meaning of all the elect, the whole Church, the fulness of the Body of Christ. Then the meaning is: God is longsuffering to usward, i.e. to His chosen Church in the world, for He is not willing that any of us, that is, of His elect Church, shall perish; the coming of Christ, and the realization of the promise must wait until the last one of the elect shall have come to repentance.

These examples may suffice to teach us that we must be on our guard when the Arminian quotes texts at random in support of his contention that Christ died for all men, according to His and God's intention. Superficially considered such passages may leave the

impression that they can serve as a basis for the doctrine of universal atonement. However, when they are studied somewhat more closely, and in the light of their context, it soon becomes evident that this superficial impression is erroneous. Scripture teaches plainly that our Saviour brought the sacrifice of atonement for the elect alone, and there are no passages in Holy Writ that contradict this truth.

H. H.

Jephthah

As we have seen, after the death of Jair, the people of Israel again forsook Jehovah and served the gods of the surrounding nations. When the new tide of apostacy, that engulfed the land, was at its height, Jehovah again came with His judgment, and the distress was so great that the very existence of the nation was threatened. The people cried unto the Lord and a new spirit was manifest in Israel. There was confessions of sins. The strange gods were put away and the nation returned to the Lord. Discord and weakness, despondency and self-seeking, gave way to concord and confidence in God, that lead to victory. Thus when the children of Ammon made a new excursion into Gilead, the children of Israel likewise assembled themselves together, and encamped in Mizpah. But the host of the Lord was without a human leader to lead it into battle. The princes of the people agreed among themselves that the man that would begin to fight against the Ammonites would be head over them. And their thoughts turned to Jephthah.

The narrator sets out with a statement that bears on Jephthah's character. He was a mighty man of valour, a valiant hero. An identical language is used of Gideon (ch. 4:12). The reference is not to unsanctified natural courage and daring, but to spiritual power and invincibility that proceed on the one hand from the spiritual perception that man by himself is nothing, and on the other hand from implicit trust in Jehovah. Jephthah, as Gideon, was a hero of faith. It may well be, as some interpreters conjecture, that, previous to his being recalled from the land of Tob by the elders of Gilead, he had made successful expedition against the Ammonites, but if so, his victory was his faith. Always in the estimation of the sacred writers of the Scriptures, unsanctified physical and mental power is the arm of flesh in which the wicked place their confidence and on this account perish. All that Jephthah says and does bespeaks faith, a right attitude toward God. To the elders of Gilead he said, "If ye bring me home again, to fight against the children of Ammon, and the Lord deliver them

before me, shall I be your head." Mark the expression, "And the Lord deliver them before me. . . ." That Israel's help cometh from the sanctuary was a principle of faith with this man. Then, after he had done transacting with the elders, he "uttered all his words before the Lord in Mizpah." Plainly, Jephthah walked with God. The Lord was in all his thoughts. As can therefore be expected, he was thoughtfully familiar with the glorious history of His people and thus also with the great principles of truth which this history so clearly demonstrated, the truth that Israel was the product of God's wonder-working grace, and was therefore in duty bound to be consecrated unto Jehovah his redeemer God. That he knew the history of his people comes out so plainly in his negotiations with the king of Ammon. Then finally there is his vow, of which we shall speak in the sequence. This vow, which, in a sense, is the principal incident in the history of Jephthah, has from earliest times given rise to singular explanations—explanations that do violence to the faith of the man, militate against the assertion of his being a mighty hero. Besides, that the keeping of the vow consisted in his offering a sacrifice by blood with his daughter as the victim is a view contradicted by the statements occurring in the narrative that bear on her case. Such a sacrifice was condemned by Israel's law as being an abomination in the sight of Jehovah. The practice was abhorant to every right-minded Israelite. That Jephthah should have committed this outrage is inconceivable in the light of what we know of him from the sacred narrative. And that, had he done so, the sacred writer would have refrained from inserting in his narrative one word of condemnation is likewise inconceivable.

Among all the judges, Jephthah stands out as the tragic figure. The recorded events of his life, taken collectively, make a sad story. A Gileadite had begotten him by a woman who was a harlot. The original text here reads, "And Jephthah the Gileadite was a hero of power or might (a mighty hero): And he was the son of a woman (who was) a harlot. And begat Gilead Jephthah." As the Hebrew word translated by *woman* also has the meaning of *wife*, there are these possibilities. 1. The woman was married to Gilead; and, after giving birth to Jephthah, became unfaithful to her husband and is therefore called a harlot by the sacred writer. 2. The woman was a public prostitute by whom Gilead begat Jephthah without ever marrying the woman. 3. The woman was a prostitute and as such married Gilead and remained true to her lawful husband for the rest of her days. Undoubtedly, the interpretation under 2 is the one to be adopted. For the narrative goes on to say that the "wife of Gilead bore him sons, . . ." so that the antithesis seems to be between the woman who was a harlot and to whom Gilead was not married and the

lawful wife of the man. Further, when the sons of the lawful wife grew up, they drove out Jephthah, and said to him, "Thou shalt not inherit in our father's house; for the son of another woman art thou." So reads the original text. The word *another* in this connection, has the meaning of strange and thus this assertion projects the woman not as an estranged lawful wife but as a harlot. Had she been a concubine these sons could have taken no such action against Jephthah as that indicated above. For his expulsion also had been the work of the elders in Gilead, as appears from verse 7 of the 11th chapter. The case was evidently tried before the public tribunal of elders, and these brethren had been set in the right. But the text does not allow us to speak with certainty here. Jephthah still may have been Gilead's lawful son either by a woman who formerly was a harlot or who became one after her marriage to Gilead. One thing is certain. She was a defiled woman. This rests upon purely historical evidence contained in the narrative and is not a false charge advanced by Jephthah's hateful brethren.

It is possible but again not certain that in the statement: "Gilead begat Jephthah;" and also when we read of the "wife of Gilead;" the term "Gilead," as tribe name, takes the place of the unknown personal name of Jephthah's father. If in this case, "Gilead" were a personal name Jephthah would have been designated as "son of Gilead," and not as a "Gileadite," without any paternal surname. It must be admitted that this conclusion has in its favor a comparison with the names of other heroes, for instance with that of Jephthah's predecessor Gideon, who is constantly called the son of Joash.

Irrespective of what the status or the character of Jephthah's mother might have been, his expulsion was a base act. The text leaves the impression that he was the oldest son, born to Gilead before the latter's marriage to his lawful wife, and further that he was older than his brothers by several years. The order of events in the text is this. Gilead begat Jephthah by the strange woman. His wife bare him sons who, when grown up, thrust out Jephthah. A base act it was. For Gilead had owned and loved his firstborn child, who had grown up to be a worthy son, fearing God; and Gilead, it must be assumed, had therefore the more intended that he should inherit with his other sons in his house. But Gilead died. And these sons, contrary to the expressed determination of their deceased father and as driven by lust of gain, collectively turned against Jephthah and, with the approval and cooperation of the elders, violently expelled him from their community. That, after serving him notice that he would not be allowed to inherit with them, they even threatened to kill him, should he delay for a moment in betaking himself out of their midst, is evident from

the notice that "Jephthah *fled* from before the face of his brethren." The land in which he took up residence was the land of Tob, meaning "good land". Where it lied cannot be determined, but it must have been an excellent place of refuge, perhaps outside of Canaan's borders. Here the man dwelt—this man, a true Israelite, one of the few who served God, yet disowned and disinherited by hateful kin, an exile from his people and from the Lord's sanctuary. And here, in this land he must have spent most of the years that remained to him after his expulsion from his father's house. For after his recall he lived but six years. He was married and had but one daughter (11:34), who was still young at the time when the war with the Ammonites was fought, so that he may not yet have been an old man when death took him. With great vigor did he prosecute the war with the Ammonites. This strengthens the conclusion that he was still in his prime when, six years afterward, he died. Thus most of the years of his manhood were spent in exile. But his faith in God, however severely it was being tried, did not cease nor did the love that he bore his people turn cold. In his asylum, a growing number of what the narrative calls vain men joined themselves to him; and he became their leader. From his region of safety he was thus able to make successful warlike expeditions against the enemies of his people. And there are good grounds for concluding that he also did so; for it must have been on account of his deeds of valour, the report of which would go out to all the tribes, that the elders of Gilead implored him to be their captain in the war against the Ammonites, who had just entered upon a new expedition of pillage and plunder. It is doubtless against this enemy that Jephthah had directed his expeditions. Thus he had projected himself as a mighty hero. Hearing of his achievements, their choice fell on him. The Lord was with the man, they plainly perceived, because he trusted in God and had committed his case to him. During the time of his banishment in the land of Tob, he had acquired fame, house and possessions.

Despite the ill-treatment that they had afforded him in the past, and though they had failed to make amends for eighteen long years—his expulsion had occurred probably sometime previous to the beginning of this oppression,—the elders of Gilead, now that they were in distress, turned to Jephthah, as a last resort. They now had use for the man, as they now also had use for God. In their extremity, both God and his servant could render them some good service. They now needed the man. Brave, courageous, and Godfearing, with a proved capacity for leadership, he would make them an excellent general. So they searched him out in his hiding place and said to him, "Be our captain that we may fight with the children of Ammon." Not a word did they say about the hard

treatment he had received at their hands nor about their failure to invite him back before this. Not a word of confession falls from their lips. Let him forget the past and be grateful that they wanted him even now and consider the honor that they bestow upon him in asking him to be their leader in the war that they contemplated waging. It was not his desire to humiliate them, by directing their attention to their past brutal conduct, now that he had them at a disadvantage, that caused him to reply, "Did not ye hate me, and expel me out of my father's house? And why are ye come unto me now in your distress?" Jephthah plainly distrusted these men, their motive. Their brazen affrontery amazed him. In the light of all that had taken place in the past, how had they now the courage to solicit his help, without first acknowledging that they had grievously wronged him and, on the ground of their confession, seeking his pardon. But that is the kind of men they were. And even now, after hearing themselves rebuked, they persist in ignoring their past sins and say to him, "Therefore we turn again to thee now, that thou mayest go with us, and fight against the children of Ammon, and be our head over the inhabitants of Gilead." By offering him the headship of their tribe, they make their proposal as enticing as they know how. They go all the way with the man, except to acknowledge to him their sin. It is indeed doubtful therefore whether, on the part of the majority of these men, it is the sign of new life, that they do not shun the humiliation of going to Jephthah. They needed the man. And, in order to induce him to yield, they offer him the headship. But Jephthah is not a man who will lead them at any cost. Though born for rule, he was yet without lust for rule. He will be their head, certainly, but only on the condition that they evince that they have become other than they were, prove to him that they have truly repented of their sins and returned to the Lord; for only then are they such people as will insure the blessing of God in victory over their enemies. And the proof he demands is that they bring him home again to fight against the children of Ammon. And if the Lord will deliver the Ammonites before him and thereby declare that He has forgiven His people and accepted the face of Jephthah, then and not otherwise can he consent to be their head. "And Jephthah said unto the elders of Gilead, If ye bring me home again to fight against the children of Ammon, and the Lord deliver them before me, I shall be your head." This last clause has been taken as a question. So it appears in the English versions, where it reads, "Shall I be your head?" as if Jephthah were afraid, lest, after victory was won, they would no longer want him as head, and again expel him from their midst, and wished to assure himself on this point beforehand. But Jephthah was not that kind of a man. The clause in

question is therefore affirmative. So taken there is no trace of personal ambition in it. His chief concern is not even whether they will bring him home again but whether, having brought him home, they have the courage, born of trust in God, to face their enemy in battle. Let them say that they have. That will satisfy him that now they are the kind of men to whom God can grant victory and over whom he can allow himself to be set as judge. The elders say to him, "The Lord be witness between us, if we do not so according to thy words." It was enough. He would obey their summons; for he perceived that they were sincere. And the cause of God lay close to his heart. And he loved God's people, the seven thousand who had not worshipped in Baal's temple. They, too, were in distress. For their sakes he went with the elders of Gilead. The people kept their word with him. They made him head and captain over them with the understanding that they would do right by him for the rest of his days. And he uttered all his words including their words, it must be, before the Lord in Mizpah. This act had significance as an indication of the frame of his heart and mind, of his right attitude toward God. It meant that he took God into his confidence, was conscious of his integrity and the rightness of his cause, was acting under the impulse of a living faith in the power and the willingness of Jehovah to grant victory to His penitent people, according to His promise to them and for the sake of His name. But it also meant that he took Jehovah as his witness with respect to the transaction between himself and the elders and that he wanted God to judge between him and them, should they go back on their word.

In this frame of mind and in the confidence that God was for him and could not fail him in the crucial moment, he transacted with the Ammonites through the messengers which he sent to the Ammonite king, who was again making war against Israel. Jephthah put to the king this question: "What hast thou to do with me, that thou art come against me to fight in my land?" So, before he proceeds to war, Jephthah enters into peaceable negotiations with the Ammonites, not because he is afraid of them, on account of their being a strong people (cf. Num. 22:1; Deut. 2:20, 21) but because, mindful as he is of their being the descendants of Lot, and remembering that, by reason thereof, Israel, on their journey to Canaan, had not been permitted to assail them, he wanted to be blameless before God of their blood. Before he would draw the sword, he wanted a clear right to this war. He would therefore try to dissuade them from their hostile purposes by peaceful negotiations. If he failed in this, the blame for the ensuing bloodshed would be wholly theirs without question. Victory could be his only through the righteousness of his cause. But there was still another consideration that entered in here.

Though the people had put away their idols and returned to the Lord, though they had bewailed their sins before Him and implored His help, and therefore on the ground of His promise, made to the nation in the past, could expect that He would again send deliverance, the Lord, on His part, had as yet not let it be known to His people that He forgave them and would deliver them from their present troubles. His last word to them had been, "Wherefore I will deliver you no more. Go cry unto the gods which we have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation." And as to Jephthah, though he was eager and stood ready to war God's warfare, he was still without the unction of the Spirit. He had uttered his words before the Lord, but as yet had received no reply. It meant that he was still without a calling. The mere presence of the Ammonites in Canaan's borders could not serve as a ground for the right to this war. Though the Ammonites on their part sinned grievously in harrassing the Israelites, God had sent them and was using them to chastise His people for their sins. There was then this question. Was the hour of deliverance at hand or was God determined to afflict His people a while longer and must they therefore acquiesce in their tribulations instead of striking a blow for freedom at this time? Jephthah did not know. The right to wage this war was implicit only in his divine calling. And as yet the Lord had not let Himself be heard from. Jephthah therefore must wait with drawing his sword. Besides, he could do nothing until God raised him up, qualified him by the Spirit, instilled in his soul courage and daring—the courage of faith. And Jephthah did wait for the unction of the Spirit, but in the meantime he could request the Ammonites to justify, if they were able, their invasions of God's country. He did so. The question he put to the king of Moab was pertinent. "What hast thou to do with me, that thou art come against me to fight in my land?" It was a most embarrassing question that Jephthah put to that Ammonite king. It is about as embarrassing a question as could be put to any government of this day and age, embarked, as they all are, on policies of imperialism. For it is a question of right—right before God—and for such a question the Ammonite king was ill prepared. Had he been disposed to speak the truth, he would have said instantly, without one moment's delay, "I am come against thee to fight in thy land because I am fired by the vile ambition to remove the bounds of the people, rob their treasures, find as a nest their riches, and gather all the earth, in order that the control and dominion of my nation may be extended. And the very special reason that I fight against thee is that I hate thy God." But speaking the truth, the king would have projected himself before the eyes of the world in all his vile intents and purposes. Gone would be his power to

command respect and admiration, to hypnotize men by fine sounding slogans, and to sell himself to the world as the hope of all mankind. Thus the answer that was needed and wanted was one that justifies thievery and murder, in a word, the vile ambitions of a depraved man. Marvelous to say, the king had an answer, for he was a resourceful king.

G. M. O.

Natural Theology

(continued)

A clearer passage we have in Rom. 1:19-20 teaching that which is knowable of God is manifest in them, for God has showed it unto them: His invisible things. . . are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, namely his eternal power and divinity. Now it is strange that Dr. Schilder would deny even this passage its probative force on the ground that Prof. Greijdanus would interpret conditionally "if the unseen things are grasped with the spirit, the mind, they are seen! The spiritual activity must continue, otherwise the seeing stops." I cannot see any thing that supports this conditional interpretation unless it be the somewhat spiritual implication of the word "understood" (nooumena), and it were strange to use a per se grammatically colorless participle to express such a condition which suddenly breaks in on the thought, whereas means can very well be expressed thus as lying directly on the line of the thought. Therefore we have here a definite content given to the natural knowledge of God, and a very great content especially in His Divinity which certainly implies a group of several virtues that distinguish Him wholly from the creature.

Therefore I cannot see how Van Til can say (Proceedings Calv. Phil. Club, 1941 p. 85) that the neutral Theistic proofs cry day and night that God does not exist, because, as he says, they prove that a finite God exists. It would seem that Rom. 1 would directly deny such a position. And we must undoubtedly bear in mind that also the Kantian criticisms of the Proofs involves a false use of the word Absolute and of Ultimate Cause. For although it is perhaps true, as Van Til maintains, that the inseparable gap between finite and infinite, relative and Absolute, particular and Universal is closed in the Tri-unity of God, which can only be known from the Scriptures, nevertheless the solution obtains whether we have learned it and are aware of it or not. And so God is not separated from His creatures, but is so related to it that the heavens declare His glory, and the Gentiles

know His eternal power by its causative relation to the created things, and thence also know His Divinity. And even if the most we dared to maintain on the basis of Rom. 1 were that providing the spiritual activity continues properly, man can know God from creation (Greijdanus), even this would refute the Kantian criticism for its power lies not in an appeal to mans sinful darkness but to his finiteness.

Van Til's method, I mean in this connection only, reminds one somewhat of the method of those philosophers whose systems have already fallen by their own weight, while the Scriptures continue to teach that God maintains the proof of Himself in the minds of men and the classic "proofs" continue to make their appeal to the intellect of man and to the heart of the Christian.

Thus far we have seen that we must be on our guard against denying or impoverishing the natural knowledge of God, either by, 1. conceding that logic could ever lead to the conclusion that God is unknowable, or, 2, by teaching that the finite cannot know the Infinite.

We shall have to cling very closely to Scripture here and with it maintain:

1. That the highest purpose of God with man is that man shall know Him.
2. That man has been construed precisely for that purpose.
3. That man has become spiritually perverted in precisely that relationship.
4. That by his spiritual perversion all and every one of his faculties, to his very inmost being have become perverted.
5. That by his fall also the creation itself has been subjected to vanity and cannot clearly reflect the Creator.

In the light of this we shall have to conclude that even the so called proofs are only the crude expressions of a few phases out of an almost unlimited contact which God has established with man through all the creation and his own deep inner self.

Also in the light of this we must maintain that the rationalistic criticisms of these proofs are of course very crude fumbblings with spiritual things.

Theologians (Chas. Hodge, Orr, Kuyper, Bavinck) have shown that the ingenious attack in the line of Kant, Hamilton and Spencer have not at all convinced them and Kant himself concedes by his doctrine of Practical Reason and his unqualified "Thou shalt" which speaks in the conscience of every man, that all the facts have not at all been taken account of in his criticism of the proofs.

And it is quite evident in the light of Rom. 1:19-21, that the words cause, final cause, infinite, absolute, are very arbitrarily used by the critics. And we may un-

doubtedly note with profit the words of Dr. Chas. Hodge who states that "the word infinity comes very near the word incomprehensibility". For, indeed, the strict meaning of the word "infinity" may never be known by us. But this does not at all imply that also the meaning of such words as "cause" and "being" and "purpose" cannot be known from the created things. Why should they not be given in and with the created things themselves which have been created to reveal the Creator? And again? I may repeat, I believe that Rom. 1:19-21 teaches this very thing.

Now, undoubtedly many good men have turned away from the logical method of proof for the existence of God, because of a certain cold detached mechanical appearance in this method which suggests irreverence. However this need not at all follow from the logical method, which though it is more deliberate than the intuitive approach, is often also quite unconsciously performed.

For in the first place, the proofs do not at all attempt to bring God under a higher class of being, by fitting Him into a certain frame of logic, but they conclude from the things that are made to a Divine person of eternal power and wisdom.

But in the second place, if it must indeed be taken as obvious that the finite logic cannot prove the Infinite, then how dare we assert, as a matter of very obvious fact, that the finite *can experience* the Infinite and *does* have a *sense* of Divinity?

However the more general answer given to all of this, usually in a sense of finality, is that man cannot really know God without His special revelation, meaning that he cannot know God as Triune and as a God of grace without this.

But also here we must again speak with certain limitations. For is it indeed true that creation reveals nothing of the trinity of God? For if the work of creating was performed by the three persons it must necessarily follow that this Triunity be also reflected in the product. Dr. Bavinck points out that even the Greek philosophy shows a feeling for the fact that the things that are made were formed by the Word. We can understand how this groping where there is no special revelation would become very intense when we consider how a person deprived of his eyesight develops his remaining senses. How much more then could not man in the state of rectitude with the desire to love know his God from the things that are made, as this is indeed suggested by the fact that Adam immediately knew the animals that were submitted to him to name.

In like manner we may also believe that since this world was made to become the stage and the object of redemptive grace, it also reflected that purpose, for Adam himself is called the image of Him that was to come.

But now on the other hand if we say that this knowledge of God only comes by special revelation, the question immediately arises, when exactly does this knowledge of the Triune Redeemer break through? It would indeed be difficult to say from Scripture exactly who was under then special revelation the first man to conclude that God is Triune and Redeemer. And then without seeking to indicate any point we may immediately observe that the revelation of God is progressive. The Infinitely glorious one is indeed more and more revealed to man. The Incarnation may be considered the greatest step, but also standing on what was revealed in Christ the Word Incarnate we still continue to appropriate that knowledge through the New Dispensation. And in that sense we may undoubtedly speak of approximations. Not in the sense that the knowledge of the church is still possibly erroneous, either to the right or to the left, but surely in the sense that the church is still reaching up along the line that leads to ever fuller knowledge, and the incomplete knowledge will continue until we see face to face and will continue even then with perfect method and progress. And this by all the sanctified powers whereby the word-revelation and the experience of love in its redemptive operation, brings man ever nearer to God. Read that marvelous testimony of the Apostle Paul in Phil. 3 concerning his striving to experience even now the knowledge of God through Christ in all his living way.

At this point we may now introduce the great turning point or hinge upon which the true knowledge of God depends.

That hinge is sin or righteousness.

And now we must emphasize with equal insistence that sinful man does not know God. And that means no matter how much revelation he has. John 8:55; 16:3; 17:25; 1 John 3:6. The question is not at all one of the creaturliness or finiteness of man, nor of the nature of his faculties, whether logical or intuition-al, but it is a question of the holiness of God and the ethical corruption of man. That ethical corruption begins with the day of Adam's perversion and explains the corruption of the "natural" knowledge in heathendom, it continues under the fullest light of special revelation, reveals itself in the modern exact sciences, in the ethical sciences, and in "religion". Blind, ignorant, deceived, dead—such are the characterizations used by Scripture and they must be left unchanged. And with our minds illumined by the Spirit and Special revelation we must strive to understand this evaluation which the Scriptures make. And it is the failure to understand this that makes room for the theory of common grace with its effacing of lines in doctrine and life.

Therefore we must not introduce a dualism between the natural and the spiritual, the general and

the special as does the Anabaptist, the Lutheran and the Roman Catholic.

Nor must we as Bath does in his earlier teachings make man's creaturlieness such an undesirable limitation that he can only feel God's greatness as distance and darkness and crushing wrath, until he is lifted from time into eternity through the resurrection of Christ.

And above all we must not resort to the synthesis of Common Grace where gifts are considered grace intellectual powers as spiritual virtues and action as life, and thus lose the deep antithesis between sin and righteousness.

But we must maintain the unity of the revelation, seeking more and more to integrate the general and the special, as one testimony of the eternal and Infinite God in all His glorious virtues so that all men are without excuse and the righteous can know Him now and unto all eternity in the superabundance of revelation. And with this the antithesis of the sanctified mind and the perverted mind must be fully maintained.

By this spiritual restoration we can also understand the speech that comes to us from creation.

1. We can take account of its distortion by the curse.

2. We can read the meaning of the distortion as an expression of God's pleasure.

3. We can see underneath and through the distortion the wisdom and righteousness of God.

4. Far from saying that by the curse all legibility has been effaced from the created things, we shall read its language of redemption as the creature with uplifted head awaits the manifestation of the sons of God in order to enter into the liberty of the glory of the sons of God.

A. P.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On October 18, 1944 with grateful hearts we celebrated the 30th wedding anniversary of our parents,

Mr. and Mrs. DIRK MONSMA (nee Bylsma)

We are deeply thankful to God for having spared us our parents and it is our sincere hope and prayer that He will continue to bless them and keep them for each other and us.

The Children:

Mr. and Mrs. Lambert Mulder
Mr. and Mrs. Orrie Vanden Berg
Cpl. and Mrs. Albert Heemstra
Gladys Joan
Dwight Jay
and 5 grandchildren

Grand Rapids, Mich,

The Term Law in the Epistle to Gal.

The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians stands out in all our minds as the epistle which especially treats the subject of Christian Liberty. In the major portion of this letter, up to chapter 5, Paul carefully explains the Christian's relation to the law and so establishes the doctrine of Christian Liberty. In the chapters 5 and 6 the subject is applied to our actual life. A study of the epistle is therefore very profitable for practical Christian living.

Of fundamental importance to a correct understanding of the subject of liberty in relation to law, which is assigned to me for another article, is an understanding of the term law as used by Paul in Gal. This article is concerned with that subject.

There is a problem. The question is not what is the meaning of the term law as such. The meaning of the word itself is clear. It means rule, canon, ordinance, that which has been established. But the problem is, to what particular rule or law does Paul refer to in his use of the term. We have the laws of the Old Testament: the moral, civil, and ceremonial laws. In some passages in this epistle to the Galatians where Paul speaks of "the law" it is explained as referring to the ceremonial law. Others object and explain that it refers to the entire Mosaic legislation. The difference is vital. For the ordinary Bible reader it is difficult to determine.

Paul in some instances in this epistle uses the word "law" without the definite article. This point is lost in our English translations which use the definite article throughout the epistle. In other places Paul does use the definite article. We have the expression several times of "the law". Once in chapter 5:3 there is the expression "the whole law". In 5:14 we find the expression "all the law". The explanation of some commentators is that with the definite article attached to the term "law" the apostle has reference to the ceremonial law. Other commentators disregard the distinction made by the definite article, but nevertheless distinguish on the one hand, a reference of Paul to the entire Mosaic legislation and on the other hand a particular reference to the ceremonial laws only. They determine this from their explanation of the context. A few expositors maintain that there is only one reference made by the apostle when he refers to the Mosaic legislation, and that is, the entire code with the moral as well as civil and ceremonial laws.

My conclusion is that nowhere in the epistle does the apostle direct our attention to the ceremonial law as such in distinction from the decalogue, when he uses the term "law". This will change our conception of liberty in relation to law to be sure. An easy interpretation has always presented itself to me with the

explanation that the apostle refers to the ceremonial law in Galatians and shows how that the Galatians and the Christians of the New Testament are free from those Old Testament ordinances. That has never been satisfactory, however. Especially because it is superficial and does not show exegetical proof is it not satisfactory.

Let us examine the main passages where, it is contended, that the apostle refers to the ceremonial law exclusively and see that this is not true.

The first passage to which we wish to call your attention is found in 2:16 where Paul explains that a man is not justified by the "works of law". This expression is used several times in following passages and is therefore important.

The occasion for the attack of Peter by Paul, which is the context of this passage, 2:16, is the question of observance of the ceremonial law. This account of his attack of Peter, Paul uses by way of introduction to his subject of law and freedom in relation to law. The main difference however, between Paul and Peter here is not the superficial question whether those Old Testament ordinances are to be observed by Peter in the presence of the Gentiles. That is the occasion for Paul's reminder to Peter of the deeper matter, the vital question of the way of salvation. In verse 16 of chapter 2 Paul touches that deeper matter and reminds Peter that a man is justified by faith and not by "works of law". It is a matter of works versus faith. The expression "works of law" includes the Old Testament ceremonial observances but surely is not limited to them. It also includes other works,—the pretention of the rich young ruler, who maintained he observed the law of loving his neighbor. That is not the way of salvation, working it out by ourselves in conformity to law. And Jesus did not prescribe more and different laws for the young ruler. Neither must Peter and Paul build any more upon such a basis which they destroyed when they followed Christ. In this explanation we have a powerful word of God against all present day attempts to observe works of law as a way unto salvation. So we have a grasp of the real issue at stake in the subject of ceremonial observance which remains for all time an issue. It is the issue of humanism versus God's salvation in Christ Jesus. If it is only a matter of the outward keeping of the ceremonial law that is the concern of Paul in writing this epistle, we almost feel that it is now a dead issue. That was decided soon in the course of transition from the Old into the New Testament dispensation. In all the uses in this context of the term "law", that is, in the verses 16, 19, and 21 Paul uses the term without the article and does not refer to a particular ceremonial law, but to the concept law.

In chapter three we have another context in which the term law appears. In this connection the apostle

in the main uses the term with the article. The first passage where this appears is verse 10, where it also seems that he refers to the ceremonial law. We read a quotation from Deuteronomy 27:26: "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Turning to Deut. 27 we find that the curses which the children of Israel assumed from Mount Ebal were for transgressions of the moral law, judicial law and ceremonial law. It cannot be limited in this case either to just one in particular. The "book of the law" is the book of the entire law.

In verse 19 we have the important question, "wherefore then serveth the law?" Here it is used with the definite article. The answer that Paul gives to his question in verse 19 is found in the following verses of chapter 3 and therefore the references to the law in this entire section are all the same. My conclusion here too is negative first of all. It cannot refer to the ceremonial law as such. The first reason is again because there is no special indication made by the apostle in the use of the term nor in the context to warrant such an interpretation. In the second place this mention of "the law" is in connection with his previous mention of the fact that it came four hundred and thirty years after the promise. Certainly that refers to the historical giving of the law at Mount Sinai. The important event of the giving of the law is not remembered as the giving of the ceremonial law. It is the Decalogue which takes first place and the other laws are secondary, of importance only in relation to the ten words. These laws are inseparably connected. The secondary laws are without significance apart from the moral law. Jesus reminds us that on the essence of the moral law hang all the law and the prophets. In the third place, the reason given for the revelation of law, was "for the sake of transgressions". Particularly the moral law brings out our transgressions. The ceremonial law contains prescriptions for keeping the types which are promises of better things to come. The very answer of Paul as to the reason for the introduction of the law into history does not harmonize at all therefore with the answer of some that he refers to the ceremonial law exclusively. It follows necessarily that the reference to the law in verse 24 must also be the entire revelation of law at Sinai. The law in its entirety was a schoolmaster to drive the Church to Christ.

The third context which we must show does not contain the term law as a reference to the ceremonial law. That is the section of chapter 4. The passage which brings out the real issue of the whole context of chapter 4 is verse 4: "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law." Although the able exegete Meyer explains the preceding expressions of the

term law as not referring to the ceremonial law, he nevertheless does so in this passage. He explains the immediately preceding expression "elements of the world" as referring to the "rudiments of ritual" of both Jews and Gentiles. And so also he says Christ was born of a woman and under the Jewish rudiments of ritual, that is, circumcision and all connected with it. That is his understanding of the expression in the fourth verse, "under law". I have not the space here to give the very good exposition of Dr. Greijdanus of the expression "elements of the world". Probably I shall have opportunity in the next article. However, let me state that it can be clearly shown that the expression, "elements of the world" does not refer specifically to the Levitical rites. I wish to give some arguments here to show that the expression "under law" in this fourth verse does not refer to the ceremonial law as such. In the first place the expression certainly refers to the incarnation of the Son of God. He was born of a woman and by virtue of such a birth, becoming like us in every respect, he was under law, the law of God regarding the creature. It is altogether superficial to explain ceremonial law only, which it is true he took as a Jew. In the second place it becomes still more evident that the concept "law of God" is meant here for the following verse gives the purpose, "to redeem them that were under law". That cannot refer to Jews only. It refers to Jews and Gentiles, the whole body of elect of Old and New dispensations. This is plain from the use of the personal pronoun, "we" which concludes verse 5, "that we might receive the adoption of sons." In the third place, nowhere are the ceremonial rites referred to as the "elements of the world". This is not true even in Colossians 2:20. If in that passage it is a reference to the ceremonial rites, then we would have such a strange explanation that Christ Himself died to these rudiments. How could such be true, if these rites themselves were types of Christ, and of His own death. He would not have to die to free himself of the rudiments, if that is what is meant,—his own shadows. The shadows foretell of Him and fall away when He appears. They were types of His dying to the rudiments. And in both Colossians and Galatians the expression refers to the fundamental laws of creation under which we all are born.

My first conclusion, therefore, is negative. The term law cannot apply specifically to the ceremonial law. If we see that, we have arrived at a richer and deeper understanding of Paul's subject of liberty in relation to law.

My positive conclusion is very simple. The apostle has essentially only one reference with his use of the term law in Galatians. That reference is to the law of God. There really is no other law. God is the only law-giver. We can still make three distinctions of

that use of the law of God by the apostle Paul. First, when he speaks of law without the article he refers to the *concept* law, to the will of God as it concerns the creature according to His creation in Paradise. In the second place, when Paul becomes more particular, he uses the article and refers to the historical revelation of His law at Sinai, namely, "the law". In chapter 3:22 he even speaks of that historical revelation as written when he speaks of, "the scripture". In the third place there is the indefinite use, "a law", also without the article and in this case definitely indefinite. That is a reference to law in the abstract, if I may so define myself. I find one use of that in 3:21, "for if there had been a law given, which could have given life. . . ." Paul means, if there had been any law given.

L. D.

Calvinism According To Kuyper's Stone-Lectures – A Critique

The Stone-lectures of Dr. A. Kuyper on Calvinism are well known in Reformed circles; it may be taken for granted that at least the title of this work is known by many of the readers. For the sake of those who may be interested in this subject and who are acquainted with this work a few remarks of an introductory nature will not be superfluous.

Dr. Kuyper delivered these Stone-lectures in the month of October, 1898 at Princeton, N. J. They were delivered in the English language. However, they are also obtainable now in the Holland language. The question might be asked as to which copy is the original one. Personally we found the Holland copy the easier of the two to read, and again and again could not avoid the impression that the Holland was the original and that the English was translation. However this may have been our quotations will be from the English copy.

In six lectures the late Dr. Kuyper treats the theme: Calvinism. The method followed in presenting the subject matter is rather uniform throughout. At the outset we are told in nearly each lecture the course of argument to be followed and a brief resumption is given of the ground covered up to that certain point. The speaker (writer) traces a definite line of thought containing an all-embracing life-and-world-view. With bold strokes this is done in the first lecture. It is especially in this first lecture that the speaker gives us his interpretation of *history*. In the last and concluding lecture which speaks of "Calvinism and the *Future*" we again see the speaker's view of history.

There is indeed very much in these lectures to which we gratefully and heartily subscribe. Dr. Kuyper was no scholar in the common sense of the word; he was a pioneer hacking his way through the forest, a man of broad and penetrating vision overlooking the entire domain of life. Nevertheless we cannot agree with the departed brother's underlying thesis in his interpretation of the history of this *fallen, sinful* world. We believe that the lines must be drawn differently not only in the matter of the relationship of *nature* and *grace*, but most emphatically also in regard to *sin* and *grace*.

Permit us to sketch for you Kuyper's view of Calvinism and its place in the *development of mankind*. It is well to bear in mind that thus the matter is constructed by the learned speaker.

"Calvinism" according to Kuyper is not to be defined to the ecclesiastical, dogmatical domain. That this is his contention is evident first of all from his definition and circumscription of calvinism. By the logical process of elimination Kuyper shows us exactly how he would have us conceive of Calvinism. He catalogues the following senses in which we can and in which also historically we do speak of Calvinism. First of all as it is employed by Roman Catholicism as a stigmatization of Protestantism. This use of the term is both historically and factually beside the point. Secondly there are the *denominational* Calvinists. These are those who possibly in church government are presbyterian as Calvin advocated, but deny the doctrine of predestination. Then "Calvinism" also serves as a Confessional name. In this sense, a Calvinist is represented exclusively as the outspoken subscriber to the dogma of foreordination. They who disapprove of this strong attachment to the doctrine of predestination cooperate with the Romish polemicists, in that by calling you "Calvinists", they represent you as a victim of dogmatic narrowness; and what is worse still, as being dangerous to the real seriousness of moral life". p. 6. Kuyper does not deny that attachment to the doctrine of foreordination is Calvinism, but to this he would not limit it. We quote: "The chief purpose of my lecturing in this country was, to eradicate the wrong idea, that Calvinism represented an exclusively dogmatical and ecclesiastical movement". p. 231. This last quotation is sufficient commentary on these usages of the term "Calvinism".

There is, according to these lectures, also a fourth sense in which we can speak of Calvinism. This last interpretation of the term "Calvinism" is to take it in a scientific-philosophic sense. And it is the contention of the esteemed lecturer that in this sense of the term Calvinism must be championed. Writes Kuyper: "But beyond this sectarian, confessional and denomina-

tional use of the name "Calvinist", it serves moreover, in the *fourth* place, as a *scientific* name either in an historical, philosophical or political sense. Historically the name of Calvinism indicates the channel in which the Reformation moved, so far as it was neither Lutheran, nor Anabaptist nor Socinian. In the philosophic sense, we understand by it that system of conceptions which, under the influence of the master-mind of Calvin raised itself to dominance in the several spheres of life. And as a political name, Calvinism indicates that political movement which has guaranteed the liberty of nations in constitutional statesmanship; first in Holland, then in England, and since the close of the last century in the United States."

From the rather lengthy quotation just made, it is quite evident that Kuyper conceives of Calvinism not as a movement born from the principle of regeneration in the heart of the elect only and ending in the new creation of all things (Matt. 1:28) but that he would draw the line of Calvinism to the life of *mankind, the human race*. Calvinism is the *movement in history* when considered in "its deepest logic" (p. 35) from the lower to the higher forms of life in the development of mankind.

To show that we are not yet criticizing but that we are merely attempting to sketch for you Kuyper's view, attend to the following from his lectures. In the first place Kuyper sketches for us four all-embracing life-and-world-views—which each in their turn have dominated all life. These are as follows: Firstly, Paganism which may be considered to cover everything from Animism to Buddhism. Secondly, Islamism-Mohammedanism which rose in the 12th century and dominated all life. a. In relationship to God. b. In relationship of our fellow-man. c. In relationship to the world. Next in line comes the Roman Catholic hierarchy as an all-embracing life-and-world-view, that is, the conception of man's relationship to 1. God; 2. to fellowman; 3. to the world round about us. Calvinism is the last in line *historically*. Also Calvinism has developed a life and world view from its own deepest principle and religious convictions. Centrally in its conception of man's relationship to God; then of his relationship to his fellowman, and finally, of his relationship to the world of God's creation. Calvinism is the highest budding out of the human race. The human race needed to pass through the stages of Paganism-Islamism-Romanism to come to Calvinism.

Thus is the movement in history as conceived of by Kuyper. The endeavors of nations apart from Israel-Jerusalem had a positive contribution to make to history. That we are not misinterpreting the deceased brother may be evident from the following quotation: "But even this is not all. The fact that in a given circle Calvinism has formed an interpretation of life quite its own, from which both in the

spiritual and secular domain a special system arose for domestic and social life, justifies its claim to assert itself as an independent formation; but does not yet credit it with the honor of having led *humanity* (underscoring of me, G.L.) as such, up to a higher stage in its development, and therefore this life-system has not, so far as we have considered it, attained that position which alone could give it the right to claim for itself the energy and devotion of our hearts. In China it can be asserted with equal right that Confucianism has produced a form of its own for life in a given circle, and the Mongolian race that form of life rests upon a theory of its own. But what has China done for humanity in general, and for the steady development of our race? Even so far as the waters were clear they formed nothing but an isolated lake. Almost the same remark applies to the high development which was once the boast of India and to the state of things in Mexico and Peru in the days of Montezuma and the Incas. In all these regions the people attained to a high degree of development, but stopped there, and, remained isolated, in no way proved a benefit to humanity at large. This applies more strongly still to the life of the colored races on the coast and interior of Africa—a far lower form of existence, reminding us not even of a lake but rather of pools and marshes. There is but one world-stream, broad and fresh, which from the beginning bore the promise of the future. This stream had its rise in Middle-Asia and the Levant, and has steadily continued its course from East to West. From Western Europe it has passed on to your Eastern States and from thence to California."

"The sources of this development are found in Babylon and in the valley of the Nile. From thence it flowed on to Greece. From Greece it flowed on to the Roman Empire. From the Romanic nations it continued its way to the North-western parts of Europe and from Holland and England it reached at length your continent. At present that stream is at a standstill. Its western course through Japan is impeded; meanwhile no one can tell what forces for the future may lie slumbering in the slavish races which have thus far failed of progress. But while the secret of the future is still veiled in mystery, the course of this world-stream from East to West can be denied by none. And therefore I am justified in saying: that Paganism, Islamism and Romanism are the three successive formations which this development had reached, when its further direction passed over into the hands of Calvinism". pp. 33, 34.

From the foregoing it is very evident that according to Kuyper Calvinism must not be understood as having its course of development through the line of Adam, Seth, Noah, Abraham, David, Christ, the church in the world but most emphatically through

the line of Egypt Syria, Babylon, Athens, Rome, the civilization of western Europe and the United States.

If this has not been made clear in the above quotation then may the following serve to assure us that this line in the development of Calvinism is not at all the portion of the line of the Holy Promise. Kuyper no doubt felt the difficulty of maintaining the position he had taken in explaining the history of the world in its development of the human race in the light of both of Scripture and of historic considerations. Consequently he proceeds further in his lecture as follows: "The succession of these four phases of development did not take place mechanically, with sharply outlined divisions and parts. This development of life is organic, and therefore each new period roots in the past. In its deepest logic (in zijn diepste gedachte) Calvinism had already been apprehended by Augustine; had, long before Augustine been proclaimed to the City of the Seven Hills by the Apostle in his Epistle to the Romans; and from Paul goes back to Israel and its prophets, yea to the tents of the patriarchs. Romanism likewise does not make its appearance suddenly but is the joint product of Israel's priesthood, the cross of Calvary and the world-organization of the Roman Empire. Islam in the same way joins itself to Israel's Monism (belief in one God) to the Prophet of Nazareth and to the tradition of the Koraichites. And even the Paganism of Babylon and Egypt on the one hand and of Greece and Rome upon the other, stand organically related to what lay behind these nations, preceding the prosperity of their lives.

From this last quotation Kuyper must prove that Calvinism means to be and is the *development of the human race*. It is his contention that the source of this development is Egypt-Syria-Babylon-Athens-Rome-Western European Civilization-United States. Does the above paragraph demonstrate this. If words have meaning all that Kuyper shows is that the Line of Calvinism is Calvin-Augustine-Paul (Letter to Rome) Prophets, Abraham; that both Romanism and Islamism borrowed elements from this holy work of God in Christ, corrupted these with elements of paganism. And that the Pagan line is Egypt-Babylon-Greece, Rome and with what lies back of each. Hence two parallel lines in history, at least as far as the chronology is concerned. Yet both having their own spiritual impetus. This is Kuyper's Analysis. p. 35.

Yet this is not at all the conclusion of Kuyper in these Stone-lectures. Attend to the following: "But even so (notice the concession, G.L.) it is as clear as day that the supreme force in the central development of the human race moved along successively from Babylon to Egypt to Greece and Rome, then to the chief regions of the Papal dominion, and finally to the Calvinistic nations of the western Europe. If Israel flourished in the days of Babylon and Egypt,

however high its standard, the direction of the human race was not in the hands of the sons of Abraham but in those of the Belshassars and the Pharaohs. Again this leadership does not pass from Babylon and Egypt on to Israel, but to Greece and Rome. However high the stream of Christianity had risen when Islam made its appearance in the 8th and 9th centuries the followers of Mahomet were our teachers and with them rested the issues of the world. And though the hegemony of Romanism still maintained itself a short time after the peace of Munster, no one questions the fact, that the higher development, which we are now enjoying, we owe neither to Spain nor to Austria, nor even to the Germany of that time, but to the Calvinistic countries of the Netherlands and to England of the 16th century. Under Louis XIV, Romanism arrested the higher development in France, but only that in the French Revolution it might exhibit a ghastly caricature of Calvinism, which in its sad consequences broke the inner strength of France as a nation, and weakened its international significance."

We are not now criticizing Kuyper's presentation of Calvinism, but are merely attempting to make clear the position taken by the author of the Stone-lectures. In another article we will give our criticism of Kuyper's conception, his life and world view. And so we notice that with might and main Kuyper maintains that the Calvinistic line runs Egypt-Babylon-Greece-Rome-Islam-Romanism-Calvinistic Western Europe.

There is one more element that Kuyper brings into the picture. This is the element of the *commingling of blood*. The stand of the author is that in those countries where the one type of man is prominent there is less development than where there is a mingling of nations. On the contrary where there is an intermingling as in the cases of the sons of Shem and Japhet. These groups by commingling have crossed their traits with those of other tribes and thus have attained a higher perfection.

Now what, according to Kuyper, has this all to do with Calvinism? Calvinism has as its purpose the *development of mankind*. This is a fundamental thesis with the writer. Attend further to the following from his pen: "To this should be added that the history of our race does not aim at the improvement of any single tribe, but at the development of *mankind* taken as a whole, and therefore needs this commingling of blood in order to attain its end. Now in fact history shows that the nations among whom Calvinism flourished most widely, exhibit in every way this same mingling of races."

Our criticism of the foregoing we will reserve for a following issue. We now pass on to some of the

highlights of the other lectures. These lectures treat of the following subjects: Lecture II—Calvinism and Religion. Lecture III—Calvinism and Politics. Lecture IV—Calvinism and Science. Lecture V—Calvinism and Art. To the Lectures I and VI we have virtually called attention in the foregoing. Our evaluation of these Lectures will also have to wait until the following issues of the Standard Bearer.

The following is a synopsis of the content of these lectures.

In Lecture II, which treats of Calvinism and Religion, the author calls attention to the following questions. 1. Is religion for man's sake or is it for God according to Calvinism? 2. Is it mediate through the church institution as was the case with Rome, or is it immediate and placing us directly before the face and majesty of God and His law. 3. Is religion total or partial; does it include the entire man, or is it merely a matter of the will and feeling? 4. Is religion now since the fall normal or is it abnormal and soteriological? In passing we wish to remark, that we do not intend to call attention to every detail of this lecture. In the next issues we wish to call attention to elements of Kuyper's conception of man's personality which stand in direct relation to his conception of the progress of mankind and the presupposition of common grace.

In the third lecture we receive an insight into Kuyper's conception of a Calvinistic State. To quote Kuyper's own words: "In order that the influence of Calvinism on our own political development may be felt, it must be shown for what fundamental political conceptions Calvinism has opened the door, and how these political conceptions sprang from its root principle."

And again we quote: "This dominating principle was not soteriologically, justification by faith, but, in the widest sense cosmologically, the sovereignty of the Triune God over the whole Cosmos, in all its spheres and kingdoms, visible and invisible. A *primordial* Sovereignty which eradicates in mankind in a threefold deduced supremacy, viz., 1. The Sovereignty in the *State*; 2. The Sovereignty in *Society*; 3. The Sovereignty in the *Church*."

In the fourth lecture Kuyper develops what to his mind is the relationship of Calvinism to Science. (Wetenschap) We quote: "Four points of it only do I submit to your thoughtful consideration; first, that Calvinism fostered and could not but foster *love for science*; secondly, that it restored to science its domain; thirdly, that it delivered science from unnatural bonds; and fourthly, in what manner it sought and found a solution for the unavoidable *scientific conflict*."

The fifth lecture of this series treats of Calvinism and Art. Here we enter upon a discussion of the

beautiful, the field of aesthetics. The esteemed speaker considered the following points: 1. Why Calvinism was not allowed to develop an art-style of its own; 2. What flows from its principle for the nature of Art; 3. What it has actually done for its advancement."

A hasty perusal of this august list of subjects will convince us that that subject matter is very broad and lies in part outside of the range of the regular study of a minister. It will not be possible for us to enter into the field of aesthetics in our discussion. Neither will we be able to enter into the detailed questions of politics and science which are provoked by these lectures.

We gratefully acknowledge our indebtedness to Dr. Kuyper for having taught us much in these lectures. Especially is this true of the lectures on Politics and Art. This does not imply that we subscribe to all. It is especially on the points touching the place of Science and Politics in Kuyper's conception of history as the development of mankind that we take exception to. But of this we will write more later.

G. L.

Gleanings From Twenty Years *

At the close of the first installment of this article, it was concluded from the facts presented, that the cause of the Standard Bearer is losing supporters and that the paper is no longer read and received as it should be. If you would not wish to grant that on the facts thus far revealed, certainly the Annual meeting itself testifies loudly to that conclusion. On the night this paper was delivered there were 31 individuals present at the Annual meeting of the Reformed Free Publishing Society, publishers of the Standard Bearer. One of these individuals was not a member of our denomination. 8 were members of the Board. 5 were nominees for the Board (one nominee was not present). 7 were not members of the Society, while 4 joined that night; exclusive of the 7 who did not join. Actually, therefore, there were only 7 members (excluding Board and nominees, who almost had to be there) present at the meeting. There were 24 votes cast and 7 visitors. The Churches were represented as follows: 1 outsider, 1 from Roosevelt Park, 4 from Holland and the remainder from Fuller Ave. The other Churches were not even represented. None of the staff nor any of the ministers, with the exception of the speaker, were present. The speaker was the youngest individual present; beside him there was only one other young man present—below 35 years of age. The average age of the audience was easily above 55

years; as an approximation it could be set at 60. Certainly, these facts speak for themselves!

Finally, there are facts relative to policy which are revealing. It is possible to make a sharp distinction here between editorial policy and business policy, which is in itself a fact, as we show presently.

Editorial policy is determined by the purpose of publication of a paper. This purpose in respect to the Standard Bearer has been variously stated. The original purpose was: "to publish the views of the Revs. H. Danhof and H. Hoeksema relative to the common grace controversy." From thence it became, according to the Editor, "a semi-scientific theological paper." The purpose as stated in the constitution of the R.F.P.A. is as follows: "to propagate the Reformed principles applying them to every phase of life, along the fundamental lines of sin and grace and opposing all views repugnant thereto."

With respect to these purposes the following is clear. The original purpose has long ago been accomplished and has been, to a great extent, abolished. For the past twenty years, and under the able direction of the Rev. Hoeksema, the second purpose has been met and fulfilled. The purpose as stated in the constitution of the R.F.P.A. has been partly accomplished.

We make bold to express an opinion regarding this policy. If we bear in mind all the facts thus far presented we believe that the Standard Bearer could serve a much greater purpose than it does or has—and can do so within the limits of the stated purpose of this Society. The facts show that our Young People are not reading, that many families in our own denomination are not even subscribers, and that the interest of those who do subscribe and read is weakening through the years. It is true, of course, that the fault does not lie entirely with the Standard Bearer or its contents, but we feel that it does somewhat. The material is often written in a style that is way above the comprehension of even an intelligent adult. This is due, perhaps, to the special training or brilliant mind of the writer; but a man's greatness does not lie in the fact of being able to speak or write so that no one can understand him. True genius is to be able to impart one's great learning so that even a child can understand. Though we are not all geni we might strive for that ideal. To my mind, it is one of the great assets and virtues of the Rev. Hoeksema that he has the ability to present the deepest and most profound truth with lucidity and clarity. One can always follow a distinct and definite line in his material. There, certainly, is a lesson for us all; in all writing and speaking.

Another fact is that some of the articles read as though they were shaken out of the author's sleeve on dead-line date (as perhaps they were). Certainly

the result is not evidence of a conscious effort to put forth one's best work of which he may be justly proud.

But to get back to the point—the paper is not being read as it should. The question therefore arises: should the Standard Bearer serve the people or should the people serve the Standard Bearer? Should we have a paper without readers or a paper with readers? The answer is that we should listen to the popular appeal and the voice of our Young People. And, certainly, we should have enough confidence in those whom we have instructed for 20 years to know that the popular appeal does not mean a forsaking of principle.

The time has come to make "our doctrine a way of life." The particular times in which we live demand, and will continue to demand, an emphasis on practical Christian living. The true Church today, as will become increasingly evident, faces a crisis! She must be able to stand, not on theory, but on practice and alive in this world. Our Standard Bearer can and should lead the way.

This does not mean we have to compromise, or even depart from the expressed purpose or policy: "the propagation of the Reformed principles applying them to every phase of life, along the fundamental lines of sin and grace and opposing all views repugnant thereto." For twenty years we have had that propagation! For twenty years we have had the fundamental lines of sin and grace! For twenty years we have had the opposing of all views repugnant thereto! Now let's have the APPLICATION OF THEM TO EVERY PHASE OF LIFE! Let's digest what we have chewed for twenty years. The taste has been so sweet in our mouths—let's fill the body with this nourishment! We repeat, this does not mean a lowering of the standard but rather the opening of a great new field of development of the practical aspects of our precious heritage. It means the making of "our doctrine a way of life," and let's really bring it down to earth.

A cause for great joy, is that the policy is already shifting to that emphasis. The recent discussions of labor problems, social questions, education etc. indicate the beginning. Let's keep it up and emphasize it and include our Young People. Show, for example, that the pleasures of this world—movies, dancing, drinking, card-playing, etc.—are incompatible with our Reformed truth. That the way of peace for young and old, also in this life, is to acknowledge and love a Sovereign God. This should be done, of course, in language and form that they can understand; that all shall be left without excuse.

Once again this does not mean, that the Standard Bearer must be full of milk-sops. We have more confidence in the training we have given than that! Even

now much of the material is intelligible to a 14 year old e.g. the Meditations. At the same time, much is also beyond the comprehension of a high-school graduate; which is more than the majority of the readers boast. Especially is that true of articles with quotations in several languages and whose English is on the level of Ph. D. thesis. At times one receives the impression that the material is written for the ministers in our midst and for the 12 outside subscribers (whoever they may be) rather than for the 800 faithful supporters of the paper. Even a semi-scientific theological subject, if it has intrinsic worth, can be applied practically.

It is understood that the readers of a magazine should be spiritual enough to apply what has been written to themselves. The facts have shown that they evidently are not. Certainly, they cannot be blamed if they could not possibly have understood and followed what was written in the first place. But even assuming that they could read and follow (certainly this is true of a great majority of the material and what has been said previously is the exception; usually only an excuse or a matter of the mind of those not interested) and are, therefore, to be blamed, can we, even then, simply wash our hands of the matter by saying that they are not spiritual enough? That at the same time is a reflection on the training they have received and upon those who have given it. Wouldn't it be much better, for them and for the Church generally, to reach out to them and lead them back to the spiritual level upon which they should stand?

The business policy or financial facts present the greatest contrasts of the heights and depths of the past twenty years. Before we started gathering material we had expected to find the financial situation of the Standard Bearer the darkest chapter of all. We were overjoyed, therefore, to find it exceptionally bright at present. That it is so bright, is due greatly to the faithful, persistent, and untiring efforts of Mr. R. Schaafsma; who for the past 11 years has been the business manager. No man, without exception, has given so willingly of his time and efforts, to keep the Standard Bearer a going proposition. The beautiful part of it all is that he ascribes all the success to the blessing of God upon the project. That, is a vivid example of true love for God's cause. With one accord we should express sorrow that his health demands his resignation at this time. We feel assured that he shall be amply rewarded by his Father in heaven Whom he so faithfully served and acknowledged.

The facts are as follows. For the first time in its history the Standard Bearer can boast a balance on hand at the end of the year. Practically all subscriptions, excepting gifts, are being paid for; an unprece-

dented achievement. Many of the arrearages, accumulated through the years, have been collected. This has been accomplished through the agents and even more so by the continual reminders and introduction of an envelope system to facilitate collections. These are the bright spots.

The sad facts too, are numerous. There are only 800 subscribers to our Standard Bearer. There are only about a dozen subscribers outside of our own denomination. About one third of our own people are not getting the paper. Though the financial end of the paper is running smoothly now, there is no indication that it will continue to do so for it is usually in financial straits. The only way that it has stood in the past is through the immense and continual support of the Churches in the way of special collections. The usual situation is, that while 1,200 copies of the paper are printed and sent out, about 950, and often many less, are paid for; or about 250 and often many more are not paid for. Another sad fact, though not dealing directly with the Standard Bearer, yet a matter of concern to the R.F.P.A., is that there are about 3,300 books and pamphlets belonging to this organization collecting dust and moulding in the tower room of Fuller Ave. Finally, the point about the complete separation of Editorial and Business departments belongs to the category of sad facts.

To advance a bit of proof for some of the statements made, we should like to present the following:

COST OF PUBLISHING AND MAILING THE STANDARD BEARER

\$120 per issue or \$3,300 per year. (\$130 for printing each issue plus \$20 for mailing etc).

RECEIPTS FOR A TYPICAL YEAR:

1. \$2750—Subscription dues—1100 at \$2.50 per year (ordinarily if 1200 are sent out 1100 should be paying subscribers).
2. 50—Obituary, Anniversary etc. notices (an average of 2 per issue).
3. 50—Profit from Field Day (held each 4th of July).
4. 425—Special collections from Fuller Ave.
5. 375—Special collections from all other Churches.
6. 100—Gifts from societies, individuals, program collections, etc.
7. 75—Dues from members of the R.F.P.A. (in excess of subscription fee).
8. \$3825—Total receipts for a typical year.

Remarks: Many of the above figures were estimates used as a basis for conclusions. We were very happy to hear from the financial report delivered at the meeting that our cost figures were too low while our receipt figures were very accurate or too high with

only one exception. According to the financial report our figure of \$3300 representing the cost of publishing the paper was actually \$400 higher than cost for the past year. It is also higher than the figures given in the Treasurer's report for July 1943; cf. Standard Bearer, Volume 20, number 1, page 20. Item two in column of receipts was the only figure that was too high here, but inasmuch as it is negligible it can be omitted altogether with the same general result. Items 4 and 5 were determined as follows. From the published financial reports of our Fuller Ave. congregation of the last 7 years, we found that the total of all collections for the Standard Bearer amounted to about \$3000 or \$425 per year. This is an average of about 75 cents per family per year. This figure per family compared favorably with the average per family, for the same number of years, of our Holland congregation and we used it as our base. We estimated the number of families in our denomination, outside of Fuller Ave., to be about 500 and hence arrived at \$375 collected yearly from our Churches, (excepting Fuller Ave.) for which exact figures were not available, a total of \$800 from all our Churches (items 4 & 5). It was very encouraging, therefore, to note from the financial report delivered at the meeting that the sum of \$800 collected from our Churches was only a few dollars less than they actually received. According to the same financial report our items numbered 6 and 7 were both way too low. In our report these total \$175 while in the report as given at the meeting the total was about \$525; a difference of \$350 in favor of the Standard Bearer. It is also a known fact, that in the early years of our Standard Bearer receipts from special collections, Field Day, Gifts, programs, etc. were much higher than they are at present, also, that membership dues of the R.F.P.A. have, in past years, amounted to \$1,000 and more. The purpose of this lengthy explanation is to make clear that the situation is much less bright than we have presented it and further that our deductions, therefore, are certainly valid and warranted.

W. H.

(To be continued)

*Speech delivered at the Annual meeting of the R.F.P.A. on Thursday evening, September 14, 1944 in Fuller Ave. Comments and criticisms concerning any of the material here presented is invited.

NOTICE

Communications relative to renewal of subscriptions and membership fees or gifts should now be sent to Mr. Gerrit Pipe, 946 Sigsbee St., Grand Rapids 6, Michigan,

Contribution

MUSINGS ON MOTIVES

A motive is that within the individual which incites him to action. (Webster Dictionary).

Therefore any action of any individual has its origin in an idea translated into a motive and transported into action.

If a man is of a pure mind his motives as well as his actions will be pure, and, contrary; if a man is impure in mind, his motives and actions will be impure.

If an individual is religious, naturally his motives and actions will have a religious contour.

If a human being is financial minded; his thoughts, ideas, motives and activities will be centered in monetary.

If a man loves God, he will love his neighbor, and his motives and actions do express love, excluding self love.

If a chaplain carries his soldiers upon his heart, he will teach and preach to them in canteen, in the field when marching, at the soldiers' bunk, in the dining room, not always in words, yet always in deed and activities, and with his hand upon the sword, will speak or work to and for them when engaged in actual warfare, for his motives will express themselves in such pastoral activities.

If a soldier is patriotic in a Scriptural sense;—and the most are without knowing it—; his weapons will function as expressions of true motives producing sound battle activities.

All of these motives are pertaining to the individual.

Although how sweet, pure and loveable the motives of any individual may appear and be; yet, notwithstanding, they are objects to the *total depravity of mankind*.

Yet, after, all; and in fact there are but two kinds of motives. The one is heavenly, springing from the fountain of everlasting life, as founded in the Throne of God. The other is from below, darting from the well of evil, founded in everlasting death coming from Lucifer, king of death and despairing darkness.

These two motives represent the Everlasting Life and Everlasting Death, being the parents of all other motives coursing boundless through human life.

Every individual is endowed with ideas and thoughts, etc. representing *motives* and *activities*.

But, behold the change. . . . Mark the uncontrollable tendencies openly and secretly developing in our National Political Economy, which darken the heavens horizon of our erstwhile glorious individuality, which shone so brilliantly and alluringly in the bright hea-

vens of our all illuminating Christianity.

See perishing individuality melting and dissolving into the horrid, wicked, chaotic atmosphere of a God-dethroning collectivism. This collectivism is the original doctrine of Karl Marx, clarified by Nietzsche.

And behold and termble, for the entire world of our day, inclusive of glorious America, is bending over to a super-government headed and controlled by a Superman, casting away God bestowed *nationalism*, and falling into the putrid abyss of International Political Economy, in which splendid, manly Individualism with its golden vehicles of *motives* and *actions* must perish.

Jacob H. Hoekstra.

NOTICE

To those who wish an index for the last 10 volumes of the Stadar Bearer, please place your order now so ways and means may be found to have this done in a way most reasonable for all those interested.

B. Woudenberg, Sec'y.

839 Watkins St.

Grand Rapids 7, Michigan.

IN MEMORIAM

De Mannen Vereeniging van Bellflower wenscht langs dienen weg hun deelneming te betuigen met een van haar members, Mr. H. Pieksma, in het verlies van zijn beide ouders,

MR. en MRS. W. PIEKSMA

die in Redlands woonden, en plotseling weg genomen werden, slechts eenige dagen na elkander.

Moge de Heere die alle dingen doet in Zijn wijsheid de bedroefde familie vertroosten met Zijn genade en Geest.

John Bekendam, Secr.

Ds. L. Doezeema, Pres.

IN MEMORIAM

The Consistory of the Kalamazoo Protestant Reformed Church hereby wishes to express its sympathy with one of its members, Mr. Samuel Dykstra, in the loss of his

MOTHER

May our Lord comfort the bereaved and may they always be ready to say, that what the Lord does is well, for He is Good and infinite in wisdom.

Rev. H. Veldman, Pres.

Mr. P. Alphenaar, Clerk,