

THE STANDARD *Bearer* A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

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MEDITATION

Open Thou My Lips!

*O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth
shall shew forth thy praise.*

Ps. 51:15.

Open *my* lips!

The prayer of the psalmist stands very definitely in the singular.

Emphatically personal is this outcry, personal in its longings to proclaim the praises of Jehovah, in its profound sense of unworthiness and incapability of praising the Lord, in its consciousness of lips that are irrevocably sealed unless they be opened by the grace of the God of his salvation.

But the prayer and praise that leave our lips on Thanksgiving Day are a united expression of the whole Church.

On that day we gather to unite in grateful praise.

Unite, let it be clearly understood, not as a nation, but as the people of God. It is not the wicked and the righteous, unbelievers and believers, that meet on that day before the throne of grace to pour out their hearts before the Most High. Even though the occasion for this day is the end of the harvest; and even though it is true that the Lord caused His sun to rise over the righteous and wicked alike, and sent rain on the just and the unjust; even though, on this day we are, therefore, emphatically reminded of the truth that in this world there is something promiscuous in God's providential dealings with men, so that the righteous and the unrighteous have all things in common, and the latter even receive more of earthly riches and abundance than the former; yet, even on Thanksgiving Day the distinction between them that fear the Lord and

them that fear Him not is not obliterated, but clearly maintained, and it is only the former that unite in praise.

To give thanks one must not taste *things*, but the favor of the Most High.

And for the wicked this is impossible.

They taste many things, but not the grace of God. Even in their prosperity the favor of Jehovah is not upon them: His face is against them that do evil. Even in their abundance they receive no token of the lovingkindness of the Lord toward them, for He is angry with the wicked every day, and when they prosper He sets them on slippery places, that they may be cast down into destruction. Even on Thanksgiving Day, though it be proclaimed by the President of our nation, it remains true, that there is only one access to the throne of grace, and that the way into the inner sanctuary leads along the blood-sprinkled way, through the veil, that is the flesh of Christ that was broken for us. But in that Christ the unbeliever has no part. Even on Thanksgiving Day, the sacrifices of the wicked are an abomination to Jehovah, and it is only the prayer of the upright that is His delight. And even on that day of national rejoicing, the wicked but open their lips to eat and to drink, but the prayer that their lips may be opened unto the praise of the Lord is foreign to them.

How, then, shall they praise Him Whose favor they do not taste?

How shall they give thanks to Him, Whose truth they hold under in unrighteousness, and for Whose glory they care not? Is it not true that even on Thanksgiving Day:

"Thus speaks the Lord to wicked men:

My statutes why do ye declare?

Why take my covenant in your mouth,

Since ye for wisdom do not care?

For ye my holy words profane

And cast them from you in disdain."

And again:

"Consider this, who God forget,
Lest I destroy with none to free;
Who offers sacrifice of thanks,
He glorifies and honors Me;
To him who orders well his way
Salvation free will I display."?

But unite we do, as God's people in Christ, the Church of the living God, in order that "the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God." II Cor. 4:15.

All unite!

Unite so, that in oneness of heart and mind, in the one Christ, by the one Spirit, without a single discordant note, we sing the praises of the God of our salvation!

The contents, the ground, and the object of our thanksgiving must be such that not one of the saints, no matter what his station and position in life, no matter what his earthly way and lot may be, is excluded.

It must at once embrace and transcend all things! Embrace all things, for the Lord reigneth over all.

On Thanksgiving Day, nor on any other day, you dare not find the reason for your praise in an abundance of things, in earthly prosperity and joy. You dare not let mere *things* be the measure of your gratitude and adoration. For, if you do, you must needs divide your "things" and your experience into two classes, and pile them into two heaps. And you will regard the one heap, the pile of what you consider "good things," with a certain carnal joy, and conclude that "you have still many reasons to be thankful," while, with regard to the "evil things," you will desperately attempt, at least for one day, to forget them, and to smother the murmur of rebellion that rises in your heart.

And how small the pile of "good things" then becomes for some of us!

Who, even in the midst of the present unreal prosperity is able to forget that it is war-prosperity? Who as we take our places at the family table covered with abundance, can fail to see the empty place of husband or son or brother, that is, perhaps, even on that very moment, in the heat of battle, home-sick, miserable, in fear of death, utterly perplexed because of the "hell" that is let loose all about him? Who, even for one day, can be oblivious of the place that is left empty for always, concerning whom we received the formally cold, but for us heart-rending report: "We regret. . . killed in action"? . . .

And where, then, if "things" are the ground of your thanksgiving, is your joy and peace?

No, we shall not divide our experience into two piles, but our thanksgiving shall embrace *all things*!

But while it embraces all the experiences and vicissitudes of this present life, it shall transcend them all!

For with them all, we shall lift up our hearts to the God of our salvation, and understand and acknowledge that all these things come to us, not by chance, but by His Fatherly hand!

Peace and war, joy and sorrow, prosperity and adversity, plenty and scarcity, sickness and health, life and death,—they are all His work!

And considering that they are the work of the God of our salvation, we know that they are good, though we understand it not.

And knowing that He doeth whatsoever He hath pleased, we are prepared to praise Him in all His works!

And so we unite in thanksgiving!

Yet, if we are thus to embrace all things in our adoration, if we are thus unitedly to transcend them all, and rejoice in the lovingkindness of our God, in the midst of the sufferings of this present time, we may well humble ourselves before the throne of grace, and implore Him for His mercy!

For who is able unto these things?

Before we *unite* in thanksgiving, we may well enter our closet, and each in his own position utter this intensely *personal* prayer:

O Lord, open thou my lips!

That I may show forth Thy praise!

Such is the purpose of the prayer for the opening of our lips.

To be sure, the shewing forth of the praise of God is also the result of that grace whereby our lips are opened, the fruit of it. And the psalmist, no doubt, also intends to confess that he is incapable and unworthy of shewing forth the praise of Jehovah, unless the Lord by His irresistible grace opens his lips.

Yet, that which is the fruit of God's grace is also the purpose of the psalmist's prayer, the end which he has in view, and which he longs to attain, so that the prayer may be rendered thus: "O Lord, open thou my lips, in order that my mouth may shew forth thy praise!"

And this, to shew forth the praise of the Lord, is true thanksgiving!

Let us beware, lest our deceitful heart substitute anything else for this shewing forth of His praise!

Beware, lest you imagine that in any sense you could remunerate Him for all His benefits to you-ward! What would you give Him? He is the ever blessed God, the fulness of all good, the absolutely self-sufficient Lord. And He is the sole Proprietor of the whole universe, the Creator of the heavens and of the earth. The silver and the gold, the cattle on a thousand hills,

the earth and its fulness, belong to Jehovah! Always he speaks:

"I will receive from out thy fold
No offering for my holy shrine;
The cattle on a thousand hills
And all the forest beasts are Mine;
Each mountain bird to Me is known,
Whatever roams the field I own."

And again:

"Behold, if I should hungry grow,
I would not tell My need to thee,
For all the world itself is Mine,
And all the wealth belongs to Me;
Why should I aught of thee receive,
My thirst or hunger to relieve?"

Beware, lest your evil imagination makes you feel pious and religious in the thought that you give Him something when you offer Him a dime of His own dollar! Beware, lest you become abominable in His sight, when you foolishly would pour a little drop back into the Fountain from which your cup was and always is filled! You can give Him nothing! He is always the Giver, never the Receiver! He is the ever flowing Fount of all good. Even your thanksgiving is His gift to you, not yours to Him! And as soon as you have rendered thanks unto His Holy Name, you are already under obligation to fall back on your knees, and thank Him for your gratitude!

No, but to shew forth His praise,—that alone is thanksgiving!

His praises, you understand, are His marvelous virtues!

God is GOD!

And He is the LORD!

And He is GOOD!

He is the implication, the fulness of all infinite perfections! He is a Light, and there is no darkness in Him at all! He is pure and infinite goodness! He is righteousness and holiness, truth and faithfulness, love and grace and mercy and lovingkindness, justice and power and might, the only Potentate of potentates, the only Lord, Who dwelleth in the light no man can approach unto, the Creator and Redeemer, Who calls the things that are not as if they were, and Who quickeneth the dead!

And this PRAISE He reveals to us in many praises in all the works of His hands!

He reveals them in creation, for the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handiwork; day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge! He reveals them in all the works of His providence even in this cursed world, in which all things are made subject to vanity, and we lie in the midst of death. He reveals His

praises in rain and sunshine, in devastating floods and scorching heat, in abundance and in famine, in our prosperity and adversity, in peace but also in war, in health but also in sickness, in joy but also in sorrow, in life but also in death! He reveals them to His people centrally in the death and resurrection of His only begotten Son, through Whom He revealed His everlasting love and purpose of salvation, and in the light of Whose cross and glory you may be assured that all other things shall be added unto you, and shall work together for your salvation!

That is His praise revealed in many praises!
Shew them forth!

Point to them! Include them all! Exclude none of them! Do not put your "things" on two piles to praise Him for some of them, but point to them all, and confess that they all show forth His praise, and that they all reveal that the Lord is good, that His mercy endureth for ever! Say it to Him in adoration and worship! Tell it to your children, to one another! Declare it in all the world, before a boasting and vaunting and wicked world that speaks of chariots and of horses, that the Lord is God, that He reigneth over all. . . .

And that He is ever GOOD!

Unto this ye were called!

He called you out of darkness into His marvelous light, that you might shew forth His virtues!

His marvelous praises!

Lord, open thou my lips!

How else shall we ever declare His praise?

O, how utterly impossible this is without His grace! For, on the one hand, with our natural eye we do not see His praise. We see war and destruction, madness and confusion, suffering and death; we see that the wicked prosper, and that the righteous suffer, and that the ways of the Lord are not equal. . . .

And, on the other hand, we are carnal and sinful by nature, and are neither worthy nor capable and willing to shew forth the praises of the Most High! We are inclined rather to rejoice in things, and to rebel when things are against us!

Thanksgiving, the shewing forth of the praise of Jehovah, is the fruit of His marvelous grace in the Beloved!

Lord, open thou my lips!

My lips, yes, but from within! Open my heart, whence are the issues of life! Work mightily, constantly, irresistibly, in my inmost heart, that I may have eyes to see thy glory and thy everlasting mercy over me in all things, a will to adore thee, joy in Thee!

Then, and then alone my mouth shall be opened!

To declare Thy glorious praise!

For ever!

H. H.

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CONTENTS

MEDITATION—

- OPEN THOU MY LIPS 97
Rev. H. Hoeksema

EDITORIALS:—

- I TOLD YOU SO100
GRAND RAPIDS CHRISTIAN HIGH101
THE EVANGELICAL & THE REFORMED CHURCH.....101
EXPOSITION OF THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM.....102
Rev. H. Hoeksema
DE LES DER HISTORIE105
Rev. G. Vos
JEPHTAH'S VOW108
Rev. G. M. Ophoff
CALVINISM ACCORDING TO KUYPER'S STONE LECTURES — A CRITIQUE112
Rev. Geo. Lubbers
FREEDOM OF THE PRESS IN PEACE AND WAR.....114
Rev. C. Hanko
THE KENOSIS OF PHIL. 2:7115
Rev. J. Blankespoor
CONTRIBUTION117
Mr. H. A. Van Putten
THE NESTORIAN CONCEPTION OF THE NATURES OF CHRIST118
Rev. H. Veldman

EDITORIALS**I Told You So**

The caption of this article expresses in brief the contents of an editorial in *The Banner* of Nov. 10, 1944. Basing his remarks on a sentence or two of very incomplete and hardly trustworthy information concerning the “discharge” of Dr. Schilder that appeared in a Dutch publication printed in London, England, the Rev. H. J. Kuiper reminds his readers of the warning he sounded against inviting the well-known brother from the Netherlands to speak in the Christian Reformed Churches at the time when he was visiting here, because of his alleged unsound views regarding common grace. The editor calls attention to the fact that, in his own opinion, he is now finally justified in his former action against Dr. Schilder, though at the time he was severely criticised for it. And he rather loudly shouts: I told you so!

The history of the last twenty years convinces me more and more that a sound course in Christian ethics would by no means be superfluous for some of the leaders in the Christian Reformed Church. A frantic determination to defend their own little church and their own pet notions, and a stubborn obsession with respect to the common grace theory, appear to distort their ethical judgment. The above mentioned editorial is a clear illustration of the truth of these statements.

Let us briefly consider the arguments of the editor.

He tries to justify his action against Dr. Schilder five years ago on the basis of a very scant report concerning the doctor's discharge from the school in Kampen recently. Five years ago Dr. Schilder was invited by some Christian Reformed laymen to deliver some lectures here. He was a professor at the school of the “Gereformeerde Kerken” in The Netherlands in good standing. Those churches are sister churches of the Christian Reformed Churches in this country. There was no charge against Dr. Schilder. There was not even the slightest indication that he denied “common grace.” Yet, the professors of Calvin and some of the ministers of the Christian Reformed Church, of whom I have good reason to believe that the editor of *The Banner* was one, wrote him a letter in which they asked him not to come at that time. This I have from Dr. Schilder himself. When the brother ignored this appeal, and decided to come anyway, the editor of *The Banner* did not hesitate to throw suspicion on Dr. Schilder's good name. The brother came. He preached and lectured. He never denied common grace. He never spoke against the “Three

Points." He did not attempt to create unrest in the Christian Reformed Churches. *The Banner's* suspicions were proved to be false. The editor's fears were proved to be unfounded. The action of the editor was certainly contrary to Christian ethics. Now, it should be plain to all whose judgment is not distorted that whatever may have taken place at the present time, and even if it should be true that Dr. Schilder is deposed as professor because of unsound views concerning common grace, cannot possibly justify the editor's action of five years ago. At that time he condemned a brother unheard, and he cast suspicion on the name of a man in good standing in his own churches, against whom no one lodged an indictment of unorthodoxy.

But, secondly, what reason does the editor have to say: I told you so? A very scant report in *Het Vrije Nederland*. Can the editor be sure that Dr. Schilder is "ontslagen"? He cannot. Even if he should be "discharged," does the editor know that this action was taken on the basis of Dr. Schilder's denial of "common grace"? He knows nothing about it. And, finally, does the editor have data to prove that, if the "discharge" should be a fact, it was justified? Not at all. He takes it all for granted. And in order to be able to give his own action of five years ago a semblance of justification, he drags the name of Dr. Schilder through the mud once more.

One unethical action may seem to justify a former action of the same character. But two unethical actions do not make one good one.

The editor concludes with a: "Let us pray."

H. H.

Grand Rapids Christian High

In connection with a contemplated drive for funds to enlarge the Grand Rapids Christian High School, I was asked to write an editorial of recommendation.

I realize that it is somewhat extraordinary to comply with this request. For, first of all, it concerns a purely local matter, and that, too, one that has no interest for our churches in general. And *The Standard Bearer* is not a local paper, but meant for all our people. Besides, it is difficult to avoid the impression that this article is written for propaganda purposes. And our publication is not interested in any form of propaganda or advertisement.

Nevertheless, lest I should leave the impression that it is my opinion that our Protestant Reformed people are not concerned in this drive for funds, and that they have no responsibility to shoulder the financial

burden connected with the Christian High, I promised to write a few lines about it.

The Grand Rapids Christian High School is in need of new buildings. Its enrollment of 280 pupils in 1920 has increased to an enrollment of 756 at the present time. In the last ten years the enrollment has doubled. Plans have been made for a complete building program at an estimated cost of three hundred thousand dollars.

A relatively large number of these pupils belong to the Protestant Reformed Churches of this city. In fact, I was somewhat surprised to find that they constitute twelve and one third percent of the total enrollment.

It is very plain that our people are responsible to make room for their own pupils, and to provide equipment for them.

And, although, as is well known, it is my conviction that our Protestant Reformed people should complete their own system of education, they certainly are under obligation to support the school that educates their children.

And they should never refuse to shoulder the financial burden connected with this responsibility.

H. H.

The Evangelical and The Reformed Church

To us, who cannot conceive of any organic union of churches except on the basis of a common confession of faith, and who take this fundamental requisite seriously, it is somewhat amazing that the General Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States could, in 1932, unanimously adopt the Plan of Union, which we published in the last issue of our paper, and thus virtually, subject to the approval of their classes, accomplish the merger of the Church they represented with the *Evangelical Synod of North America*.

Yet, thus it was decided. We read (*An Examination and Criticism*, p. 89):

"The Rev. J. Stewart Hartman then moved that the General Synod adopt the plan of Union as read by Dr. Leonard, and that it be sent down to the Classes of the Reformed Church for their approval. After the motion had been properly seconded. Dr. George W. Richards addressed the General Synod on the reasonableness and advantages of the proposed union. The Plan of Union was further discussed.

"The vote was taken and the plan approved by a rising unanimous vote."

Now let us examine the implication of this action by the Synod.

What did it adopt?

They adopted the declaration, and asked their various classes to adopt the same, that "The Reformed Church in the United States and the Evangelical Synod of North America (are) under the conviction that they are in agreement on the essential doctrines of the Christian faith as contained in the Old and New Testaments and as defined in their respective standards of doctrine."

They adopted the statement: "We acknowledge and accept the historical confessions of the two Churches as the doctrinal basis of union."

What do these declarations imply?

They imply that the General Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States, as early as 1932, expressed that: 1. That the Augsburg Confession, Luther's Catechism, and the Heidelberg Catechism, are in agreement on essential doctrines. 2. That henceforth the Reformed Church in the United States adopt these three standards as their doctrinal basis.

And this means that the Reformed Church in the United States permitted itself, in 1932, to be swallowed up by the Evangelical Synod of North America. (This was the official name of the Evangelical Church before 1934).

The merger was the story of the cat and mouse: the mouse became part of the cat. Officially, the Reformed Church in the United States became the Evangelical Synod of North America.

That this is true is evident from the following.

The Evangelical Synod of North America has its beginning in a gathering of six "Evangelical" pastors in Missouri. These founded the "Deutschen Evangelischen Kirchenverein des Westens." This gathering took place Oct. 15, 1840. Out of this "German Evangelical Denomination of the West" developed, after a few decades, the Evangelical Synod of North America. And as to the Confession this denomination adopted, we quote the following from *Kleiner Evangelischer Katechismus*, p. 69:

Die Deutsche Evangelische Synode von Nord Amerika, als ein Teil der Evangelische Kirche, versteht unter der Evangelischen Kirche diejenige Kirchengemeinschaft, welche die heiligen Schriften des Alten und Neuen Testaments für das Wort Gottes und für die alleinige untrügliche Richtschnur des Glaubens und Lebens erkennt und sich dabei bekennt zu der Auslegung der Heiligen Schrift, wie sie in den symbolischen Büchern der lutherischen und reformierten Kirche, als da hauptsächlich sind: die Augsburger Konfession, Luthers Katechismus und der Heidelberger Katechismus niedergelegt sind, insofern sie miteinander übereinstimmen; in ihren Differenzpunkten aber hält sich die Deutsche Evangelische Synode

von Nord Amerika allein an die darauf bezüglichen Stellen der Heiligen Schrift, und bedient sich der in der Evangelischen Kirche hierin obwaltenden Gewissensfreiheit."

Which means: 1. That the doctrinal basis of the Evangelical Synod of North America before the merger consisted of the Augsburg Confession, Luther's Catechism, and the Heidelberg Catechism in as far as they are in agreement with one another. 2. That freedom of conscience is allowed in regard to those doctrinal points in which those Confessions disagree.

Now, we recall that the Confession of the Reformed Church in the United States was the Heidelberg alone. It is evident, therefore, that according to the plan of Union, adopted by the General Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States in 1932, the latter simply shifted to the doctrinal basis of the Evangelical Synod of North America.

I consider this point of principal importance. And I am amazed that the General Synod of 1932 unanimately adopted this Plan of Union.

In our next issue I must elaborate on this somewhat.

H. H.

The Triple Knowledge

An Exposition Of The Heidelberg Catechism

PART TWO

OF MAN'S REDEMPTION

Lord's Day XII

8.

Christ Our Intercessor. (cont.)

The question is: how must we conceive of this intercessory prayer of our Lord as our High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary? How does He intercede for us at the throne of grace?

In answer to this question, we must, on the one hand, eliminate from our conception of this heavenly mystery all that is earthy, temporal, and imperfect. Even though Scripture necessarily employs figurative language, and speaks in earthly language, to aid our understanding of the heavenly realities, yet we must never forget that all these terms and symbols have a deeper, spiritual, heavenly meaning. There is, of course, no material throne in heaven, on the which there is seated a visible manifestation of the invisible God, and before which our Saviour appears occasion-

ally to utter a prayer in behalf of His redeemed people. Christ, let us remember, is Himself the person of the Son of God, the second Person of the Holy Trinity, God of God, in His divine nature one in essence with the Father and the Holy Ghost, eternally dwelling in the Father's bosom. And in His glorified human nature He has the most intimate fellowship with the Father. He took our human nature into the most intimate communion with God that is possible, and the union of the divine and human natures in Him is rooted in and rests in the divine Person. It is, therefore, not partial but perfect and complete; not temporal and occasional, but everlasting and constant; not mediate but immediate. Hence, all that is imperfect, temporal, earthy, mediate, must be eliminated from this communion of Christ with the Father, and from its expression in the intercessory prayer of our Lord in our behalf. And, on the other hand, we dare not speak about this sacerdotal intercession as if it were a mere figure of speech, without a corresponding reality, but we must rather insist that it is highest and deepest reality: as a petition it is the most perfect and highest possible realization of true prayer; and as intercession it is the richest and ultimate expression and function of His mediatorial office of High Priest.

Two aspects, therefore, there are to this intercessory prayer.

As *prayer* it is directed to God. And it is highest reality. Even as with us prayer signifies that we seek and find the Father, that we exercise fellowship with Him, that we speak to Him in adoration and petition, that we open our hearts and pour them out before Him, and that we approach Him as the overflowing Fount of all good, in order that we may drink from that Fountain and be satisfied, that we may receive His grace and Spirit; so the prayer of Christ as our High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary is a real seeking and finding of the Most Blessed, fellowship with Him, a pouring out of His Mediator's heart before Him, to receive from Him and out of Him all the fulness of the blessings of salvation for His people. Only, while with us this fellowship with God, this drinking out of the eternal and overflowing Fount of all good, is very much in part and imperfect, with Christ it is perfect and constant. Constantly He stands in the attitude and relation of prayer to God, and constantly He receives from the Father the full answer to His prayer.

And as *intercession* it is directed to the salvation of His people as its end. In this prayer the Lord is ever conscious of His inseparable union with the elect. Not for one moment is this prayer concerned with Himself alone. He prays for His own, for those whom the Father has given Him. He prays as the High Priest over the whole house of God, as the representative of all those for whom He shed His lifeblood on the accursed tree, as the Head of the Church, which is His

body. And He prays in order that He may bestow the fulness of grace and blessings He receives from the Father upon His people.

It is strictly a mediatorial prayer.

We must remember the relation which He sustains to His people, and the relation in which He, with His people, stands to the Father.

He and His people are inseparably united. They are one. He is their Head, they are members of His body.

And this unity is both legal and spiritual, forensic and organic.

His people are, so to speak, a legal corporation of which Christ is the Head in the representative sense of the word.

But they are also a living spiritual body, united with Christ as their Head in the organic sense.

Only when we bear this in mind can we somewhat understand the necessity and significance of Christ's intercession with the Father in behalf of His people.

As their Head in the representative sense of the word He was authorized to accomplish all the work of salvation for them, in their stead, and in their behalf, and with it to appear before the Father as the ground of His intercessory prayer. In this capacity, our only High Priest took upon Himself the guilt of our sins, and in the hour of wrath and judgment bore them away on the accursed tree. As such He could enter into death in their stead, and blot out all their sins, yea, obtain for them eternal righteousness, the right to all the blessings of salvation, eternal life and glory. Our righteousness, our right to redemption and liberation from the power of sin and death, and to the glory of God's eternal tabernacle, is never in us, it is always and only in Him. We lie in the midst of death, Apart from Christ, we are not righteous for one moment. On the contrary, we are guilty, and worthy of eternal damnation. We must never overlook or distort this truth. Perhaps, we are inclined to imagine that, when once we are justified by faith, we have a certain ground of righteousness in ourselves. But it is never so. Christ is and remains our only righteousness for ever. If it were possible that we could even for one moment be separated from Christ as our Head in the juridical sense of the word, that moment we would be damnable in our sin and guilt. However, this is for ever impossible, because this relationship between Christ and His people is rooted in sovereign election. Christ's perfect obedience, therefore, is our only righteousness. Hence, on the basis of that obedience He also represents us as our Intercessor with the Father. On the ground of His perfect righteousness, merited for us, He can say: "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." John 17:24. And

this implies that on the basis of His merits He prays the Father for all those spiritual blessings that are indispensable to bring them where He is, and to place them in a position to behold His glory.

It is true, this prayer also becomes our own, but this is possible only through Him, in His name, and on the basis of His perfect right to intercede for us.

But even so all is not said.

If we do not say more we create the impression that Christ's intercession simply means that He petitions the Father to bestow all the blessings of salvation upon us, but that with the actual bestowal of these blessings our High Priest has nothing to do. Upon His prayer God makes us partakers of His grace without Christ. The river of the water of life flows directly from the throne of God, apart from Christ, into the New Jerusalem.

But this is not according to Scripture.

It belonged to the calling of the High Priest under the old dispensation, not only to sacrifice and pray for the people, but also to bless them.

The river of the water of life flows from the throne of God *and of the Lamb*. It is true, indeed, that Christ promised that He would pray the Father, and He would send us another Comforter, that He might abide with us for ever, John 14:16. It is equally true, however, that He said that He Himself would send the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, unto us, John 16:7. And on the day of Pentecost it is, indeed, He, the exalted Christ, that pours out the Spirit, Acts 2:33. He is the water of life, which we must drink; the bread of life, which we must eat unto eternal life. He is made unto us wisdom from God, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

Hence, we receive all the blessings of salvation out of Him.

He bestows them upon us.

He imparts Himself to all the elect. For He is their Head, not only in the juridical sense of the word, but also in the spiritual, organic sense. He is the vine, they are the branches. He is the Head, they are the members of His body. There is a spiritual bond that unites them to Him. Hence, they live out of Him, and He, as the quickening Spirit, lives in them. All the spiritual blessings they need as sinners, guilty and damnable, corrupt and defiled, dead through trespasses and sins in themselves, to become living children of God, liberated, justified, sanctified, and glorified, flow from Him unto them. He is ascended up on high, leading captivity captive, to give gifts unto men, Eph. 4:8. He it is that gives to His Church in the world "some apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers. For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Eph. 4:11, 12. For he "fills all things." Eph. 4:10. And He it is, too, out of

Whom we receive "even grace for grace." John 1:16. And "as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." John 1:12. And so, the grace of salvation in all its implications, redemption and forgiveness of sins, adoption unto children and eternal righteousness, sanctification and preservation, perseverance and glorification, reaches us, flows unto us from the Christ, the Son of God come into the flesh, crucified and slain, raised from the dead, and exalted in the highest heavens; Christ, the resurrection and the life, our Intercessor with the Father!

But they come unto us from Him *as the Mediator*.

The only and deepest Fount of all the blessings of salvation is the triune God. Out of God, but through Christ as the Mediator, the stream of the water of life reaches us.

God is the limitless Ocean of life and bliss; Christ is the reservoir that is constantly filled from the divine Ocean; and out of the reservoir Christ, the river of the water of life flows into the Church. "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."

Of God, through Him, and unto Him, are all things, also the Christ in all the riches of His salvation.

In the light of all this, we can somewhat understand the intercessory prayer of Christ. He prays the Father, and upon His prayer He receives the Spirit and the power to send His Spirit into the Church. He prays the Father, He, as the Son of God in the exalted human nature; and upon His prayer He Himself receives all the spiritual blessings from God, "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," in order that He may bestow the blessings of salvation upon His people, and "fill all things."

Thus it is constantly.

And thus it will be for ever. The living stream of the water of life flows out of God, through Christ, into the Church.

Thus the intercessory prayer is very real.

It is the perfect prayer. It is characterized by none of the imperfections that cleave unto our prayers. We know not what we should pray for as we ought; Christ knows all our needs.

It is a constant prayer. Constantly, Christ stands in the attitude of prayer before the Father, that out of Him as the Fount He may receive all the blessings of grace to bestow them upon His people.

It is a prayer that is based on strictest justice and perfect righteousness, the righteousness of His own perfect sacrifice.

And it is always, and constantly heard!

9.

Our Eternal King.

In its explanation of the name Christ, "that is anointed," the Heidelberg Catechism finally points to

Christ's eternal kingship. He is not only our chief Prophet and Teacher, and our only High Priest, but "also our eternal King, who governs us by His Word and Spirit, and who defends and preserves us in (the enjoyment of) that salvation He has purchased for us."

The words in parentheses do not belong in the text. The original reads: "und bei der erworbenen Erlösung schützt und erhält," that is: "and defends and preserves us in the redemption obtained for us."

Christ, then, according to this confession, is the King of His Church. As such He rules over her and in her by His Word and Spirit, preserves and defends her in the midst of the world over against all the forces of darkness, and leads her unto the glory prepared for her before the foundation of the world. Unto this end, He is also King over all things, even over all the powers of evil, all principalities and powers are made subject unto Him. He has received a name above all names, and all power in heaven and in earth. And He uses His mighty power for the preservation of the elect, and unto the coming of the day of His return and the establishment of His eternal kingdom in glory.

He is King over His Church by grace.

But He is also the Lord of lords, and the King of kings by His power.

This glorious and comforting truth is denied by the Chiliasts, or Pre-millennialists.

According to them, Christ is not the King of the Church, but merely her Head in the organic sense. He is the King of the Jews, of the nation of Israel, and as such He must still be revealed in the future. This national Israel, the kingdom-people proper, rejected Him in His first advent. He came unto His own, but His own received Him not. On the contrary, they crucified the Lord of glory, their King. Because of this the Jews are for the time being rejected. They are in captivity, in exile, in the diaspora, scattered over the face of the earth among all nations. And during this period that the kingdom-people are in the diaspora and God does not deal with them unto salvation, He gathers another people out of the Gentiles. This other people, gathered in the interim of Israel's captivity, is the Church, the body of Christ, the Bride of the Lamb, that will be taken up in heavenly glory when it is complete. This Church is not the kingdom of Christ. On the contrary, the Jews are and remain forever the royal people of Christ, and Christ is their anointed King. And when the Church shall have been gathered and the fulness of the Gentiles shall have come in, Christ shall once more turn to His own, gather them out of all nations, cause them to return to their own land, the Old Testament land of Canaan, and rule over the house of Jacob and on the throne of David for ever.

We cannot in this connection refute this theory in detail. Fact is that it is based on a fundamentally

wrong conception of the relation between the old and the new dispensation, between the Old and the New Testament, between the Church and the kingdom of heaven. As to this last, there can be no question about the fact that the only kingdom of which the New Testament ever speaks is the kingdom of heaven. And that the relation between this kingdom and the Church is such that the members of the latter are also the citizens of the former, cannot be subject to doubt. Concerning the kingdom of heaven, the Lord taught the people in parables. Thus He explains that the kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man who sowed good seed in his field, but while men slept an enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat. And He interprets that the field is the world, the good seed are the children of the kingdom, and the tares are the children of the wicked one. Surely, according to this, the children of the kingdom are not the Jews, but the believers out of all nations, for "the field is the world." The enemy that sowed the tares is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world, so that nothing can be expected after that harvest; and the reapers are the angels. And when the time for the harvest is ripe, "the Son of man shall gather out of his kingdom (established in all the world) all things that offend and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Matt. 13:37-43. Surely, these righteous, these children of the kingdom, are not the Jews, but the elect gathered by Christ's word and Spirit out of all the nations of the world. The Church is also His kingdom, and He is our eternal King! H. H.

De Les Der Historie

(Psalm 78; Derde Deel)

Tot hiertoe hebben we geluisterd naar het getuigenis des Heiligen Geestes in dezen psalm, zooals het ons verhaalt van de groote daden Gods die Hij aan Israel gedaan heeft, dezelve nederleggende in Zijn Wet en verhalende door de redenen Zijnsmonds.

Zie, zoo zingt de zanger Israels, we hebben die redenen en die wet gehoord. Ook zullen we er voor zorgen, dat onze kinderen er van hooren, opdat die ze vertellen mogen aan hunne kinderen tot in verre geslachten. En dat zal gedaan worden in biddend opzien tot God, opdat Hij ons en onze kinderen genadig zij; en zij niet worden gelijk onze vaders in de woestijn die Zijne werken vergaten en terugkeerden van den strijd. Hunne roeping was om met God groote dingen te doen en den vijand Gods te verdoen. Doch, gelijk de kinderen Efraïms, zij keerden weder, zij keerden

om, ten dage des strijds.

En nu volgt een beschrijving van het groote kwaad dier vaders, die gezondigd hebben tegen God temidden van Zijn wonderdaden.

Het vreeselijk karakter van hunne zonde was dit: "Zij vergaten Zijne daden en Zijne wonderen, die Hij hun had doen zien."

Er zit een woord in dezen zin, dat vreeselijk is. En dat woord is: "vergeten". Vergeten is vreeselijk. Vooral en bovenal als men iets van God vergeet. Als men iets vergeten heeft, bestaat zooiets voor U niet meer. Iemand negeren is de grootste wonde en het vlijmendste leed hetwelk ge iemand kan doen toekomen. En als die "iemand" dan de groote God is, dan halen wij Zijn groote grimmigheid ons op den hals.

Dat had het historische Israel gedaan. Dat deden de vaders waarin de genade Gods niet werkte.

Wat had God gedaan? Luistert en we zullen het weer vertellen. Tot in alle eeuwigheid zult ge het hooren, zoodat ge kunt jubelen, jubelen.

God had wonder gedaan in Egypteland voor de vaderen, in het veld Zoans. Een groote schaar der goddelooze Egyptenaren zat hen op de hiel. In de verte zagen ze de wagens en de ruiters van al de kloekhelden die joegen en hijgden om de Israelieten in te halen. Ze hoorden van uit de verte het gerommel en het gedonder van wapentuig en raderen der wagens van Farao.

Toen is hun de schrik om het hart geslagen; toen zijn ze heel bang geworden, want, eerstens, konden zij niet snellijk wegvlieden met al die ouden en vrouwen en kinderkes; en, tweedens, vlak voor hen was de Schelf-zee. Van beide zijden verrees het hooge gebergte. Waar moesten zij heen?

Uit hen schreeuwen van Mozes tot God kunnen we opmaken, dat zij dien man Gods verweten hebben hetgeen onbillijk was. Doch Mozes riep tot God. En God zeide: Zeg den kinderen Israels dat zij voortrekken!

En het wonder Gods werd vertoond. God kliefde de zee en zij ontkwamen uit den handen der goddeloozen. Erger nog: de goddeloozen kwamen om in de golven van het roode meer.

Wat een wonder Gods! Het water der zeën deed Hij staan als een hoop. En de wolk Gods ging voorop. Er was ook een weinigje waterdamp en waterspatten. Er moest toch een doop zijn dier kinderen Gods; een doop van Mozes den man Gods!

En de Heere voer voort hen te leiden in de huilende wildernis. De wolkkolom des daags en de vuurkolom des nachts, alzoo ging de liefde Gods voorop in barre zandwoestijnen. Hebben we hier geen Oud-Testamentische schaduwen van Christus Jezus, den Heere?

Die sprake wordt duidelijker als er dorst komt en honger onder de arme zwervelingen. Voor dorst van menschen en beesten kliefde de Heere de rotsen al die

lange jaren. Overal waar zij stilhielden was er een Rots die gekloofd werd en het water vloeide voort ter verfrissching. Al die rotsen waren een profetie van de fonteynen des heils die in Christus tot in alle eeuwigheid geopend zijn. Als er honger was onder de schare dan verzochten ze den God die hen leidde van dag tot dag. Dan spraken ze kwalijk van God en spottende hebben ze gevraagd: Zou God een tafel kunnen toebe-reiden in de woestijn? Door dit goddeloos vragen hebben ze God verbitterd, want de vraag die krenkend was openbaarde hun hart. Zij begeerden spijze *naar hunnen lust*. Het openbaarde, dat zij meer dachten aan de bevrediging van het kwade hart, dan een verzadigd worden van God, hetwelk alléén heil spelt voor een schepsel naar Zijn beeld geschapen.

De vuile spot en goddeloosheid braakt U tegen in de schampere vraag. En huns ondanks moeten ze spreken van Gods wondere daden. Ze zeiden: Hij heeft de rotsteen geslagen zoodat er water kwam. Welnu dan: kan Hij ons ook brood bereiden tot spijze en vleesch naar onze lusten? Hoe vreeselijke boosheid!

Al die dingen deden ze, doch de Heere heeft het gehoord en werd verbolgen. Zouden wij den Heere niet rechtvaardigen in dezen? Zoudt ge niet verwachten, dat Hij de gansche vergadering van Jakob verslinden zou in grooten toorn? Ja, dat zouden we verwachten. Doch God is geen mensch. Straks zullen wij zien, aan het einde van den psalm, waarom God nog voortvoer om Zijn wonderen te doen, temidden van een geslacht, dat Hem vertoornde door hunne daden. Terwijl zij nog murmureerden, en terwijl zij nog spotten, opende de Heere de deuren des hemels, nadat Hij de wolken geboden had, en o wonder! er regende een zachte regen van hemelsch brood op de goddelooze vergadering. Verworpenen hebben hemelsch brood gegeten en de godvergetenen onder hen zijn verfrist geworden met hemelsch water. Ze hebben de wonderen Gods gezien gelijk als Betsaida en Chorazin. Zij zijn tot den hemel toe verhoogd geworden, ook al is het ontzettende feit geschiedenis geworden, dat zij terneder geslagen zijn in de barre woestijnen. Hij regende het Man en gaf hemelsch koren. Leest het maar: het staat er. O het ware beter geweest als ze met de Bata-vieren gesidderd hadden voor Thor in de bosschen van Noord-Europa, dan hemelsch koren te eten en hemelsch water te drinken. Gedoopt te zijn met den doop van Mozes en dan ter helle te varen: het is erg!

Toen heeft de Heere wonder op wonder gestapeld. Hij beval den oostenwind de kracht Gods openbaarde zich in den zuidenwind en daar kwamen ze aan: de massa's van kwakkelen. De Heere gaf hun vleesch, kostelijk vleesch tot spijze, want niets is te wonderlijk voor den God onzes heils.

We zien de goddelooze Israelieten na dezen; zij hebben het geruisch van de vleugelen der kwakkelen

gehoord; straks zien zij het nedervallen in hoopen. Toen zijn ze aan het eten gegaan, doch niet met mate. God vergetende, hebben zij zich zat gegeten aan het heerlijke vleesch van vogelen.

Hebben zij zich toen voor God op den grond geworpen in groote vernedering en berouw over hunne daden? Wel neen! Er staat van dit geslacht, dat zij, al etende, nog niet vervreemd waren van hunnen lust. De booze wortel van goddeloosheid zat hen nog in het hart terwijl zij aten. En daarom was het resultaat dat "Gods toorn tegen hen opging, dat Hij van hunne vetsten doodde, en de uitgelezenen Israels nedervelde."

Doch het gaf niets.

Want: "Boven dit alles zondigden zij nog!" De wonderen Gods die spraken tusschen hunne tanden en in hun maag hebben hun geen goed gedaan, want zij geloofden niet. Later, veel later, zegt Paulus, dat zij verworpen werden alhoewel zij Gods daden zagen en hoorden en ervoeren, omreden het niet met geloof gemengd was.

Toen is tot hen een kwaad van God geschied. Hij "deed hunne dagen vergaan in ijdelheid". Dit, geliefde lezer, is het uiteindelijke deel van den goddelooze op aarde. Men mag dan lid der kerk zijn en de groote daden Gods zien en hooren: men verslijt zijn dagen in ijdelheid. Dat wil zeggen, dat Uw gansche leven gelijk is aan een ademtucht, aan een mist die ras verdwijnt. Dan zit er geen bestand in al Uw streven en werken. Ge kunt dan niet komen tot eenig goed doel. Ge werkt wel en ge spreekt en leeft wel, doch er wordt één, slechts één element gemist in Uw werk en leven en dat één is God! Dan is men den naam waard, die vreeselijke naam: Goddeloos! En het einde van zulk een leven, iederen dag, ieder uur, iederen hartslag is dan ook verschrikking! Dat staat erbij. De verschrikking is de rechtvaardige soldij van het ijdele. Dan vreest ge voor Uw schaduw; dan springt van schrik op bij het hooren van een vogeltje; dan zijt ge bang veel en velerlei. Vraagt het aan de goddeloozen: zij hebben immers hun leven in hun rechterhand? Laat ze dan voor zichzelf zorgen. Maar hoe kan dat in dit vreeselijk heelal? Er zijn millioenen van boozen, van duivelen, van mij vijandig zijnde elementen! Waar moet ik heen? En zoo zegt het ook Paulus, vele jaren later: "met vreeze des doods bevangen al hun leven." Zaaït ijdelheid temidden van Gods wonderen en ge zult verschrikking oogsten. Ge behoeft niet eens te wachten totdat ge dood zijt en geworpen wordt in den poel des vuurs. De voorsmaak van eeuwige schrik is nu Uw deel al, als ge gebonden zijt in boeien van een ijdel leven.

En, let wel, het is God die het doet. Dat merken we in wat er volgt. "Als Hij ze doodde, zoo vroegen zij naar Hem!" Denkt echter nu niet, dat dit zoeken en vragen naar God zuiver was. Later staat er van dit zoeken en vragen: "Zij vleiden Hem met hunnen

mond en logen Hem met hunne tong!" Zij deden het slechts omdat zij bang van Hem waren. Het was een slaafsche vrees, welks wortel is de haat. God doodde hen. God had geen welbehagen in hen en Hij vergramde Zich tegenover dit geslacht. Later zegt David van dit volk: Zij zijn een volk dwaiende van harte en zij kennen Mijne wegen niet. Daarom heb Ik gezworen in Mijnen toorn zoo zij Mijne rust zullen ingaan!

En zoo doet het de goddelooze mensch altijd. Hij wil zonder God leven en zich verlustigen in een ijdel leven, zonder God. Dan komt verschrikking over hun zien en gaat God hen doodden. Doch dan roepen zij tot God en zoeken Hem met gevele. Zelfs in hun doodsnood zijn ze niet eerlijk en spreken zij niet recht van God. En waar zit hier de reden? Luistert: de psalmist zegt het: "hun hart was niet recht met Hem en zij waren niet getrouw in Zijn verbond." Als Uw hart niet recht is met God, dan staat ge krom tegenover Hem, dan mint ge Hem niet, doch dan haat ge Hem. En als er dan toch een woord van gebed over Uwe lippen komt, dan is dit "vleien" en "liegen" tegen God.

Hoe moeten we nu dit alles rijmen met wat nu volgt? Want nu komt er een vers dat spreekt van Gods barmhartigheid en van het verzoenen der ongerechtigheid? Bovendien, we zullen het moeten verklaren, dat het drinken uit den rotsteen en het eten van manna en kwakkelen een zegen geweest is voor Israel! Leest slechts vers 40 van Psalm 145 en ge zult het probleem zien! Ik schrijf dat vers over: "Zij baden, en Hij deed kwakkelen komen en Hij verzadigde ze met hemelsch brood." In Psalm 105 is het enkel lieflijkheid en zegen voor ditzelfde volk Israels! Hoe moeten wij dat rijmen?

Ik moet nu wel even vooruitloopen in den psalm en U wijzen op de verzen 67-72. Daar is de oplossing.

We zouden het volgende er van willen zeggen: 1. God verwierp de tent Jozef's en den stam van Efraim verkoos Hij niet. En hoewel we weten, dat dit allereerst gaat over het vraagstuk: uit welke stam zal de Messias komen? toch ligt hierin ook de gedachte, dat alles niet Israel is dat uit Israel voortkwam. Er was een verworpen bolster rondom Zijn van eeuwigheid geliefd volk. En tot dien bolster behoort, eerst, het vleeschelijk Israel die nooit bemind waren; en, tweedens, het vleesch van Gods eigen volk. Al dat vleesch haat God en Hij toornst er tegen. 2. Maar Hij verkoos den stam Juda, den berg Sion, dien Hij liefhad. Daar hebt ge het feit der verkiezing. Daar hebt ge het lied van eeuwige liefde. En om dat beminde volk gaat alles. En dat beminde volk heeft Hem geloofd en geprezen ook dan als de vergadering van Korach, Dathan en Abiram spotte met God. De liefde Gods woonde in hen. 3. Die uitverkiezing zit vast aan de verkiezing van David, den beminde Gods bij uitnemendheid, en dat is Christus. Die werd geroepen om de herder van het volk Gods te worden in de historie.

Dat was ook een van de redenen waarom de mindere David in de historie verschijnt: hij moest een schaduw vooruitwerpen van den Beminde Gods, Jezus Christus, onzen Heere. 4. En die Herder heeft Zijn schapen dan ook geweid naar "de oprechtheid Zijns harten". Dat kwam uit ook in het tijdperk, dat we hierboven behandelen. Temidden van het uitgieten van den toorn Gods was er een volk ten allen tijde, dat vóór God sprak en met Hem wandelde. En om den wille van dat volk, en nu keeren we terug tot de plaats waar we pauzeerden: "Doch Hij, barmhartig zijnde, verzoende de ongerechtigheid, en verdierf ze niet, maar wendde dikwijls Zijn toorn af, en wekte Zijn gansche grimmigheid niet op; en Hij bedacht dat zij vleesch waren, een wind die henegaat en niet wederkeert!"

En die barmhartigheid vindt steeds, onophoudelijk en exclusief het volk Israels die van voor de grondlegging der wereld bemind zijn en in die liefde aan Jezus gegeven zijn. (Joh. 17) Vanwege dien Jezus worden Uwe zonden verzoend en wordt ge geleid langs zeer stille wateren naar het harte Gods. G. V.

Jephthah's Vow

As was said, Jephthah's right to wage war with the Ammonites was implicit in his calling. He had to wait with drawing the sword until the Lord by His Spirit should raise him up. And Jephthah did wait. But in the meantime he could request the Ammonite king to justify, if he were able, his invasion of God's country. He did so. The question he put to the king 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. For it was a question of right before God, and for such a question the Ammonite king was ill prepared. But the king had an answer. He said to the messengers sent by Joshua: "Because Israel took away my land, when they came up out of Egypt." Jephthah made plain to the king that his claim to the contested territory did not even wear the appearance of truth, that, in his warlike expedition against the people of Israel, he was pitted against the only true God and that therefore his sin was great. But the king refused to be dissuaded. "Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah and he passed over Gilead, and Manasseh, and passed over Mizpeh of Gilead, and from Mizpeh of Gilead he passed over unto the children of Ammon." As the location of Mizpeh is a matter of plain conjecture, Jephthah's course, though plain to the contemporaries of the sacred writer, cannot be made out by us. This matters little, for it is not important. Either just before he set out or while on the march, "Jephthah vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said, if thou shalt without fail deliver the

children of Israel into my hands, then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth out of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt-offering."

Let us now attend to this vow. The matter of Jephthah's sacrifice has always divided opinions in ancient as well as in modern times. First there is the question: What did Jephthah actually vow or promise? There is the view that the vow could comprehend only human beings and not animals. This view reposes on the following considerations. 1. In order to be effected by the vow, the creature had *to go forth to meet* Jephthah. A dog will go forth to meet and greet his master, but such behavior is not very characteristic of cattle, that is, of animals that could be offered up for a burnt-offering. 2. To qualify for the vow, the creature had to come forth out of the very doors of Jephthah's house. The vow therefore could include only human beings, unless Jephthah was living in the same house and under the same roof, was thus domiciling, with his cattle. But this was not likely. 3. It is inconceivable that Jephthah thought it probable that cattle would come forth to meet him on his return and not the members of his own family—his wife (were she still living) or daughter, or his servants. 4. To qualify for the vow, the creature, according to the text in the original, had to be capable of rational action. The vow was that "Whatsoever cometh forth out of the doors of my house to *meet me*. . . ." Now the Hebrew verb rendered *to meet* also has the meaning *to call*, to praise, *magnify*, *laud*, *celebrate*. This Hebrew verb is *kara*. Doubtless, the text should have been rendered, "Whatsoever cometh forth to celebrate my victory," and thus not, "Whatsoever cometh forth *to meet me*. . . ." And this for the following reasons. a) *Kara to meet* is to encounter, to meet in a hostile sense. Jephthah, certainly, was not looking forward to a meeting of this character from whatsoever should come forth out of the doors of his own house. What he could reasonably expect and what he doubtless was also looking forward to is that some member or members of his own household would come forth to cry out in his hearing their great joy with which the tidings of the victory filled them. If this was his expectation, and doubtless it was, the vow takes on meaning. Jephthah knows that victory will awaken great rejoicings among his people and among the members of his own household. They will meet him with acclamations and gladness. They will receive him with timbrels and dances. He will be celebrated and praised. But he also knows that victory belongs only to God. And so, in the fulness of his love, which would give to God that which belongs to Him, as the author of the victory, he makes his vow. He promises that if God will grant him victory, then that which goeth forth from the

doors of his house, to meet him with acclamations of gladness, shall be Jehovah's.

The above arguments have weight. Certainly the view that, according to the intentions and expectation of Jephthah, the vow included, besides human beings, also animals is too improbable. This view may therefore be dismissed. Yet there are interpreters, who, in their effort to lay a firm foundation for the view that Jephthah did not slay his only daughter, try to make plain from the text that the vow did include animals as well as human beings. It is maintained that the expression "shall be the Lord's" is used in the Scriptures of persons only and that the word "burnt-offering" in the statement of Jephthah, "and I will offer it up for a burnt-offering" is used only of animal sacrifices, that thus when Jephthah said, "Whatsoever cometh forth to meet me. . . . *shall surely be the Lord's*" he had reference to persons and that when he said, "I will offer it up for a burnt-offering" he had reference to cattle. The view then is this: Jephthah foresaw that cattle so well as human being and human beings so well as cattle might come forth out of the doors of his house to meet him. Foreseeing this, he made in his vow provision for both. Thus, what Jephthah, according to this view, said as to his intentions is this, "Whatsoever cometh forth out of the doors of my house to meet me. . . . *shall surely be the Lord's if it be a human being, or if it be an animal suitable for the altar, I will offer it up for a burnt-offering.*" As it turned out, it was a human,—it was his daughter and only child that went forth to meet him and not one of his cattle. The first clause therefore went into effect. Thus, he did not slay her, he shed no blood, as he would have been obliged to do, had it been one of his cattle that had gone forth out of the doors of his house to meet him. But he did with her according to the first clause of his vow, "It shall surely be the Lord's." He set her apart for God, so that, all her life she remained unmarried. In this way these interpreters think they succeed in establishing that Jephthah was not obliged to slay his daughter, namely, in the way of showing that the vow covered animals so well as human beings and that it prescribed for each a distinctive treatment. Now it is certain, as we shall see, that Jephthah did not slay his only child and daughter. However, it cannot be proven in this way. It is not true that the formula "it shall surely be the Lord's" was used only for persons and not also for animals. There is the passage in Ex. 18:12, 13. There it is commanded that, when Israel shall come into Canaan, every first-born shall be set apart unto Jehovah, both the firstlings of every beast "which thou hast", and the first-born of man. The firstlings of such animals as were suitable for the altar had to be offered in the sense of slain. The first-born man, however, must not be slain but redeemed with money.

Thus, what these interpreters want to pass off on us as exegesis is simply an expedient for the extinction of a difficulty. It thus remains certain that Jephthah's vow, according to his own intentions, foresight, and choice of words, covered only human beings and not also animals. We have fortified this view with cogent reasons, to which another can be added. Let us notice once more the language of the vow. "Whatsoever cometh forth from the doors of my house to meet me. . . . *shall surely be the Lord's*, and I will offer it up for a burnt-offering". The impression that this language makes upon the unbiased reader is that Jephthah resolved and was prepared to make some *extraordinary* sacrifice, thus a sacrifice that precluded cattle. What was to be consecrated had to come forth out of the very *doors* of his own house, thus had to come forth not merely from his fields or estate. Whatever came forth to meet him would *surely* be the Lord's. This language, certainly, is too emphatic if the vow had reference also to animal sacrifices. As a God-fearing Israelite, Jephthah, it must be supposed, regularly offered up burnt offerings. There would therefore have been little meaning in his binding himself by a sacred vow unto the offering of animal sacrifices. Israel's law prescribed and required them. The more certain it is therefore that the vow covered only human beings. We even go a step further. The text suggests that in vowing that vow Jephthah had reference in particular to his daughter and only child. For he promised to set apart for the Lord whatever would come forth out of the doors of his house. That might have reference to his daughter alone, if his wife no longer lived. For it was a promise to consecrate unto God one taken from his very hearth, thus a confident and daily companion. The language of the vow therefore might even exclude servants. Whatsoever would meet him, would *surely* be the Lord's. Also this language may indicate that he binds himself to consecrate to God someone very close and dear to him, in all likelihood his only child. "It shall surely be the Lord's. . . . I will offer it up for a burnt offering." There is next this question. Just how was Jephthah's daughter to be the Lord's, through his actually slaying her and thereupon placing her dead body upon the altar of burnt-offering that stood in the outer court of the sanctuary in Shiloh or was she to be the Lord's in some other way? The former view has been defended with vigor but with lack of insight into the Scriptures and in ignorance of the character of Jephthah by literalists of ancient times and by interpreters of this day mostly of the liberal school. "The implicit designation to God of whatever came forth out of the doors of his house points unmistakably," it is said, "to a human life as the devoted thing. Too ready from his acquaintance with heathen sacrifices and ideas to believe that the God of Israel will be pleased with the kind of offerings by which

the gods of Sidon and Aram were honored, feeling himself as the chief of the Hebrews, bound to make some great and unusual sacrifice, he does not promise that the captives taken in war shall be devoted to Jehovah, but some one of his own people is to be the victim. The dedication shall be all the more impressive that the life given up is one of which he himself shall feel the loss. . . .” The writer whose words we now quote goes on to say, “The insufficient religious intelligence of the man, whose life has been far removed from elevating influence, this once perceived—and we cannot escape from the facts of the case—the vow is parallel to others of which ancient history tells. . . . We see in his vow a fatalistic strain; he leaves it to chance or fate to determine who shall meet him. There is the assumption of the right to take into his hands the disposal of human life; and this, though most confidently claimed, was entirely a fictitious right.”

Such is the appraisal of liberal commentators of the man Jephthah and his vow. And all that they say of the man is true, if he actually slew his daughter and offered up her body for a burnt-offering.

The question is then whether he was guilty of this? Statements occur in the narrative that unmistakeably indicate that he was not. The daughter asked that she be left alone “two months that I may go up and down the mountain, and bewail my virginity.” Thus, she is to live—a virgin life. If not, it would have been unnatural to ask for a space of two months to weep over her virginity instead of over her life. If she was to die, she would have remained at home with her father instead of departing with her companions. But she departed to lament not that she must die as a virgin but to bewail her virginity. At the end of two months she returned to her father, “who did with her according to his vow which he had vowed: and she knew no man.” So reads the text. Had she been put to death, the narrator would have said, “And he presented her as a sacrifice on the altar, and she died having known no man.” Or, what is more likely, he would have refrained from making any mention of her virginity and simply narrated her death, if, according to the vow, she had to be the Lord’s through death, if her death alone could satisfy the requirements of the vow. Thus, as here death is not indicated, she did not die, was not slain by her father, unless the narrator is to be charged with the failure to speak of the transaction in such terms as rightly describe it. But we deal here not with man’s word but with the word of God. Of the two clauses: “And he did with her according to his vow,” and, “And she knew no man”, the second is explanatory of the first, is thus explanatory of the vow, of the language of the vow, “It shall be the Lord’s and I will offer it up for a burnt-offering.” Thus the sentence, “And she knew no man,” tells us how Jephthah offered up his daughter, to wit, not by slaying

her but by bringing her under the necessity of living a virgin life. The view that Jephthah actually put his daughter to death results from the unwillingness to explain the language of the vow, “And I will offer it up for a burnt-offering,” in the light of the explanatory sentence, “And she knew no man.” The latter sentence is changed into, “And she *had* known no man,” (pluperfect) and is thus made to indicate *not* that Jephthah’s daughter lived a virgin life in answer to the requirements of the vow but that, when her father slew her, she *had* known no man. But if this were the meaning of the notice, it could just as well have been omitted. For if she was slain, her being a virgin at the time of her death, had no significance whatever. It is hard to understand why interpreters insist that the maiden was slain, despite the fact that the narrative plainly indicates the contrary, unless it be that they want to make out those Old Testament worthies for heathen. If Jephthah slew his daughter he was verily a heathen and an Israelite only in name. If he were a true Israelite, he could not vow to bring a sacrifice by blood with a human being as the victim. Such a doing was an abomination to God. It was forbidden and denounced by Israel’s law.

In the 27th chapter of Leviticus, Israel’s law legitimized such dedications of persons to God. The whole chapter is taken up with the subject of the setting apart for God human beings. But the law there also prescribes that such persons could or should be redeemed, that is, freed from the obligations of the vow by a price paid to the priest. Why did Jephthah not follow this prescription? The only possible answer is that it did not cover his vow. He had vowed that his daughter should live a virgin life *for the rest of her days*. The uniqueness of the vow is indicated by its language. “I will offer it up for a burnt-offering.” The burnt-offering symbolized the worshipper’s complete dedication to God through the consumption by fire of the dead body of the animal that had been slain.

Jephthah’s doing—his vowing a vow—was in harmony with the fact that in the period of the judges Naziritism flourished and was widely defused. The Nazarites were persons, who through the vow that they took upon them, presented to the people the image or symbol of its sacred and priestly calling. The Nazarites were raised up by the Lord for this purpose, especially in times of apostacy. Says Amos to backsliding Israel, “And I have raised up your sons for prophets and your young men for Nazarites. Is it not even thus, O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord” (Amos 11:2). Jephthah’s vow was not the Nazarite vow. But it had this in common with that vow that it placed his daughter under the necessity of presenting herself to her people as an image of whole-hearted consecration to God. In her case this had to be accom-

plished—so it appears from the sacred narrative—through celibacy (the state of being unmarried).

There is also this question. Should Jephthah have taken it upon himself to obligate his daughter to perpetual virginity without her knowledge and consent? The answer that the thought was furthest from his mind that it would or might be his only child who would come forth to meet him, will not do. If this were true, Jephthah was a rash, stupid and thoughtless man. But this he was not. The words that the maiden and Jephthah exchange after the latter's return, suggest that he knew that the vow was expressive of her aspirations and would therefore meet with her approval, that thus he was not putting her under obligation from which she would shrink. "And it came to pass, when he saw her, that he rent his clothes, and said, Alas, my daughter! thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me: for I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back. And she said unto him, My father, if thou hast opened thy mouth unto the Lord, do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth; for as much as the Lord hath taken vengeance for thee of thy enemies, even of the children of Ammon. And she said unto her father, Let this thing be done for me: let me alone for two months, that I may go up and down upon the mountains, and bewail my virginity, I and my fellows. And he said Go." Let us observe that, though Jephthah told his daughter that he had opened his mouth and could not go back, thus disclosed to her that he had vowed a vow and must perform it, and indicated by his profession of grief that the vow concerned her, he did not tell her just what the obligation was under which she had been brought by his vow. Yet her instant reply seems plainly to indicate that she knew,—knew that she had been placed under the necessity of living a virgin life. "Let me alone", such was her response, "that I may bewail my virginity." Also to be observed is her apparent willingness, nay, eagerness, that her father do with her according to his vow. Not one word of protest fell from her lips, not one word of regret. Her father was in tears, but she, at the moment, was far from tears. She behaved as a daughter who had gotten her way with a reluctant parent. That she bewailed her virginity was but natural and must not be construed as indicative of a rebellious spirit and of a maiden bowed down with grief caused by the consideration of what the vow implied for her.

May we not then imagine the situation to have been this? God had given it in the heart of this maiden to be to her people, in those troublesome times, an image of its calling. She had revealed her desire to Jephthah. But he was reluctant to give her up; for she was his only child. Should she live out her life as a virgin, he would be without offspring to perpetuate his name

and place among God's people. Then the Lord called him to lead Israel in the war of liberation against the Ammonites. The Lord would grant him the victory he knows. And he is deeply grateful, for he loves God, His cause, and His people. So he has need of giving some extraordinary expression to his gratitude. He is mindful of the aspirations of his daughter and only child. So with her before his mind, and as aware of her wish, he vows his vow. If the Lord without fail will deliver the enemy into his hands, then whatsoever cometh out of the doors of his very house to meet him, shall surely be the Lord's. He made no mention of her in his vow. But the omission was deliberate. He purposely gave his vow the generality that it must have in order to include all the members of his family. For he knew not the Lord's will. But the Lord then spoke. His only child went forth to greet him on his return. That was to him the finger of God. Indeed, he had opened his mouth and could not go back. He told her so. He divulged to her the sorrow of his heart. She understood. He need say no more. Without a moment's hesitation, she assumed full responsibility for his vow. For she had prepared herself for that moment. He was sorrowful. But his grief did not bespeak a soul vexed with God's way with him. His sorrow was but natural.

There is nothing strange in this imagining. It is suggested by the words of Jephthah's daughter and not rendered unlikely by the reactions of Jephthah, consisting in his rending his clothes at the sight of her approach. If this reaction be taken as an expression of surprise, we are shut up to the view that, despite the definiteness of the vow, it had not occurred to him that his daughter was also included. Now this, of course, for some reason not revealed to us was possible. Fundamentally it makes little difference, as long as it be maintained that the vow was not rash and indicative of stupidity and unpardonable thoughtlessness. Certain it is that, were we in the possession of the knowledge of all the attending circumstances, it would appear that this vow was anything but rash. This much is plainly revealed: Jephthah actually did not slay his daughter; he set her apart for a virgin life in obedience to his vow and thus did not go back when he saw the finger of God pointing to her, his only child. This is all we need to know definitely. This is fundamental. For herein lies the chief significance of this Old Testament worthy. Jephthah is the judge of the vow, who consecrated his only child to a virgin life, and thereby provided the Israel of his evil day with a most remarkable image or symbol of Israel's calling. His doing also made a profound impression on his people, as is evident from the notice that "it was a custom in Israel that the daughters of Israel went yearly to praise or celebrate (not "lament". The original has "praise) the daughter of Jephthah four days in the year."

G. M. O.

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

(2)

KUYPER'S METHOD

In our former article we quoted rather at length from Kuyper's Stone-lectures. We may therefore assume in this article that there remains no doubt in the mind of the reader as to what his conception really was; what he deemed to be a Calvinistic interpretation of the history of mankind—mankind as such apart from the work of the Wonder of Grace in Christ Jesus.

The conception developed in these lectures and the conclusions arrived at as it touches Calvinism is both negative and positive. Negative, in that it is asserted, that Calvinism is not to be understood in an exclusively confessional, ecclesiastical-dogmatical sense. And positively, it is asserted that Calvinism is a movement in the entire domain of life: religious, political, scientific and artistic. And that not merely in this sense that this indicates the entire orb of the life of the regenerated and enlightened christian, but that this is the case with *mankind as such!*

In this article we wish to institute an investigation to see what *method* Kuyper employs in these lectures. To be sure, when we speak of *method* we do not mean the purely formal method in which Kuyper would make the subject matter clear of these lectures. We refer here to the question of what is known by scholars as "methodology", that is, the science of method used by one to arrive at and to ascertain the truth of the *underlying presuppositions*. In this case the premise that the history of the world and of mankind must be judged to have followed the course of: Paganism, Islamism, Romanism, Calvinism, Western European civilization—San Fransico!

Speaking of "method" it will be well to remember that there are in the last analysis but two methods that can be followed. The one is to have *Scripture be our guide*. The other is to disregard the Word of God altogether, and to merely reason from an assumed premise by inference or observation, or to reason from the facts of experience. It stands to reason that if the first method is employed one will have to proceed exegetically-synthetically, that is, he will have to study all the testimony of Scripture having bearing on a certain matter and come to conclusion and judgments from the data of Scripture.

The question is therefore in order: Does Dr. Kuyper in attempting to establish the underlying presupposition of his conception of Calvinism proceed exegetically-synthetically? If so, does he apply this rule consistently to the very end, or does he reason

from the facts of experience and draw certain fundamental conclusions from these when he draws the lines of Calvinism as set forth in these lectures? To seek to give an answer to these questions will be the burden of this writing.

It is an interesting fact, that the Holy Scriptures shed a great deal of light on the history of what it calls "the nations". In the prophecy of Daniel this is especially the case. Both in the image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream (chapter 2) and in Daniel's vision of the "Four Beasts" (chapter 7) we see the development of the world-powers in their Antichristian character. And again the Holy Spirit shows John on the Isle of Patmos the vision of the "beast" coming up out of the "sea" and also of the "beast" coming up out of the earth. Rev. 13. And again this is referred to and explained in Rev. 17. And the lines of nations there given is: Seven nations. Babal-Assyria-Babylon-Persin-Greece-Rome-One not yet! This is the beast with the seven heads and ten horns!

Now it must be borne in mind that we are not criticizing Kuyper's conclusions, but we are interested merely in the question of Kuyper's *procedure* to come to his conclusions. However the foregoing paragraph does shed a great deal of light on whether Kuyper's conclusions are Scriptural.

This question becomes all the more to the point when we remember that according to Kuyper it is Calvinistic to see mankind develop in the three-fold relationship, the entire orb of life. 1. Man in relationship to God. (Calvinism and Religion) Lecture II. 2. In relation to fellow-man (Calvinism and Politics) Lecture III. 3. In relationship to the world, creation (Calvinism and Science and Art) Lectures IV, V.

Once more I ask, does Kuyper in these lectures develop this conception exegetically-synthetically? By consistently applying to *fallen* man in his primordial relationship to God what the Scriptures teach and what the fathers of Dort had set down in confessional statements, statements concerning the things that are revealed that must soon come to pass, and from that Scripture teaches concerning the nature of these "nations"?

One might object to these questions and say: Kuyper had performed all that groundwork in other works, and he is merely giving here the product of that investigation. He might say: don't expect a man to do everything in a few lectures. If this should be the case, then in a way, this investigation can cease here. We would merely stand before the question whether the *conclusions arrived at* were Scriptural. This by the way, is the task awaiting us in the next instalment on this subject.

However one would wish to judge of this matter, the fact is that one looks in vain for any semblance of an attempt in these lectures to proceed from the

plain teaching of Scripture. That is an undeniable fact. Nowhere does Dr. Kuper show that his conclusions are in accord with Scriptures, neither does he show that the positive line, of which he speaks, is in harmony with the plain teaching of the prophecies in this matter.

We would here discontinue our discussion were it not for another matter in these lectures worthy of notice. It also touches the matter of Kuyper's Method.

To understand this point it should be borne in mind that Kuyper has one underlying thesis which lies back of his entire conception and presentation of Calvinism. It is what he denominates as: Common Grace. He brings this to play when he discusses fallen and unregenerate man's relationship to God. Thus the matter must be stated. He is not speaking of the regenerated man in Christ Jesus. In unregenerated mankind there is the sense of the Divine, the Seed of religion. This has a positive content. There is something well-pleasing to God here in their endeavors. This is due to the restraining influence of common grace. p. 63.

Again this principle of Common Grace is brought to bear in the relationship of man to man, that is, in the field of Politics and Social life. Also here there is a restraining influence. The Magistrate is there because of sin and is really a gift of Common Grace. And finally in the last relationship of man's relationship to the world. Also here the great and noble endeavors of men are by reason of the restraint of sin due to Common Grace.

The question has been asked repeatedly by interested laymen: "Where did Dr. Kuyper obtain this teaching?" We believe that the following quotation from Lecture IV on "Calvinism and Science" p. 159, will shed some light on this question, and we believe also demonstrates Kuyper's method. We quote: "Now I proceed to consider the dogma of 'Common Grace', that natural outcome of the general principle, just presented to you, but in its special application to *sin*, understood as corruption of our nature. Sin places us before a riddle, which in itself is insoluble. If you view sin as a deadly poison, as enmity against God, as leading to everlasting condemnation, and if you represent a sinner as being 'wholly incapable of doing any good, and prone to all evil' and on this account salvable only, if God by regeneration changes his heart, then it seems as if of necessity all unbelievers and unregenerate persons ought to be wicked and repulsive men. But this is far from being our *experience in actual life*. (I underscore, G. L.) On the contrary, the unbelieving world excels in many things. Precious treasures have come down to us from the old heathen civilization. In Plato you find pages that devour you. Cicero fascinates you and bears you along by his noble tone and stirs up in you holy sentiments. And if you

consider your own surroundings, that which is reported to you, and that which you derive from the studies and the literary productions of professed infidels, how much there is that attracts you, with which you sympathize and which you admire. It is not exclusively the spark of genius or the splendor of talent, which excites your pleasure in the words and actions of unbelievers, but it is often their *beauty of character, their zeal, their devotion, their love, their candor, their faithfulness and their sense of honesty*. (I underscore, G. L.) Yea, we may not pass it over in silence, not unfrequently you entertain the desire, that certain believers might have more of this attractiveness, and who himself among us has not been put to the blush occasionally by being confronted with what is called the "virtues of the heathen."

"It is a fact, that your dogma of total depravity by sin does not always fully tally with your experience in life."

What does this quotation from this lecture teach us as to the author's approach to the question of Common Grace? Of the possibility of a good world-life in the threefold relationship of God, fellow-man and the world?

Briefly stated the method is: the approach of *experience*. Practical life does not tally with questions 5 and 8 of the Heidelberg Catechism, neither with Romans 3:10-18 and Ephesians 2:1-3. What is the conclusion? This. I must *learn* to tally my experience with God's verdict? Not at all. The good that we experience is better than the Scriptures say. Hence an explanation must be given. And that explanation is: Common Grace!

What to say of this method of procedure? It is the same rule that in the last decades has been applied to Genesis 1-3. Scientific observation finds that it cannot square its facts with Genesis 1, the biblical account of creation. And what is done about it? Either the facts of Genesis are denied, or the text is made to fit the case. Scientific conclusions rule in deciding the meaning of the text. And thus also Dr. Kuyper attempts to construe the sense of the Scriptures to fit with, to tally with experience.

But what Kuyper does is more ingenious. But what Kuyper attempts in his method is to show that there are two operations of the Holy Spirit in sinful mankind. Hence there is not only the work of God in regeneration, the positive line in history which runs Abraham-Prophets-Paul-Augustine-Calvin, but there is also the line which runs: Paganism-Egypt-Babylon-Greece-Rome-Islamism-Romanism-Calvinism. Two parallel lines, the lines of natural grace and of saving grace.

Our conclusion: Kuyper did not arrive at this conception in the way of exegetical-synthetical study, but in the way of attempting a reconciliation of what he

considered a discrepancy between the doctrine of total depravity and the good that the unregenerate do.

And: this was not the method of the Reformers.

G. L.

Freedom of The Press In Peace and War

Freedom of the press is considered to be one of the inherent attributes of a democracy. While a dictatorship necessarily suppresses the press under its authority, allowing nothing to be published for public consumption than what can serve its interests, a democracy is supposed to give every individual free rein to express in print any views and opinions or divulge any information within the sphere of decency and good order. Thus freedom of the press, as a part of free speech, is one of the "four freedoms" we are said to be fighting for in this present war.

It is one of the freedoms guaranteed to its citizens by the constitution of the United States. The Bill of Rights, which includes the first ten amendments to the constitution as adopted in 1791, speaks of freedom of the press in one breath with freedom of religion and of peaceable assembly. It is the very first article which states that "Congress shall make no laws respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."

It is quite evident that this statement, "Congress shall make no laws. . . . prohibiting the free exercise . . . of the press" can never be interpreted literally, neither in times of peace nor in war. To place the press beyond the jurisdiction of all national laws amounts to absolute license and anarchy. It means that every individual is free to express himself in print exactly as he pleases, and the law has nothing to say about it, neither as to form nor contents. A person may spread sedition, fraud, slander and what not; he may express himself in the most obscene and profane language, while the public and the nation have no constitutional protection against it.

Therefore it is generally conceded that this article of the Bill of Rights must be interpreted in the light of the whole constitution. The individual cannot be granted liberties at the expense of the public welfare. Liberty, so it is said, is a social benefit, to be exercised only in so far as it serves the greatest good of the greatest number. It is considered just as dangerous to allow the press unrestricted freedom of expression as it is to grant anyone the right to shout "fire" in a crowded theater. And since our constitution seeks the

social interests of the people its articles must be read in that light.

It is interesting to note that this is the position held by the Supreme Court of the United States. The Court has ruled that "the rights of which our Constitution speaks are not absolutes to be exercised independently of other cherished privileges, protected by the same organic instrument." Therefore it has granted Congress and the States the right to punish any printed matter deemed dangerous or otherwise harmful to the State. It has determined that Congress may censor a publication in advance in cases of obscenity, and may deny mailing rights or otherwise punish by law any printed matter which threatens the welfare of the State. Thus profane and obscene language, libel, fraud, propagating sedition, advocating methods of violence or crime, and revealing military information in time of war are considered misdemeanors in the free use of the press. As late as June 9, 1942, the Supreme Court held that the exercise of free speech, press and religion may be limited by legislative bodies "to times, places and methods not at odds with the preservation of peace and good order." This, by the way, was a decision passed in regard to the right of the Jehovah Witnesses to sell tracts without a public license. We cannot fail to note the difference between this interpretation of the Bill of Rights and that particular article itself. The article states that Congress shall make no law prohibiting the free exercise of religion and the press. The Court rules that "peace and good order" shall be the criterion, the sole criterion, to determine in how far the press, and even religion, must be restricted.

To date all this presents no particular difficulty in times of peace. The press expresses itself quite well as it pleases without anyone giving special thought to the restrictions of the law. It may happen that a certain magazine is deprived of its mailing privileges, and thus barred from the market because of its obscene character. Or it may be that a certain newspaper is drawn into a lawsuit on the charges of libel or the like. And it may even happen that some periodical is occasionally called to task for its radical views, especially if it makes a practice of opposing every public issue and public figure. But beyond the restrictions of decency and fairness to others the press pretty well speaks its mind as it pleases. In fact, a democracy so proudly boasts of its freedom of the press that in times of electioneering it condones "mud slinging" and insinuations almost without end. Often the more radical a publication is, and the more it appeals to the public mind, the more liberties it takes and receives. Public opinion seems to be a sufficient check on the press. What the public refuses to read it refuses to buy, and thus bars it from the market.

It is in time of war that this becomes quite a dif-

ferent matter. As soon as a war breaks out the press realizes that there are government restrictions to be considered. This is felt most of all in the strict censorship of the news, allowing only that to be published which has been released by the War Information Board. This is a big item especially in our day, because, if allowed to be sent out unrestricted, the news could reach any part of the world on the same day that it happens. Thus the object of restriction is twofold. On the one hand, no information may be published which may prove advantageous to the enemy. On the other hand, all military information must be released in such a way that it serves to build up the unity and morale on the home front. Even defeats and losses must be reported at such a time and in such a way as to be least felt by the people at home. Before the war a huge cry went up about the dictatorial style of releasing information to their people, withholding the facts minimizing their own losses and exaggerating the losses of the enemy. Today we have become so accustomed to these practices in our own country that we think little of it, and many are even ready to defend a misrepresentation of facts on the basis that the end justifies the means.

But there are also other wartime restrictions of the press. In peace-time it is conceded that a person has the right to express his views and opinions on any subject, regardless of whether he is right or wrong. It is argued that every case should be strong enough to withstand all its opponents and that truth will triumph over the lie. But in time of war the national interests overrule every other consideration. Anyone may denounce all past and future wars, but he must be silent on his denunciation of the present war. To denounce past and future wars is considered innocent enough, but to denounce a present war, to question national politics or to criticize the manner in which the war is waged is considered dangerous to the public safety. And anything that does not serve the "welfare of the public" must be condemned.

This was especially evident under the "sedition laws" of the last war. There are cases on record where people were punished for criticizing the government or the Red Cross, for demanding a referendum to precede the declaration of war, for complaining about the ammunition and guns used by the army, and for saying that war is contrary to the teachings of Christ. At that time the press experienced very little more freedom than under a dictator. And that is also true to a great extent today. The restrictions of war information is a clear example of how the press can be and is repressed. The hesitancy to publicly expose the tragedy of Pearl Harbor is but another example. Even during the recent election campaign there was a certain amount of reticence about opposing the present administration in its war efforts. Especially in time of

war nothing must be said or published that might threaten the unity and welfare of the nation. Criticisms of national policies and actions are soon branded as unpatriotic, seditious and communistic, if not punished by law.

It should become increasingly clear to us that even in a democratic system the interests of the community overrule every other consideration. God has no place in this purely humanistic set-up. The question of what is ethically right or wrong according to the precepts of God is not taken into consideration. The first question is not our moral obligation overagainst the living God, but what is regarded to be the social welfare of the people. "The greatest good for the greatest number" is the motivating principle that opposes such things as profanity, fraud, sedition and the like. The atheist is given full freedom to propagate his blasphemous mockeries with the living God under the protection of the constitution. The evolutionist is allowed to publish his lies in the text books used to instruct the children in the public schools of the nation. But anything that is regarded as a disturbance of "peace and good order" cannot serve the public welfare, and must therefore be punished by legislation. It is that principle that governs the freedom of the press, and brings about numerous restrictions in time of war.

This should be a warning to the Church of Jesus Christ not to allow herself to be misled by high sounding phrases that appeal to the flesh. It is not difficult to see how easily this highly praised freedom can be turned as a weapon in the hands of antichrist against the Church. Today the Church may be free to publish her doctrine and teachings in as many forms and publications as she wishes, tomorrow these same teachings may be regarded as a detriment to the peace and welfare of the community. It would not be the first time in history that the Truth was considered a disturber of the peace in a world that has ruled God out of its life. Today the Church may still be the voice crying in the wilderness, but also that voice will be silenced. And that is very possible under a Bill of Rights in a country that is waging a war for freedom of speech. We do well always to be on the alert.

C. H.

The Kenosis of Phil. 2:7

The word kenosis is a Greek word used in the above mentioned portion of Scripture. There we read: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. In the Holland language the first clause reads as

follows: maar heft zichzelf vernietigd, in the Greek: but He emptied Himself. The word *kenosis* thus refers to the word "emptied" in the first clause. Now one may wonder why this particular word is so outstanding and why an article is written on it in the Standard Bearer. The reason is because its explanation in connection with the whole context is of vital importance for the doctrine of the humiliation of Christ. Our conception of this state of Christ depends upon the exegesis of this word. The Lutherans claim to find a very firm ground for their particular conception of Christ's humiliation in this word. Hence their doctrine which is called the *Kenosis Theology*.

First of all I want to say that it is not my intention to write an essay on this doctrine of *Kenoticism*, nor on the doctrine of Christ's humiliation. I'm convinced for more than one reason that this essay must be of a practical nature. It is true that dogmatics must find a prominent place in writing about this truth but that with a view to the practical life of the Christian. This Paul does first of all. Take notice of the practical nature of the first few verses. "If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfill ye my joy, that we be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." From these words it is evident that there was a lack of unity among the Philippians, a lack of mutual love and cooperation. Everyone lived for himself. Therefore the apostle admonished them to change their strivings and lives. They must be one in the Lord. In lowliness of mind each must esteem other better than themselves. Each is to put every other brother first on the list to be considered, himself at the bottom of the list. The worldling reverses this order, he comes first, everyone else comes last, perhaps does not come at all. Only low-mindedness can do such a thing, do it truly and sincerely. Then we read in verse five: Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. Christ must be their example in this.

In verses six and seven the apostle goes on to tell us what Christ did "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." Our question is what is meant by the expression: but made himself of no reputation, in the Greek: He emptied Himself. The word *kenosis* therefore pictures before our mind an emptying, a full vessel being emptied of its contents until it's gone. How now did Christ empty Himself? According to the Lutherans, the doctrine of *Kenoticism*, Christ emptied Himself of His Divine attributes when He became man and took

them on again in His evaluation. The question is whether Christ did this by means of the incarnation or whether he did so after He became flesh. According to the Lutherans Christ *was* in the form of God before the incarnation and with the latter emptied Himself of the form of God. Perhaps we ask whether it makes a great deal of difference how we explain this portion. The answer is that it makes all the difference. With this verse the old question is again brought to the foreground: What think ye of the Christ? Is He really God's Son or only partly God's Son, or only a man and not even partly God's Son? You see, therefore, that this is no squabble of theologians, this is an issue on the life or the death of every Christian's faith in his Saviour. Centered on the humiliation of Christ, it involves automatically the whole saving work of Jesus wrought here on earth, and involves equally his exaltation. Conclusively the Lutherans must admit that since Christ emptied Himself of the form of God with the incarnation He while on earth had only a human nature.

Some of us may readily see that unknowingly many "Reformed" people adhere to the same notion. Do we not often hear people say, and ministers as well, that Jesus left His heavenly home, or that the Son of God for the short span of thirty-three years became man and during this time was no longer God but man? Think of the sacrifices the Son of God made when He came to earth, denying His heavenly home, the bliss and glory of heaven! All this is Lutheranism plain and simple, and a denial of the Divinity of Christ. The Son of God did not leave His heavenly home. He is omnipresent and while on earth He is also in heaven. With the incarnation the Divine nature was united with the human nature in the one Person of the Son of God. In this connection we can also say that Christ's humiliation did not consist in the fact that He took on our human nature. So it often is presented. What a humiliation for Christ to become man! Our objections to this presentation is twofold: 1) that it implies an emptying of the form of God, which is impossible. The Divine nature of Christ never changed, and enjoyed the heavenly bliss and life as much while Christ was on earth as when in heaven. 2) That then Christ would still be in the state of humiliation because He today and unto eternity will have a human nature. No, His humiliation consisted in the fact that He assumed a human nature under the law and its curse. From this He is delivered with His exaltation.

Reformed theology has always maintained that the Lutheran conception is untenable. Christ while on earth is also God. Christ had a Divine and a human nature united in the Person of the Son of God. Further it is believed, however, that *with* the incarnation His Divine nature or form of God remained hidden, was obscured (Dutch: *ging schuil*) by the human

nature. The Divine nature did not become manifest while on earth. In this way, so they say, He emptied Himself. To say the least, it is a very poor explanation of the word "emptied". According to this conception we could very easily substitute another word without changing the meaning. Besides, according to this explanation, Christ to a certain extent did empty Himself of the form of God, which the Lutherans believe too.

To obtain the proper and true conception of this emptying of our Lord we must understand the expression that Christ was in the form of God. Usually we read that He *was* in the form of God, the past tense being used. This gives the verb used a temporal significance. But we cannot speak of a past tense in respect to God. He always is. Neither can we infer the past tense from the Greek. Therefore it is also impossible to say that Christ who had a Divine nature also on earth was in the form of God. The Son of God is always in the form of God, as the incarnated Son as well as before the incarnation. Of this He can never be emptied or empty Himself. We must remember that Paul is speaking of Christ, who also has a human nature. He has a form of God and a form of man. According to the Council of Chalcedon these two never become one, nor that the attributes of the Divine can ever be attributed to the human nature of Christ. Christ, e.g. can never become almighty or omnipresent. It is true, however, that due to this mysterious union special gifts are given to His human nature, such as wisdom, holiness, knowledge and power. Think of His wisdom as the perfect pedagogue and His power as the healer. Now we literally read in the Greek that *having taken on* the form of a servant He emptied Himself. He did not empty Himself by becoming man, but having taken on the human nature He emptied Himself. The question then follows how He emptied Himself. Surely not of the form of God, His Divine nature. But this is told us in the following verse: He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Negatively the apostle expresses the actions and desires of Christ in the words: He considered it not robbery to be equal with God. Being in the form of man and also in the form of God (and due to this union also having special gifts in His human nature) He could have striven to be equal with God. In this peculiar position with all His ability He certainly was able to rob God of His name and honor and make a name for Himself. Christ could have made Himself very great in the eyes of the world. No man has ever had such opportunities. Couldn't He have become a wonderful king of the Jews, establishing a kingdom in which men would not have to work, where there would be no sick or dead, no poverty or subjection to other nations? But this He refused to do. It

was far from Him to even think about it. This is exactly the sin of the devil. Being only an angel He attempted this robbery. But Christ in a much more favorable position refused to usurp this place. And think of man. Give him any form of power and ability and he will always use it to his own advantage to make himself great and deprive God of His honor. He will be like God. Not so with our Lord Jesus Christ.

No, Christ went in the opposite direction. This is expressed positively in the kenosis of verse 7. He emptied Himself. Of what? Not of the form of God but of all the display of honor, power and fame and beauty which He according to His human nature did have and could have increased. He emptied Himself of all these. He humbled Himself until He finally died the ignominious death of the cross. It was always His meat that God His Father become great and He be a willing servant of Him for the sake of His own. Through His emptying Himself we would be saved. In this we behold the depths of grace. He emptied Himself of all beauty, comeliness, fame, position and place in the world that He might redeem His people. We see Him completely empty on the cross. There He is the exile, the outcast, the despised One, reckoned with transgressors. It is the perfect and marvelous display of the deprivation of all of self. It is the amazing display of sacrificing all He had for the sake of those given Him by the Father.

Shall we then, who now are saved through this deed of Christ and confess His name, be selfish, seeking self? Such is the drift of Paul's argument. For those saved by Christ He has now become the perfect example. Therefore the apostle admonishes them as well as us to love one another, exercise the fellowship of the Spirit, be filled with bowels of mercy, in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus who became miserably poor that we might become unspeakably rich.

J. B.

Contribution

Dear Editor and Brother:

When I read the first of your last two articles on the C. L. A. in the Standard Bearer, I said: It does my heart good to see Rev. Hoeksema come out of his corner. A few days later I received a letter from a friend of mine who expressed the same sentiment. Now, we do not mean that Rev. Hoeksema hid away in a corner somewhere, but we, and others with us, have never been able to justify the action of the Fuller Ave. Consistory which appeared in the Standard Bearer some time ago. This Consistory stated, concerning the C. L. A.: "we would advise you to support it and use your

influence with that organization".

Since then the Rev. Hoeksema had been very silent on the question. Our long wait for further light was well rewarded, however, by his recent discussion of the problem.

It seems to me, however, that (although this point has been treated in passing) there is still another angle to this whole Union question which deserves consideration and emphasis. This point is the evil of collective bargaining. This method was also upheld in the article referred to above, for it was stated: "the Consistory recognizes the fact that the individual laborer can hardly have a position, and collective bargaining and organization are often necessary". I firmly believe, that apart from everything else: — strikes, pickets, coercion, corporate responsibility; which are all related to the whole question, collective bargaining itself is a great evil. Further, that taken by itself, it is so far from being justifiable that it will over-rule possibility of membership in a Labor Union.

To bring out this point, let's consider the following example. An employer has 300 men working for him. Of these 300 men, 100 are good mechanics, 100 are fair mechanics and the remaining 100 are poor mechanics. All agree to collectively bargain for a raise of 10c per hour in pay. The representative of the Union thereupon applies to the employer for this increase. Among the 300 men the 100 may be worthy of 10c an hour more, the second 100 barely entitled to it, while the last 100 may already be overpaid. Of the last 100 the employer might like to discharge many but due to the fact that he needs workers or because of the pressure of the Union he keeps them in his employ.

The question is: in all sincerity before God, in the name of a Christian Labor Union, or as an individual Christian, can one truthfully claim that these last 100 men are worthy of the increase that their representative asks for? May he as a Christian ask and claim a raise for them, may they as Christians allow him to do so? The fact remains, that if they are not worthy of an increase, an outright injustice has been inflicted upon the employer and sin has been committed against the 10th commandment.

How can anyone represent another by collective bargaining and proclaim, by his representing many, that he swears before God that what he claims for them all is the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth? To my mind this is impossible. A man can and may bargain alone, basing his plea upon his own talents and circumstances, but never for another.

Let me pass on to the readers of the S. B. a little discussion I had with a member of a Union here in this city. It will also further clarify the point I make. After discussing the Union question for a little while he asked me: "Don't you believe in the Union?" My answer was: "No! How could I?" "Well," he said,

"what must we do as a laboring class to get what is coming to us?" My answer was that he could and should bargain alone, and if he did not receive the merits of his worth he could seek employment elsewhere. I pointed out to him that he was only capable of judging and bargaining in his own case and never in that of another. He did not agree with me in this, so I illustrated to him why I did not believe in the Union and stated that he didn't either. This caused still more amazement on his part.

"Let us assume," I said, "that I am working in your home as a decorating contractor. We have made certain agreements as to what and how the work shall be done and what my hourly wage shall be. After a few days on the job *I feel* that I did not get a square deal and, therefore, demand an increase in hourly wage. To this, you as owner and upon the basis of our original agreement, refuse to comply. If then I began to drive out of your home you, your wife and children, and to destroy the furniture and mutilate your home, what would you do?" He stared at me and did not answer. I suggested to him that, in such a case, if he had a good shot-gun in the basement he would very likely make good use of it. He stated that he thought that is just what he would do. I assured him that the shot-gun would also be my answer in such a case. I think he was convinced that after all he did not believe in the Union.

Think it over—members of the C. L. A.!

Your brother in Christ,
H. A. Van Putten.

The Nestorian Conception of the Natures of Christ

The doctrine of the Person of Christ implies especially four factors. Christology, of course, includes other doctrines besides the Person of Christ, such as the truths concerning His names, His offices, and His states. The doctrine of the Person of Christ, however, implies especially four factors. First of all, it implies the true and proper conception of the Divinity of the Lord. We must confess Christ to be very God. Secondly, this doctrine refers to the true and proper humanity of Christ. We must not only confess that He is very God but also that He is very man. In the third place we must confess that these two natures, the Divine and the human, are united in the one Divine Person. And, finally, the proper distinction between these two natures must be maintained, so that they, although united in the one Divine Person, retain their own peculiar properties. The two natures of the Christ must never be mixed or confused.

All the heresies or wrong conceptions which have arisen and developed about the Person of Christ in the course of history are rooted in an erroneous conception of one or more of these factors. Arius, e.g., would not concede the existence of a truly and properly Divine nature in the Person of Jesus Christ. Others went to the opposite extreme of error and denied His humanity. Apollinaris denied the true and complete humanity of the Christ, contending that the son of God, the Logos (the Eternal Word) took the place of the human spirit in Christ. Nestorianism, which is the subject of this essay, denied the union of the two natures in the one Person of the Son of God.

Nestorius belongs to the fifth century, although the date of his birth and of his death is not known. He was born in the Syrian city of Germanicia. He belongs to the school of Antioch and was a disciple of Theodore of Mopsuesta, the most famous representative of that school. There were at that time two schools, the one at Alexandria and the other at Antioch. The school at Alexandria, whose chief representative at this time was Cyrillus, was characterized by a tendency to obliterate the difference between the two natures of Christ. The school at Antioch on the other hand emphasized the distinction between the two natures and revealed a tendency to separate them. Nestorius soon gained for himself a wide reputation as a monk and as a presbyter (a ruler in the church), especially because of his ardent defense of the orthodox truth over against heretics. He is known as an eloquent and pious man, although hasty and imprudent, with little knowledge of the world and human nature, and immoderately severe against heretics.

Nestorius became bishop of Constantinople in 428. Soon he began a controversy about the Person of Christ. He criticized severely a phrase, much in vogue at the time, which designated Mary as "the mother of God." Nestorius objected to this phrase and would rather speak of the mother of Christ. This action of the church leader aroused a storm of opposition. Clergymen began to preach against him. Laymen opposed him while he was in the pulpit, even to the extent of interrupting him in his sermons. Cyril of Alexandria rose against him and bitter anathemas were exchanged between the two leaders.

At a synod of Rome in 430 Nestorius was condemned. His views were condemned again at the general Synod of Ephesus, 431, although it must be said that the truth of Christology was not very clearly stated by the opposing party. Moreover, the followers of Nestorius, in a separate gathering, also condemned Cyril. At first Nestorius found many friends and supporters. Later, however, these friends forsook him and made a compromise with Cyrillus in 435. In the year, 435 Nestorius was banished by the emperor to Petra in Arabia. In later life he probably lived in Egypt, where

he was driven from one place to another until the day of his death. Nestorianism did not flourish for any length of time, undoubtedly due to the fact that the Church gradually restated the doctrine of the Person of Christ.

Appraising the heresy of Nestorianism we must bear in mind that we refer to Nestorianism. It may be considered doubtful whether Nestorius himself was a heretic. He is surely a sad and tragic figure in the history of the Church. Much uncertainty as well as bitter jealousy between him and Cyrillus entered into the controversy. On the one hand, it may be noted that Cyril, the most ardent opponent of Nestorius, did not entertain a correct conception of the Person of Christ. He taught that the Logos (the Eternal Word) did not merely *assume* the human nature, but *became* man. After the incarnation there was only the nature of the incarnated Son of God. The predicates of the human and Divine natures became the common property of both. He thereby certainly lost sight of the distinction between the two natures. On the other hand it may be said that Nestorius maintained that the two natures were united in the one Person, although, in the heat of the controversy, he probably did not always express himself clearly.

We must certainly be careful before we condemn a man because he preferred the expression "mother of Christ" to "mother of God". This was already a moot question before Nestorius came to Constantinople. In his sermons against the expression "mother of God" he declared that "Mary did not give birth to divinity, but to man, the instrument of Divinity." Here his motive was his desire to exalt the Divinity of Christ, holding, as he did in his first sermon, that "the creature hath not given birth to the uncreatable." Who among us would object to such a presentation? It is certainly a fact beyond dispute that the Son of God was born of the virgin Mary *our flesh and blood*. Mary certainly did not give birth to Divinity. To teach this would render one guilty of pantheism, which is, of course, the denial of the line of demarcation between the Creator and the creature, and therefore a denial of the living God. On the other hand this does not imply that the expression "Mary, the mother of God" is therefore necessarily wrong and to be rejected. I am of the opinion that this expression should not be used without a careful explanation. But, if the term be properly defined and explained, it can hardly be denied that it has much in its favor. We must, of course, be careful to distinguish between the two nature of our Lord and maintain that they are united in the one Person of the Son of God "unchanged, unmixed, undivided, and inseparable." However, we must never lose sight of the fact that they are united in the one Person of the Son of God, that it was the living God who assumed our flesh and blood, that it was Jehovah, Who is and re-

mains true and eternal God, who also became man. I believe that we may safely say that this truth is expressed beautifully by asserting that Mary was the mother of God. This expression teaches, as far as I am concerned, that the true and eternal Son of God, the Eternal Word, took upon Himself, out of the virgin Mary, our human nature, and that therefore the Divine and human natures are inseparably united in the one Person of the Son without at any time losing any of their peculiar properties.

Whatever opinion one may entertain, however, with respect to Nestorius himself, Nestorianism is a heresy. It certainly separated the Divine and human natures and really believed that Christ was two persons. Nestorianism would concede a true and proper deity and a true and proper humanity. But they are not united in a single self-conscious personality. The Nestorian Christ is two persons—one divine and the other human. The important distinction between “nature” and “person” is not observed, and the consequence is that there are two separate and diverse selves in Jesus Christ. Instead of a blending of the two nature in the one Divine Self, the Nestorian scheme places two selves side by side. The result is that the acts of each nature derive no character or are not influenced by the qualities of the other. Nestorius appears to have regarded the association of deity with humanity as occurring at birth, and to have represented the humanity as laid aside again after Christ’s death and resurrection. There is no Divine humiliation because the humanity is confessedly the seat of the humiliation. And there is no exaltation of the humanity because the Divinity is confessedly the source of the exaltation. Hence, although Nestorianism acknowledged the alliance of God with man in Christ Jesus, it so separated the two natures from each other in His Person, that the suffering which the Redeemer endured derived no character or value from His Divinity, and was in reality not different from that of any mere man. There is a God, and there is a man; but there is no God Man in the one Person of the Son.

It is surely unnecessary to refute this heresy, that Christ was actually two persons, from Holy Writ. Suffice it to say, that Scripture literally teaches us that a virgin would conceive, that she would bring forth a son, and that His Name would be called Immanuel, God with us. The truth that Christ is the Son of God, the Eternal Son of God, and that the mystery of salvation is that God is revealed in the flesh, is the rock upon which the Church of God is built, is the confession to which the Church has clung tenaciously throughout the ages with all the power at her command.

To separate the two natures in the Christ and believe that our Lord was two persons is a very grave error. It is tantamount to Deism which has no place for God’s immanency because it divorces the Divine

from the human in our Lord, and it must lead to Pelagianism which denies the atoning character of the suffering of Christ and regards the Lord’s passion as merely that of an example. Indeed, to believe that Christ was two persons is tantamount to a denial of the atonement. To be sure, the Son of God suffered only in the human nature. Nestorianism, however, separates the Divine from the human in the passion of Christ and regards His suffering as not differing from that of any other mere man. Atonement is possible only in the way of full and complete satisfaction of the justice of God. The guilt of Zion must be paid. The wrath of God must be borne unto the end. We believe that our Redeemer must be the Eternal Son of God, God Himself in the flesh, not only because it is only the Eternal God himself Who can pay the eternal price and bear His own eternal wrath, but also because it is only the Person of the Son of God, Who, because He is the Divine Person and therefore not personally guilty of the sin of Adam, can take upon Himself the guilt of others, the guilt of the elect human race and of the whole world as it shall be redeemed in and for the sake of God’s chosen race. Remove this Divine element from the passion of the Lamb of God and the only thing that remains is the suffering of a mere man who cannot satisfy the justice of God. We thereby lose the atoning character of Calvary and retain merely an exemplary suffering. Our guilt has, then, not been paid. We are yet in our sins. The people of God are, of all men, the most miserable. H. V.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On December 1, 1944, our beloved parents,

MR. CORNELIUS LUBBERS and

MRS. CORNELIUS LUBBERS—Van Putten

commemorated their 40th Wedding Anniversary.

We their children and grandchildren, extend to them our sincere congratulations. Together with them we look back upon the road travelled throughout these years with all its joys and sorrows, and with the hand of faith we write: “Eben-Haezer”. Looking forward into the inscrutable future we thankfully commit our way to God and His promised care over us.

Their grateful children and grandchildren,

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Berens,
Rev. and Mrs. Geo. C. Lubbers
Mr. and Mrs. John C. Lubbers
Mr. and Mrs. Peter J. Lubbers
Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius Jelsma
Mr. and Mrs. Henry C. Lubbers
Miss Henrietta Bernice Lubbers
and Sixteen grandchildren.