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MEDITATION

Interceding On The Cross

And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left. Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. Luke 23:33, 34.

Then!

Significant moment!

Then, at that particular moment, said Jesus, Father forgive them, for they know not what they do!

Precisely *then* He made intercession for the transgressors!

And that, even at that moment, such intercession was at all possible, that there was even at that moment, and for the transgression that was committed then, a ground for intercession, so that it might be accepted by the Father,—that is the mystery of the atonement, and of the salvation of the elect!

That He, Jesus, the Captain of the salvation of His brethren, through Whom it pleased the Father to lead many children to glory, was strong enough to utter this intercessory prayer precisely at this moment, that was His victory! For even now, at the moment of His crucifixion, He began to see His seed. And exactly this prayer reveals beyond a shadow of doubt that, although He submerges in death, even the death of the cross, He shall prolong His days, and “the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand.” He shall see of the travail of His soul, and even at this moment he is assured of it. He shall justify many, for He bears their iniquities, and He is quite conscious of it at this moment, and willing to bear that terrible burden even to the end. God will “divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong;

because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.” Isa. 53:10-12.

Then!

O, if exactly at that moment, and because of the character of that moment, this intercession had not been possible; or if the Captain of our salvation had found that moment too terrible, too abounding with evil and hatred and malice, to pray for the very transgressors that so filled that moment; all would have been lost!

But now, this intercession, for *these* transgressors, and at *this* moment, proves it, salvation is, indeed, possible! What is impossible with men is possible with God!

The love of God is more powerful than all the hatred of men!

Now, it is become evident through this very intercession at this moment, that this Captain is capable to lead His brethren from the depths of sin and death on to the heights of eternal righteousness and heavenly glory!

He is the most meek among men!

Meeker even than Moses! Where Moses failed, He carries right on! For, even though also of the mediator of the Old Testament it could be said in his day that he was more meek than any man, at the crucial moment he failed: in hot anger he became impatient with his brethren, struck the rock, called the Church a crowd of rebels, and was unwilling to give them drink! And he himself could not lead his brethren into the promised rest. But this Man, having arrived at the most crucial moment of His work does not fail. When all looks dark, when all hands are turned against Him, when His own rejected Him, when it appears as if the very elect have been swallowed up by the hatred of the world,—then He made intercession for the transgressors!

Then!

O, let not the simplicity of the record induce you to

overlook the tremendous import of this indication of the exact time of this intercession!

It was "when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary."

It was when they had crucified with Him "the malefactors, one on His right hand, and the other on the left."

Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them!

For they know not what they do!

It means complete victory!

The victory of the cross!

Tremendous moment!

They were come to the place, which is called Calvary! They, that is, Jesus and His enemies! But let us rather at once include ourselves as we are of this world by nature: Jesus and we had come to the Place of the Skull!

And, O, we and He had not just come there, as if it were a mere incident. It did not simply happen, we know not how, that He and we came to that place. No: we had led Him thither! And the way He and we travelled together to that horrible place of the death of the Son of God, is one terrible testimony against us, a horrible testimony of our sin, of our hatred of God and His anointed!

For that they now came to the place that was called Calvary, was but the inevitable outcome of their whole attitude against Him for the last three years. He had come unto His own, and His own received Him not. He had revealed Himself among them, had spoken to them as the revelation of the Father, the Light of the world, the Bread and Water of life, the Resurrection and the Life, the Way and the Truth. And they had loved darkness rather than light. They had opposed Him, hardened their hearts against Him, filled Him with reproach, contradicted Him, and repeatedly they had sought some occasion against Him to condemn Him to death, or even attempted to lay their hands on Him to kill Him.

And now, they were come to the place which was called Calvary!

In the direction of that place they had constantly moved!

And especially during the last few hours they had moved with almost inconceivable speed. Madly they had rushed on! For, according to Mark, it was only the third hour of the day! The last stretch of the way to Calvary had been literally covered with iniquity. They had taken Him captive in the garden, led Him to Annas, assembled the council in the hollow of the night, sought accusations against Him in vain, condemned Him to death, maltreated Him in their fury, blindfolded, buffeted, mocked Him, spit in His face; they had led Him to Pilate, to Herod, put Him to

nought, pressed the thorny crown on His brow, scourged Him, demanded that Barabbas be released rather than He, obtained from the Roman governor the sentence of death against Him, and had led Him away to be crucified!

So they, Jesus and His enemies, Jesus and the whole world, Jesus and we as we are of that world by nature, came to the place which is called Calvary!

And there they finished their evil work!

There they crucified Him!

There they numbered Him with the transgressors, and clearly expressed this their intention by placing His cross in the midst of two others, of two criminals, one at His right, and the other at His left!

That was the moment!

But is not this, then, the end?

Is not the very character of this moment such that it has become for ever impossible to make intercession for the transgressors?

Is it not precisely impossible for *this* Man, the only One from Whose lips intercession for the transgressors might be expected, to pray for *these* transgressors, that have thus come to the place which is called Calvary, and there have filled the measure of iniquity by crucifying the Son of God?

Hark!

Then said Jesus!

When *these* transgressors have thus travelled the way of iniquity to the very end, and have accomplished all their furious hatred against Him. . . .

Then He said: Father, forgive!

Awful paradox!

Marvellous love!

What is impossible with men, is possible with God!

Nay more: man's impossibility is the precise moment of the revelation of God's efficient power!

For look again, and you will discover that this cross is more than man's cross: it is also God's. It is more than the expression of man's hatred: it is also the revelation of God's love.

They came to the place which is called Calvary because the enemies led Him thither, to be sure; but no less because He sought that place, and voluntarily surrendered Himself into their power, in order that there He might lay down His life for His sheep!

Look again, and does it not strike you that they have come to the place which is called Calvary? O, we are not particularly interested in the question how this little hill outside of Jerusalem had acquired that peculiar name: place of the Skull. But the point is that it is outside of Jerusalem, or as the Word of God in Hebrews 13:12 reminds us, "without the gate." And that means that there on Calvary, is the final realization of the sacrifice of atonement that was wont to be offered annually in the Holy City. For it was the

"bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priests for sin," that were burned without the camp!

He came to the place which is called Calvary, for now we see only *Him*, as our High Priest, to take upon Him all the sins of all His people, then to shed His blood for them, carry it into the real Holy of Holies before the face of the Father and have the body of sin completely destroyed without the camp!

O, *then* it is indeed possible to say: Father, forgive!

Look again, and do you not remember the significance of the death of the cross? They crucified Him! And, to be sure, the cross in itself means nothing. A thousand crosses had, perhaps, stood on that same place. And even at this moment there are two other crosses planted next to His. But as God's cross, this cross of Jesus has the significance God put into it: Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree! He bears the curse, the expression of the wrath of God against sin, not His own, but the sin of His brethren. He is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world!

But *then* He may and surely must say: Father, forgive!

Look again, and you will discover that He willingly and consciously tastes all there is in death. For, Matthew records how they offered Him the anaesthetic, vinegar mixed with gall, that was prepared for such occasions by some humane ladies' society in Jerusalem; but He would not drink it. For He must not simply die: He must taste death; all there is of wrath and desolation, of divine righteousness and justice and holiness, He must experience, willingly, obediently, in the love of God!

But *then* He brought the perfect sacrifice!

Then that cross, man's impossibility, is God's power of salvation!

And the crucified One may intercede for the transgressors!

Then, precisely *then*, He may say: Father, forgive!

And intercede He does!

Amazing love!

Father, forgive them!

Brief intercession, but every word of which is more than full to capacity with significance.

Still, the crucified One addresses God as *Father*! Presently, He will descend into that darkness of desolation in which He experiences all the agony of being forsaken of God. And in the amazement of that moment it would seem that the Father's face is hid from Him, though He still cries out: "My God, my God!" Soon after that darkest moment He once more ascends out of the depth into the light of the Father's countenance, and, conscious that all is finished, commends His Spirit into the Father's hands. Here, at

this moment, He still knows that He is not alone, and that the Father is with Him.

Father!

My Father, and Father of them for whom I die, and in whose behalf I intercede!

Forgive!

O, to be sure, although this is not mentioned in the prayer, the sin for the forgiveness of which He pleads is, particularly, the awful transgression of the moment. But let us not forget that this is the climax, or the depth of all sin. In the death, the utter rejection of the Son of God, the sin of man, of the world, becomes fully manifest as sin. If this sin is not forgiven, no sin is remitted; if there is forgiveness for this horrible deed, there is remission of all sin!

Forgive!

The word must be taken in its full significance. It does not mean: postpone judgment, that they may have another trial. It signifies: impute not! Reckon not this sin, the most horrible manifestation of sin, all sin, against them! Let me die for this sin, for all their sin, and let them be treated as if they never committed this sin, any sin! Let these transgressors be clothed with eternal righteousness, that even as I die, so they may live in Thy sight!

Forgive!

For they know not what they do!

O, not as if their ignorance could be a *ground* for their forgiveness, for that may be found only in the death of that Son of God! Nor as if they did not consciously and knowingly reject the Righteous One: they knew that they sinned, and that they delivered Him in their hatred. But they did not know the mystery of that cross. They did not understand that from that accursed tree flowed, even then, the blood of atonement. Had they known that, they would have despised the blood of the New Testament, and there would have been no sacrifice for sin left for them. Now, forgiveness was possible through the very blood they shed!

Forgive!

Forgive *them*!

Who?

A certain class? The soldiers that hammered the spikes through His hands and feet? Pilate that had condemned Him? The leaders that had delivered Him? The people that had demanded His blood? But no! The prayer of our Lord transcends all classes!

All men? Impossible! Jesus prays not for the "world." Besides, His prayer is surely heard. Yet, all men are not forgiven!

His own! His children, as they are in, and by nature of, that world that crucified Him!

For them He prayed, and still intercedes with the Father!

Sure ground of hope!

H. H.

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EDITORIALS

The Text of a Complaint

The first point of the complaint concerns the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God.

The complainants first rather elaborately explain that the doctrine that God, though knowable, is incomprehensible, is taught by all Reformed theologians, maintained by the Confessions and clearly based on Scripture. This part is rather clear, and easy to follow. Nor is one liable to differ with the complainants on this point.

When, however, they proceed to compare Dr. Clark's teaching on this score with what they claim to be their own, and, of course, the orthodox conception of the incomprehensibility of God, it is not so easy to follow them, and to discover just wherein lies the accused's heterodoxy.

The trouble, in part appears to be that Dr. Clark's view does not involve an outright denial of God's incomprehensibility. Both he and the complainants admit that God cannot be comprehended. The difference between them, therefore, rather concerns the question as to just what must be understood by the incomprehensibility of God. And this renders the whole dispute rather abstract, a matter, it would seem, to be discussed by a conference of theologians rather than to be used as a ground for protest against the licensure of a candidate for the ministry. Write the complainants:

"It is true indeed that Dr. Clark accepts the term 'incomprehensible' as a quality of God. (This is rather carelessly expressed. One cannot very well accept a term as a quality, though one might accept that a term denotes a real quality, H.H.). But the issue of course is not settled by the bare acceptance of the language of the standards. . . . It is our contention that Dr. Clark's view of the incomprehensibility of God is definitely at variance with the meaning that this doctrine has in Christian theology." p. 5.

What, then, is the exact point of difference?

According to the complainants, it is this, that, while they hold that the difference between the contents of the knowledge of God and the contents of our knowledge is both qualitative and quantitative, Dr. Clark insists that it is only quantitative. And here the complainants mention three specific points of difference between Dr. Clark's view and their own:

1. According to Dr. Clark all truth, in God and in man, is propositional, i.e. assumes the form of propositions (God is good, man is mortal, two times two are four, the whole is greater than any of its parts, etc.

The illustrations are mine). The complainants deny this, at least with regard to God's knowledge.

2. Dr. Clark holds that man's knowledge of any proposition is identical with God's knowledge of the same proposition. Any proposition has the same meaning for God as for man. The complainants deny this. As an item of interest we may mention here that during the examination of Dr. Clark by the presbytery of Philadelphia the question was asked him: "You would say then, that all that is revealed in the Scripture is capable of being comprehended by the mind of man?" And the answer was given by him: "Oh yes, that is what it is given us for, to understand it." p. 5.

3. Dr. Clark teaches that God's knowledge consists of an *infinite number* of propositions, while only a finite number can ever be revealed to man. And this shows that, according to him, the difference between God's knowledge and man's knowledge is only quantitative: God simply knows infinitely *more* than man. The complainants insist that it is also qualitative: it also concerns the question as to the *nature* and *mode* of God's knowledge and ours.

Yet, it does not seem certain that Dr. Clark himself would subscribe to this presentation of his views by his opponents. They themselves state: "At other points, indeed, Dr. Clark seems to be employing a different conception of infinity, as when he states that the attributes are infinite as being limited by nothing outside of himself." And again: "he freely recognizes a fundamental difference between the *mode* of God's knowledge and that of man's knowledge." To be more clear on this point we will have to wait for the answer that is being prepared to this "Complaint" by the presbytery of Philadelphia, which we hope to receive.

However, even now one begins to wonder whether the real question in this controversy is, not whether *God*, but whether His *revelation* to us in the Scriptures is comprehensible, that is, can be logically understood by the mind of man. Dr. Clark's position is that all of Scripture is given us that we might understand it, that all of it is adapted to our human mind, so that, even though there be many things in that revelation of God which we cannot *fathom*, there is nothing in it that is *contrary* to human intelligence and logic. And the opponents appear to deny this.

And if this should be the real, underlying issue, if the complainants take the stand that Scripture reveals things that are, not above and far beyond, but *contrary* to, in conflict with the human mind, it is my conviction that the complainants should be indicted of heterodoxy, and of undermining all sound theology.

Either the *logic* of revelation is *our* logic, or there is no revelation.

This proposition I am prepared to defend at any time.

H. H.

Schilder And Others!

From the Christian Reformed- "De Wachter" we quote the following news item:

"Uit bevrijd Nederland schreef mij dezer dagen een predikantszoon, wiens vader lid van de voortgezette Synode (van Utrecht?) was, dat de Synode van 1943 in conflict kwam met Schilder, Greydanus en andere "aangeklaagde" mannen. Schilder en Greydanus en enkele anderen werden afgezet en het einde is nog niet te bezien. Een verschrikkelijk iets in dezen tijd."

We say: if these men were unjustly deposed, as we consider most likely to have been the case, it is a "verschrikkelijk iets" *period*.

We are very eager to hear more about all this, especially about the grounds for this deposition. Until we know something definite, however, we must refrain from comment.

In the meantime, we would advise the editor of *The Banner*, who can see nothing but *Schilder-and-common-grace*, to do the same thing, lest presently he has to swallow too many of his "I told you so's."

H. H.

The Evangelical and The Reformed Church

We were to furnish some examples of the teaching that is tolerated in the merged church known as the E. and R.

As early as 1937 a complaint against the nature and contents of Sunday School literature published by the Board of Christian Education of the E. and R. was registered with the Synod of the Northwest by the Revs. Pfeiffer and Hauser. A committee was appointed to investigate this matter, and this committee reported to the Synod of the Northwest in 1938. From this report we learn that the "Junior Uniform Lesson Guide," in an explanation of a passage from the book of Judges, tried to inculcate into the minds of the youth of the Church the following:

"In the time when much of the Old Testament was written, people did not understand what God is like. They thought that he was much like them and would get angry and punish people when they did what was wrong. Later on people began to realize that God is like a kind father or mother; that he is sad to see people do what is wrong but ready to forgive when they are sorry for their wrong."

Needless to offer comment on this modernistic distinction between the Old and the New Testament, and on this unbiblical presentation of the love and forgiving mercy of God as in conflict with His righteous anger and punitive justice. The implication is, of course, a denial of the atoning blood of Christ.

Similarly:

"In the days of the judges people thought you should love God and hate your enemy. When Jesus came to live on this earth to show people what God was like, he taught not only that we must love God but also love and help our enemies, or those people who are unkind to us and do not show love to us. What things would be changed if people kept Jesus' Law?"

The committee recommended "that the Synod of the Northwest disapproves of such denials of the Faith of the Church and insists that all Church School materials published by an agency of the Church should conform to the Constitution and creed of the Church."

This was adopted by the Synod, and it was resolved that "this action shall be submitted to the Board of Education of General Synod and to the General Council of the Evangelical and Reformed Church."

What action was taken by these bodies we are not in a position to state.

Nor, it seems to me, does it make much difference. What can be expected from a creedless church? Or what good can any synodical legislation do in a church that has advanced on the road of Modernism to the extent revealed in the above quotations?

When we were in South Dakota last fall, we visited one of the church buildings of the E. and R., and seeing some literature in the Bulletin Box, we took a sample of it along. It is called "Evangelical and Reformed Church Bulletin," and from it are made the following quotations:

"It is the responsibility of religion to bring us into such a relationship with God that He can open up our life. We shall lack the spirit of service and consecration until our life is so opened. . . . However God can do nothing for us unless we realize our dependence upon Him. A great number of people in these difficult days are finding their lives opened because they are throwing themselves upon God. Numerous examples of this are to be found among people, who as Moffatt translates the passage, 'are at their wit's end' and who say, 'It's up to you now God; there is nothing more I can do'. . . . In these days of desperate need, let us permit God to open our lives. Then we too shall obey Him, and life will be meaningful, whatever may come."

From an article entitled "The Path of Peace," in the same Bulletin, we quote the following:

"Man has done much to master the natural sciences. Is it too altruistic to believe him capable of mastering himself? Is the undertaking any more prodigious than the campaign of destruction and the fanatical devotion

to the cause of self-extermination? The answer to both these questions is an unqualified 'No!'"

Again:

"Finally, and equally important to peace, men's hearts must be indoctrinated from birth with a higher spiritual motivation. The moral sin of war, the basic respect for the thoughts and opinions of his fellowman, and the great truth that man's prayers should be answered here on earth by man—these are the precepts of peace. Heaven on earth is not as much God's problem as it is man's."

We refrain from comment.

But how is it possible for any man, minister or layman, who knows and loves the truth of the gospel, not to speak of the Reformed faith, to remain in a Church in which he is powerless to prevent the dissemination of such modernistic principles as are expressed in the above quotations?

My answer is: *that is impossible!*

H. H.

The Triple Knowledge

An Exposition Of The Heidelberg Catechism

Part Two.

Of Man's Redemption

Lord's Day XIV

Q. 35. What is the meaning of these words—"He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the virgin Mary?"

A. That God's eternal Son, who is and continueth true and eternal God, took upon him the nature of man, of the flesh and blood of the Virgin Mary, by the operation of the Holy Ghost; that he might also be the true seed of David, like unto his brethren in all things, sin excepted.

Q. 36. What profit dost thou receive by Christ's holy conception and nativity?

A. That he is our Mediator; and with innocence and perfect holiness, covers in the sight of God, my sins, wherein I was conceived and brought forth.

1.

Without The Will Of Man

Except for the adjective "true" or "real" modifying "nature of man" in the thirty-fifth answer (*wahre menschliche Natur*), our text is a correct translation of the original German.

This Lord's Day offers a brief exposition of the words of the *Apostolicum*: "conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the virgin Mary." While in the preceding Lord's Day the subject was that the man Jesus is the true and eternal Son of God, in the present chapter of the Heidelberg Catechism the emphasis falls on His humanity: the Son of God is become man, the Word is become flesh. We are confronting two questions here: 1. that concerning the mystery of the two natures of Christ, or the union of the human nature with the divine in Him; and 2. that of the origin of His human nature, or the mode of the accomplishment of this union of the divine and human nature. Strictly speaking, the Apostolic Confession speaks only of the latter: the Church confesses that Jesus, the only begotten Son of God our Lord, was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the virgin Mary. This would seem to refer only to the origin of the human nature of the Saviour, to the way in which the Word became flesh. Yet, this "historical" statement certainly implies the entire mystery of the incarnation, and of the union of the two natures in the Person of the Son of God. And once again we marvel at the comprehensiveness of the comparatively brief explanation by the Catechism of this statement of the *Apostolicum*. In its answer to the thirty-fifth question our Instructor explains: 1. That the assumption of the human nature of Christ is strictly a work of God, wholly and immediately, i.e., without the will and instrumentality of man. God alone is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, also according to His human nature: the Son of God, the second Person of the Holy Trinity, Who as Son is never to be separated from the Father, by the operation of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit that proceeds from the Father and the Son, took upon Him the nature of man. 2. That by this divine act the nature of the Godhead did not change: the Son is and continueth true and eternal God. 3. That through the act of the incarnation the human nature retained its own identity, and was merged into the Godhead: he took the true or real human nature upon Himself, and that, too from the flesh and blood of a woman. 4. That this woman, who through the wonder of God's omnipotence was chosen and "graced" to become the mother of Jesus Christ, was a virgin. 5. That through the birth of this Son of God in the flesh from the virgin Mary, He was the true seed of David, born in the line of the promise. 6. And that thus He, the incarnated Son of God, became like unto His brethren in all things, except that also in His human nature He was without sin.

These various elements, therefore, are now the subject of our further exposition.

And these truths must be maintained by the Church in opposition to every form of false doctrine, both of the early centuries of the history of the Church, and of modern times.

Even in very early times several false doctrines developed in regard to the humanity of Christ, as well as in respect to His true divinity. There were those who taught that the Son of God assumed merely the appearance of a human nature. Even as angels occasionally appeared in the form of man, so Christ was not really flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone, but appeared in the form of a man. Others presented the view that Christ assumed only a partial human nature: He took upon Himself a human body, and a human soul, but not a human "mind" or spirit; the place of the latter was taken by the divine nature. Still others erred in regard to the union of the two natures, some speaking of two persons as well as two natures in Christ, only one of whom was crucified and raised from the dead; others presenting this union as a merging of the two natures into one "theanthropos," a God-man. In modern times the incarnation is denied as purely and exclusively a wonder of God: God did not come down to man in the incarnation of the Son, but man is reaching out for God, becomes God-conscious.

Over against all these old and new errors the Church must hold fast to the truth concerning the mystery of the incarnation. She lives, not by human philosophy, but by faith in revelation. And by that faith she confesses, that Christ assumed a real human nature, body and soul, from the flesh and blood of the virgin Mary; that in His human nature He is of the seed of David, in every respect like unto His brethren, sin excepted; that the human nature through the wonder of the incarnation did not merge with the divine, nor was ever separated from the divine nature, but is and remains for ever united with Christ's deity in the unity of the Person of the Son of God. And in the same faith she confesses that the incarnation is in no sense an act of man, but solely of God. Man did not reach out for God, or develop to new heights of God-consciousness, but God came down to us, ever to remain with us and dwell with us. The incarnation is the revelation of the living God! The Creator united Himself most intimately with the creature; the Lord also became servant; the Eternal One came into time, the Infinite One into space. Great is the mystery of godliness: God is manifest in the flesh!

This truth it is which the Church meant to express in the words of the *Apostolicum*: "conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the virgin Mary."

The two parts of this confession are intimately related. They constitute one whole. They are only aspects of one and the same truth: that God alone is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, even according to His human nature, although He was not created but had a human mother, and was born of us. It is the truth that the birth of the Son of God is a human impossibility, a revelation of the God of our salvation. Christ was born without the will of man.

That this is the testimony of Scripture cannot be doubted.

Even in the old dispensation the sign of the virgin that would conceive and bear a son was given: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." It is true that those who deny the virgin birth of Christ point out that the Hebrew word used in this text for "virgin" may also refer to a young woman recently married. Fact is, however, first of all, that the word signifies the age of puberty, a person of marriageable age but not yet married; and secondly, that the text speaks definitely of a *sign*. Now a sign is a phenomenon that draws the attention of men by its extraordinary character, its being radically different from the facts of experience, a wonder of grace. But there certainly would be nothing extraordinary in the fact that a young woman would conceive and bear a son. We maintain, therefore, that the prophecy in Isa. 7:14 ultimately looks forward to the wonder of the birth of our Lord from the virgin Mary.

This is, moreover, corroborated by the passage in Matt. 1:18-25. In the twenty-second and twenty-third verses we read: "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." The "word of the Lord by the prophet" is, evidently a reference to Isa. 7:14. And "all this was done" refers to what is narrated in the preceding verses. Joseph, having noticed Mary's condition, had been minded to leave his espoused wife secretly, but the Lord had revealed to him in a dream that she was quite innocent of the sin he had suspected her to have committed, "for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." vs. 20. This passage, therefore, is not only in itself a clear proof for the virgin birth of the Saviour, but also corroborates the view that in Isa. 7:14 this amazing wonder was predicted.

Moreover, that the Scriptures plainly teach the virgin birth is also evident from the annunciation of the birth of Christ by the angel Gabriel to Mary in Nazareth, the narrative of which we find in Luke 1:26-38. We may note here specially the question of Mary: "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" There is more implied in this question than what may appear on the surface. The angel had saluted Mary with the words: "Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women." vs. 28. And when Mary was evidently troubled at this strange salutation, the angel continued: "Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God

shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever: and of his kingdom there shall be no end." And it is then that Mary asks her question of astonishment: "How shall this be, seeing that I know not a man?"

Now there is reason to ask: what induced Mary to ask this question? The mere fact that, at the moment, Mary was still a virgin, would hardly seem sufficient to explain this. It is true, of course, that she was not as yet married. But it is also a fact that she "was espoused to a man named Joseph." She was, therefore, about to be married. How, then, could she be so absolutely certain that she would "not know a man?" Certainly there was nothing in the words of the angel that would suggest this, far less raise it beyond a doubt that she would become pregnant without the normal intercourse to cause such a condition. Why could she not interpret the words of the angel as meaning that she would get married to Joseph as soon as possible, and that then, in the normal way she would become with child? Would not that have been the most natural conclusion for her to draw from the announcement of the angel, rather than at once think of the astounding possibility that she would conceive without knowing a man? Yet, of this one thing she appears absolutely sure. She will not know a man. And because of this, the words of the angel appear to her to be humanly impossible of realization. How must this certainty on the part of Mary be explained?

It seems to me that there can only be one answer to this question: there was no man for her to know, i.e., there was no man left in the royal line of the promise that could beget the promised Messiah. The Davidic generation of royal seed that, according to the promise, was expected to bring forth the Christ, had ended in a virgin! The realization of the promise had become an impossibility from a human viewpoint. Long before Gabriel visited Mary in Nazareth the glorious tree of David had been cut down to the ground, and never had it flourished again since the Babylonian captivity. But at the moment of the annunciation all that was left of it was a "root in a dry ground." There was no male descendent in the line of the generations of the promise. Only a virgin was left. And, therefore, when the angel came to announce to her that she would become the mother of Him that would reign over the house of Jacob for ever, the question arose immediately: But how shall this be, seeing I do not know a man?

This explanation is based on the conviction that in Matt. 1:1-17 the evangelist gives us very really "the book of the generation of Jesus Christ," that is, not the legal line of Christ's fathers according to the flesh, but the organic line. In other words, in this "book of generation" we have the genealogy, not of Joseph, but of Mary. If this is true, the sixteenth verse of the

first chapter of Matthew must mean that Jacob had no male children, that Mary was the only heir, and that, when Joseph married Mary he was received and inscribed legally in the registers of generations that ran from David over Jacob (vs. 16) to the mother of Jesus. In this legal sense Joseph was of the house and lineage of David. Whether he was also of the generations of David in the organic sense, is a question that depends on the other question whether or not in the third chapter of the gospel according to Luke we have the genealogy of Joseph. There is good ground to believe that also in Luke we meet with the genealogy of Mary, although legally it is that of Joseph. However this may be, if our interpretation of Matt. 1:16 be correct, Joseph was not of that line of generations, that continued line of Davidic kings (II Sam. 7:12ff; Ps. 89:19ff), that would culminate in the Messiah. Mary alone was left. Is it not probable that she often "pondered this in her heart," before the angel came to visit her with his amazing message, and that the question that had frequently troubled her soul arose to her mind at once as she listened to the angel's words: But how shall this be? How shall the promise be fulfilled, seeing there is not a man, and I am the only one left of the royal generations of David?

If this is correct, we can understand why denial of the virgin birth of Christ usually implies or leads to the denial of the incarnation of the Son of God, the truth that Jesus Christ *came into* the flesh. There are those who would maintain the truth of the incarnation and of the real divinity of Christ, but who deny that He was born of a virgin, and claim that Christ's assuming our human nature did not necessarily require His birth of a virgin. The Son of God could just as well unite Himself with our nature as it is normally conceived and born from a human mother and by the will of man. Now, this is, to say the least, a proposition that is difficult to prove, if not impossible. We know very little about the mystery of the conception and birth of a normal child, much less about the birth of the Son of God in the flesh. Even though we may not be able to demonstrate the truth of this proposition, we much rather assume, on the basis of Scripture, that the virgin birth of Christ was also ontologically necessary, that is, that the Son of God could assume the human nature only by way of elimination of the will of man. But whether this be so or not, certain it is that God purposely creates the *sign* of the virgin birth to make known unto us that Jesus Christ's coming into the flesh is His act exclusively, and that Christ is born, not by the will of man, but by the conception of the Holy Spirit. God reveals Himself where all human possibilities have come to an end. The incarnation does not take place until the generations from which He was to be born according to the promise have ended in a virgin, that is, until an im-

possible situation has been created, in order that He may be revealed as the Lord, Who not only calls the things that are not as if they were, but Who also quickens the dead. Only when we are forced to ask the question: "how shall this be?" does God give us the answer: What is impossible with men, is possible with God. The virgin birth is a *sign*, a revelation of the mystery of the conception by the Holy Ghost. The two are inseparably connected.

And this is quite in harmony with the answer Mary receives through the angel to her perplexing problem. For the angel replied: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." The answer to Mary's question: how shall a virgin conceive and bear a child? is, therefore, *through the conception by the Holy Ghost*. We refrain, of course, from any attempt to explain this profound mystery. All we can say about it is that it signifies that the Son of God Himself, by His Spirit, that proceeds from the Father and the Son, so operated upon the flesh and blood of the virgin Mary, that she conceived in her womb, and brought forth her firstborn Son. Eliminating the will of man, the Person of the Son of God, prepared His own human nature and that, too, from the flesh and blood of the virgin Mary. And this means, seeing that the Persons in the holy Trinity can never be separated, that the triune God is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ also in His human nature. It also implies that Christ is flesh of our flesh, and blood of our blood. As to His Person He came from without, from above, out of eternity and infinity, to unite Himself with us for ever; as to His human nature, He is of us, not especially created, but conceived and born. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Heb. 2:14, 15.

Thus understood, the words with which the angel concludes his message to Mary become intelligible, and receive a new meaning: "For with God nothing shall be impossible." The impossibility is the virgin without a man. The divine possibility is realized by the wonder of God expressed in the words of the *Apostolicum*: *conceived by the Holy Ghost*. And in the light of this revelation, through faith, the Church calls "that holy thing" that was born of Mary the Son of God! For "every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come into the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come into the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world." I John 4:2, 3. H. H.

Samson Justified In His Seeking Occasion

Arriving with his parents in Timnah, Samson and the woman, so we saw, were married. On the marriage-feast Samson put forth a riddle for his Philistine guests to propound. He was to give them thirty shirts and thirty changes of garments, should they find the answer to his riddle within the seven days of the feast. Should they fail in this, they were to give him the same amount of garments. Samson's wife, so we saw, at once began to tease him for the solution. Refusal drove her to take recourse to tears and reproaches. As to her countrymen, for the first three days they labored with the riddle without being able to find the answer. On the third day they began to plough with Samson's heifer but without taking recourse to threats. But on the seventh day, when they found that the wife's importunities could accomplish nothing they resorted to threats against her. She must entice her husband, that he may declare unto them the riddle, or they would burn her and her father's house with fire. Thus threatened, the woman's entreaties took on such a violence that Samson yielded; and she hastened with the answer to her people, who in turn rushed into Samson's presence and expounded the riddle. And, though it was as plain as day that they had gotten the answer from the young wife, they nevertheless insisted that Samson give them the specified amount of garments. In this way did they mock and contempt him, the Hebrew, and all that he represented. Samson went down to Ashkelon and slew thirty men of them, and took their spoil, and gave change of garments unto them that had expounded the riddle. This attack was the beginning of a warfare in which the Philistines were subdued by the hand of Samson, the lone warrior of God. Before we pass on to the remaining exploits of Samson, we must concentrate on this first attack to see whether it can be justified. The facts here are these.

Samson had sought occasion against the Philistines. The text is plain here. "But his father and mother knew not that it was of the Lord, that he sought occasion against the Philistines. . . ." The thought conveyed is that the occasion was sought by Samson and that this was of the Lord. It is undeniably true that Samson wanted the Philistines to do him a personal injury that could serve him as the immediate inciting circumstance for the war that he must wage. He wanted the Philistines to offend with respect to him personally. That offence would be the occasion that he sought. The Philistines did offend; and Samson went down and slew thirty Ashkelonites and turned over the spoils of battle to his

mockers. It has been noticed how some of the liberal interpreters view the exploits of Samson. In their eyes the slaying of those Ashkelonites was an atrocious crime committed in cold blood by a man stung by personal injuries and moved by selfish and vain passions. And they are as indignant with Samson as with the Philistines when they burned Samson's wife and her father. As has already been made clear, this appraisal of Samson's exploits is to be rejected. Any interpreter, who passes such judgment on the man and his deed shows thereby that he is woefully incompetent as an interpreter of sacred history.

Yet Samson's doing on this marriage-feast—his seeking occasion against the Philistines and his slaying thirty of their number—may, at first glance, strike us as wrong though it be that in these works Samson was above reproach. Samson's guests had dealt deceitfully with him, but consider that he had purposely occasioned that deceit by propounding that riddle. Then there is also this question. Did their treachery, which Samson himself had occasioned, justify his slaying thirty of their number? This doing of Samson was right in the sight of God; but on what grounds is it to be justified? Was the punishment, which he on that occasion meted out to the Philistines, commensurate with the injury that had been done him? In appraising these doings of Samson, in showing that they were right, we must begin with his seeking occasion against the Philistines. Some well-meaning interpreters, in their zeal and determination to set forth Samson as a saint without a flaw, so delineate on the character and the doings of the man as to deny, by implication, that he actually sought occasion against the Philistines. The cause of their denial is, that, in their judgment, the action was unethical—which of course it was not—and that therefore it cannot be harmonized with the goodness of the man. If the interpreters of the liberal school can find nothing but moral ugliness in the man, these well-meaning interpreters have nothing but words of praise for him; they clear him of guilt and know how to put him in the clear always. But the praise of these worshippers of Samson is ill-conceived; it is therefore as untrue and damaging to Samson, as are the hard words spoken of him by the liberal commentators. Samson, say these well-meaning interpreters, "really loved the maiden of Timnah, and took the full measure of youthful delight in the nuptial banquet and festival. He was too genial of nature to suppose and foresee "that covenants, even in the simplest relations of life, cannot be made with those who are opponents in principle and tyrants in disposition". Thus he actually expected to find a covenant of love and fidelity in a Philistine family; only he deceived himself. "Everything appeared to be harmonious when he propounded the riddle. He did it in the most peace-

ful spirit, from the impulse of an active mind". But it immediately, contrary to the desire and expectations of Samson. "brought the hidden antagonism to light". of Samsons, "brought the hidden antagonism to light". it was proposed were Philistines. The nobility of his disposition is supposed to reveal itself "in contrast with their vulgar nature also in this that he, for his part, risks thirty times the value of what, in case of failure, each of the thirty has to pay." The young wife teases him for the solution of the riddle, but to no avail. "Finally, on the seventh day she so tormented the hero, that he told it to her. He had a heart not only great but also tender, which at last succumbs to the prayers and the tears of the wife whom he loves and holds to be true. The treachery is completed. The miserable Philistines act as if they had themselves found the solution, and claim the reward. Then, for the first time, a light goes up for Samson. He now sees the contrast,—the incongruity and error of marrying into that Philistine family." He sees that he deceived himself when he expected to find a covenant of love in such a family. "The mists with which a seductive sensuality had obscured his vision are scattered. National wrath and national strength awake in him. His whole greatness now reveals itself."

Let us not fail to grasp the thrust of this depiction of the man. It is verily this. Samson actually imagined that the Philistines were virtuous people with whom an Israelitish man could fraternize and into whose circle he could marry without incurring the displeasure of God and without doing injury to his own soul. This being his imagining, he married that woman, thus married her in the firm belief that she would make him a good wife. To her countrymen he was well disposed. He trusted them implicitly and entertained toward them the kindest feelings and actually believed that the love he bore them was mutual. He therefore little suspected, trusting soul that he was, that in their bosom lurked a hidden antagonism to be brought to light by his riddle, that he expounded to them in a peaceful spirit. He wanted no trouble. He expected no trouble. What he looked for in these men is good will, kindly treatment, true fellowship and fair play. But he found deception, treachery, and derision. Then there went up for him a light. For the first time he saw his error; and he realized that he dealt with Philistines. In his wrath that awoke in him he threw to his deceivers the spoils of thirty slain men—men slain by his own hand—and the conflict was on. There is this question. Is this depiction of Samson, of his character, motives, and expectations true to the Scriptures? Certainly it is not. It militates against the statement that he "sought occasion against the Philistines." This statement, as was said, these well-wishing interpreters choose to overlook. They fail to take notice of it because, in

their judgment, the action was wrong. Their reasoning is that, if Samson was guilty of this, he was a vicious man, every bit as deceitful and treacherous as those uncircumcised Philistines. And they don't want to think of him as being such a character. And it is well that they do not, as no statement occurs in the sacred narrator on which to ground such a view of the man. According to the testimony of the Scriptures, Samson was a true believer, a hero of Faith. What is to be commended in these well-wishing interpreters is that they love the man on account of his faith, and therefore delight in finding in him nothing but true goodness. But it will not do to ignore what the Scriptures report of these Old Testament worthies, just because the report is damaging and militates against our pre-conceived notions of the sanctity of these worthies. We can't be less critical of them than the Scriptures. As to Samson, it is inconceivable in the light of the Scriptures that in his eyes the Philistines were a noble race of men, who had his implicit confidence and whose fellowship he craved. Samson was a hero of faith and these Philistines were heathen and idolaters; they were wicked, unprincipled and violent men, thoroughly unscrupulous. They were defiers of God; and they persecuted God's people. They had dominion over Israel and were daily practicing their abominations in Canaan's borders. It can't be that Samson loved these men in ignorance of their true character, and that he first learned to know them on his marriage feast. The conception is thoroughly wrong. It had been revealed to Samson that God wanted war with the Philistines and that he was the one to wage that war; and the Spirit of God had already begun to move him so that he was eager for the conflict and began seeking an occasion against the Philistines. This is what the sacred narrator tells us. And therefore it is not true that Samson wanted to preserve the peace with the Philistines, that with this end in view he married into that Philistine family and propounded his riddle on the marriage-feast—propounded it in a spirit of peace,—that in a paroxysm of rage he slayed thirty Philistines, because his guests instead of taking him to their bosom as he had expected, dealt treacherously with him in the matter of his riddle. All such views do Samson a grave injustice; they militate against the Scriptures, in particular against that statement asserting that he sought occasion against them.

As to Samson's seeking occasion against the Philistines, let us determine the meaning, necessity, and character of this doing. Samson's doing, his seeking occasion, indicates that the Philistines, as masters of the people of Israel—they had dominion over Israel—were not making themselves especially insufferable through atrocious rule. Israel had known fiercer enemies in the past. The Midianites, to cite one ex-

ample, had encamped against Israel—the northern tribes—and had left no substance for them, neither sheep, nor ox, nor ass. They destroyed the increase of the earth. They plundered and devastated every part of the land they entered, killing and dragging with them every living thing. They would retire with their booty in the autumn, only to reappear again in the spring to swarm over the land and to trample down the crops with their camels and herds, after the Hebrews had ventured forth from the dens and the caves in the mountains to sow their grain. But the Philistines did not so. They were not the fiercest men among the adversaries of Israel. Their rule was reasoned in comparison; and the men of Judah acquiesced in their dominion and were tributary to them without complaint. Though the Philistines were idolaters and enemies of God's cause, Philistines and Israelites got along splendidly together. There was no friction between them. Why should there be, seeing that Israel brought up regularly the required tribute and seeing that so many of them were crowding the temples of the Philistine gods. They were furious with Samson for starting a war with the Philistines. Samson, in their eyes, was a disturber of the peace, of the good relation between them and the Philistines. In their wrath finally they actually took the man, bound him hand and foot, and would have delivered him into the hands of their masters. For they had no quarrel with the Philistines; but they did have a quarrel with Samson. For he wanted war. He was eager for war. For the Lord had commanded him and was moving him by His Spirit. But no one desired war but he. This was Samson's problem and also his predicament. He was the only one among his brethren who wanted war. And as to the Philistines, they were as little war-minded as were the people of Israel. Samson set fire to their wheatfields; and all they demanded of the people of Israel, of the men of Judah, is that they collaborate with them in dispatching Samson. The people of Israel agreed to do that very thing. As the allies of the Philistines they made war against Samson. For they did not want to be delivered. They loved their masters and their bondage and their masters' gods. So what was Samson to do. It would not do for him suddenly to begin slaying peace-loving Philistines. They must offend in some way, as Midian had offended. Would that they encamped against Israel with war-like purposes. But they wanted no war, and thus did not offend, gave him no occasion. But Samson wanted war. For the Spirit of God moved him. So what the Philistines failed to give him, he sought—he sought an occasion against them. He threw himself into their company and propounded his riddle because he sought occasion against them. Being treacherous, proud, and lustful men, the riddle became to them a snare. They offended. They plough-

ed with Samson's heifer. That was their offense, and it formed the occasion that Samson sought and wanted. He now had a case and could begin his conflict with them. And he did so. Did Samson do well in seeking that occasion? Might he take recourse to such a tactic—expound to them a riddle that they might offend? Was the doing consistent with the moral law of God? One answer will do: Samson did well. For the sacred narrator justifies the deed. The justifying statement reads, "It was of the Lord, that he sought occasion against the Philistines: *for at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel.*" Necessity had been laid upon Samson from on High to deliver Israel from that dominion, though they willed not to be delivered. There was war between the Lord and Samson on the one hand and the Philistines on the other, a war that the Lord had declared and that Samson must wage. His occasioning by his riddle their deception in order that he might have occasion against them for commencing the conflict must be regarded as forming a kind of craft that he could use with impunity. It was not deception; but it was a strictly honest test to which he put them, but a test that they did not endure because of their treachery. That he wanted them to offend—which he did, for he sought occasion—is but equivalent to saying that he wanted the enemy destroyed that Israel might be free. And he must want to destroy them for God's sake. And he must serve as a willing agent for their destruction. But there is still this question. Did the treachery of his guests—they ploughed with his heifer—justify his going down to Ashkelon and slaying thirty Philistines? Does deception such as they had practiced against him—deception in the matter of a riddle—call for a punishment so severe; does it call for capital punishment? Besides, in meeting out punishment, he passes by the actual offenders and slays thirty innocent men. With the spoils of the combat he returns to the culprits and meets their unjust claim. How is this doing of Samson to be justified? On what grounds is it to be justified? On the following. 1. Every Philistine deserved to die quite apart from the treachery of Samson's thirty guests, being, as they were, wicked men, defiers of God and oppressors of His people. They had dominion over Israel. 2. The Lord had ordered them destroyed. 3. The command had come to Samson. Thus the thirty Eshkelonites and as many Philistines as fell in this war, died not as innocent men on account of the treachery of Samson's guests but they died on account of their own sins. They were slain by Samson because the Lord had given command to him to kill the Philistines. Of this killing, of Samson's conflict with the Philistines, the treachery of his guests was but the immediate instigating circumstance. The reason that this treachery could serve this purpose is that what Samson had suffered at the hands of his

thirty guests, all Israel was suffering at the hands of the Philistine nation. If then, in appraising the slaying of the thirty and the exploits of Samson in general, we take into consideration the wickedness of the Philistines, the command of God to Samson, and Samson's own faith, we perceive that these doings of the man are essentially good works well pleasing unto God. It is only when we leave God out of consideration and refuse to take account of the report of the Scriptures to the effect that Samson was a believer, that the exploits of the man stand out in our minds as atrocious sins and the man himself as the vilest of culprits.

G. M. O.

Public Worship In The Church

The Lord's Supper. — This sacrament of the Lord Supper was instituted directly by Christ. Matt. 26:28; Luke 22:19. To Christ certainly the bread and the wine were signs of His broken body and shed blood, that is, of His human nature in which He atoned the sons of His people. Not His, to be sure, was the teaching that these elements are changed into His very flesh and blood, so that the communicants eat Him physically. Thus the statement, "This is my body" means, "This symbolizes my body, my human nature." It is true that this is nowhere in the Scriptures stated in just these words, yet it must be evident that such is the construction to be placed on the statement of Christ in question. Yet apparently the exponents of the doctrine of transubstantiation do find some support in the Scriptures. They may point to this word from Christ's own lips, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed and my blood is drink indeed." John 6:52-55. Here Christ emphatically states that His flesh must be eaten and His blood drunken and that he, failing in this, has no life in himself. This is plain language. This teaching must be maintained in all its force. Christ must certainly be eaten. For He is the true bread of life. But the question is, how this is done. Not certainly in the physical sense. What spiritual benefit could the believer derive from eating Christ's flesh in the physical sense? No benefit whatever. Physical food is a means of support of the physical man only, of His lower nature. Physical food is for the upbuilding of the body but not for the upbuilding of the spirit, of the new man. Yet eating Christ is possible for the believer and is actually done by the believer. He eats Christ

spiritually and by faith. Eating Christ is a spiritual act. Eating Christ—eating His flesh and drinking His blood—is possible for the following reason. Christ is revealed to us in the Scriptures, thus presented to us by the written word that forms our Bible. Presented to us is Christ as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world, as the resurrection and the life, as the way and the truth and the life, presented to us in all the glorious significance that He has for His people. The Scriptures, in a word, is the revelation of Christ by word and symbol, thus a revelation in the face of Christ of the triune Jehovah, the God and Father of Christ and in Him the God and Father of His people. It is the revelation of the Christ, thus the Word that sets forth the Christ, that the believers actually eat as to their spirits by a living faith. And eating the Word they very actually eat Christ for the very reason that the Word of the Scriptures is a true revelation of the Christ. And the believers taste that Christ is good, and they are admonished to desire the sincere milk which is Christ, and to grow in the grace and the knowledge of Christ. The word of Christ, "Eat my flesh and drink my blood" must no more be taken in the physical sense than the admonition, "Feed the flock of God."

The contention of Walker is that we find in John's gospel, and in this very sixth chapter, the germs of the Romish and Lutheran conceptions, thus the germs of the transubstantiation idea. But this is absurd.

Whether the early church grasped the true meaning of the Lord's Supper is difficult to determine. This is certain that the early church fathers attached great significance to this sacrament. Ignatius calls it the "flesh of our crucified and risen Christ and the consecrated bread a medicine of immortality and an antidote of spiritual death." Irenaeus says repeatedly that bread and wine in the sacraments become by the presence of the Word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit the body and the blood of Christ, and that the reception of the elements strengthens the soul unto eternal life. Yet we cannot ascribe the idea of transubstantiation to this church father. For he also calls the bread and wine antitypes and thus clearly distinguishes the bread and wine from the body and the blood of Christ. Tertullian did likewise. He takes "This is my body" to mean, "This is a figure of my body." It cannot be shown from the writings of the fathers that by the middle of the second century the conception of a real physical presence of Christ in the Supper was widespread, or even spread at all.

The Lord's Supper was further regarded by the primitive church as an eternal and true sacrifice of the new covenant that took the place of the passover. Yet the anti-Nicene fathers did not regard this sacrifice—the Lord's Supper—as an unbloody repetition of the atoning sacrifice of Christ upon the cross, but they regarded it simply as a thankoffering of the whole church

for the blessings of God in creation and redemption. And to this sacrifice, they gave the name *Eucharist* meaning "thankoffering". It was especially Cyrian who developed the doctrine of the Lord's Supper as a sacrifice, offered to God by a priest. We have this from his pen, "For if Jesus Christ, our Lord and God, is himself the chief priest of God the Father, and has first offered himself a sacrifice to the Father, and has commanded this to be done in commemoration of himself, certainly that priest truly discharges the office of Christ, who imitates that which Christ did; and he then offers a full and true sacrifice in the church when he proceeds to offer it according to what he sees Christ himself to have offered." Thus the task of the Christian priest is "to serve the altar and to celebrate the divine sacrifices." Here then was being laid the foundation of that latter doctrine that this sacrifice is the very flesh and blood of Christ with atoning value.

G. M. O.

ATTENTION, CLASSIS WEST

Classis West will convene D.V. Wednesday, March 7 in the Sioux Center Prot. Ref. Church. Will those who desire lodging please contact the undersigned.

Rev. M. Gritters, S. C.

IN MEMORIAM

On the morning of January 30 the Lord in His infinite wisdom took out of our midst our beloved husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather,

KLAAS SCHIPPER

at the age of 87 years.

We have the assurance that God, whom he served, has taken him to His eternal Home for the which he longed in the last days he was here. We are greatly comforted hereby.

Mrs. Klaas Schipper

Mrs. Alice Schaaphok

Mrs. Anne Vos

Mr. and Mrs. George Schipper

Mr. and Mrs. John Schipper

Mr. and Mrs. Dick Bouma

Mr. Jacob Schipper

Mr. and Mrs. Simon De Haan

Mr. and Mrs. John Engelhard

Dr. and Mrs. James Putt

Miss Henrietta Schipper

36 grandchildren

Grand Rapids, Michigan

13 great-grandchildren.

Opent Uwen Mond!

(Psalm 81)

Hoogstwaarschijnlijk is dit een psalm van Asaf, zoowel als voor Asaf. Want deze O. T. heilige was opperzangmeester in Israel. Het is een heerlijk lied, een lied, dat spreekt van Gods groote goedheid.

Deze psalm is de eerste dien we leerden in Nederland. Welk kind, in Gereformeerde kringen geboren, kent Psalm 81, vers 12 (berijmd) niet?

Opent uwen mond;
Eischt van Mij vrijmoedig,
Op Mijn trouwverbond;
Al wat u ontbreekt,
Schenk Ik, zoo gij 't smeekt,
Mild en overvloedig!

Daarom heb ik de inzet van de versje boven dit schrijven geplaatst.

Ja, als de kleintjes nog maar amper kunnen praten leerden zij dit versje. En als dan Oom of Tante overkwam, dan moesten wij dat versje opzeggen. Later, even later, leerden we "Heer, ai, maak mij Uwe wegen, door Uw Woord en Geest bekend!" En dan volgde al spoedig: " 't Hijgend hert der jacht ontkomen, schreeuwt niet sterker naar 't genot van de frissche waterstroomen, dan mijn ziel verlangt naar God!"

O, ik weet wel, dat wij die zaken waarvan we stamelden niet verstonden, dat wij al die versjes onnadenkend zongen. Hoe kon het anders? Wat kan een vijf- of vier-jarige weten van Gods trouwverbond, Zijn wegen of den dorst naar 't eeuwig Wezen! En toch is 't schoon, lieflijk en goed, dat wij onze kinderen spoedig wennen aan de lofzangen Israels. Later, veel later, als wij de kinderschoenen ontwiesen, wanneer de Heilige Geest ons dieper inleidde, waren we aan de Woorden Gods gewend en verstonden de zaken van Gods koninkrijk zoo veel te spoediger. Daarom is er zoo groot verschil tusschen het verbondskind, dat tot zichzelf kwam door Gods Geest en de uitverkorene die van uit de wereld geroepen wordt, iets dat somtijds, niet vaak, geschiedt. De laatstgenoemde moet dan zoo ontzaglijk veel inhalen. En sommige dingen haalt hij nooit meer in. De heerlijkste en diepste indrukken krijgen wij in de jeugd. Reden waarom God Zijn verbondskinderen toeroept: Gedenkt aan uwen Schepper in de dagen uwer jongelingschap!

De psalm begint met een opwekking om den Heere te prijzen: "Zingt vroolijk Gode onze sterkte; juicht den God Jakobs!" Ge kunt wel een boek schrijven over dit ééne vers. Elk woord is zeer zwaar.

Men zingt als alle nooden vervuld zijn. Dat wil zeggen, de ware jubel is een jubel des geluks. Er is zingen, dat door God gekenmerkt wordt als een tieren.

Amos 5:23. "Doe het getier uwer liederen van Mij weg, ook mag Ik uwer luiten spel niet hooren." Dat is vreeselijk. Zingen wordt tieren voor God als ge het hart verre van Hem houdt. Alle zingen, dat uit een dankbaar, blijmoedig hart tot God opgezonden wordt is Hem liefelijk en aangenaam.

Zingt vroolijk ! Zingt nu blij te moe 't Machtig Opperwezen eenen lofzang toe! Jesaja heeft psalm 81 gezongen. Later zou hij het ons vertellen, dat de Heere den vroolijke ontmoet en dien die gerechtigheid doet. De beteekenis is, dat God den man bemint die blij is als hij gerechtigheid mag werken. Men zingt God zoo vroolijk en blij te moe, als men Hem liefheeft, als men vol is van God, als men naar Hem verlangt meer dan naar iets of iemand anders.

Waarom zouden wij niet zingen? Hij is immers onze sterkte! Wat zit daar veel in. Men moet, allereerst, zeer nedig zijn om dit te zingen. Gulweg erkent men dan, dat wij geen sterkte hebben, dat wij afsoluut afhankelijk zijn van Hem. "Van Wien het volk zijn sterkte heeft!" "Hij is de kracht van hunne kracht!" En zoo zouden wij voort kunnen gaan om het uit den Bijbel te bewijzen, dat God de kracht is van onze kracht. Hij is dat zelfs van den duivel en van alles. Hij is de Almachtige. Doch hier beteekent het iets zeer speciaals. Hij is de sterkte van Gods volk om goed, lieflijk, rechtvaardig, en schoon te zijn. Zou er daarom op volgen "juicht den God Jakobs?" Indien iemand, dan heeft Jakob uitgevonden, dat God zijn sterkte was. Hij probeerde gedurig om den Heere een handje te helpen, doch alles brak hem bij de handen af. Hij moest leeren, dat God alléén Zijn heerlijk Huis bouwt.

"Heft een psalm op, en geeft de trommel, de liefelijke harp met de luit." Dat was een inzetten in Israel. Zoekt het maar op in II Kron. 5:12 en 30:21. Daar staat, dat men den Heere moest loven met die muziek-instrumenten. Alles om toch maar een schoon harmonisch geheel te mogen hebben in het rijk der stemmen en klanken opstijgende door de atmosfeer tot voor den troon Gods. Ik kan het maar niet begrijpen, dat men vroeger soms tegen muziek was in de kerk. Ook nu is ons volk nog wel wat sober. Het gebeurt maar hoogst zelden, dat men meer dan orgel of piano muziek in de kerk toeliet. Of er geen gevaar is? Ja, dat stemmen wij direkt toe. Doch alle misbruik veroorzaakt het goede gebruik niet. In elk geval moeten wij er voor zorgen, dat de wereld van muziek gevonden wordt in onzen godsdienst. Hier en op veel meerder plaatsen in Gods Woord, wordt de kerk opgewekt om ook met de muziek Hem te loven en te prijzen. Daarom is een pijporgel in de kerk zoo mooi. In een pijporgel zitten zooveel stemmen, verschillende klanken. En als men dan iemand heeft die het spelen machtig is, dan kan het ons zoo schoon dienen in den openbaren eeredienst.

Van Godswege waren er zelfs bazuinen in de kerk. Er was zelfs een feest van trompetten. Ter bestemder tijd, op den feestdag, moest men op de bazuin blazen. Want het was een inzetten in Israel, zegt ons Asaf. Het is duidelijk uit het verband, dat het feest waarvan Asaf spreekt, het Paaschfeest geweest is. Want in het verband spreekt hij van de uittocht uit Egypte. Het blazen op de bazuin was een inzetten in Jozef geworden, omdat God hen verlostte uit het diensthuis der slavernij. Aldaar, zegt Asaf, heb ik een spraak gehoord die ik niet verstond. Ik denk, dat we hier niet allereerst te denken hebben aan de Egyptische taal, alswel de Egyptische afgoderij. Immers, in het verband is er sprake van de stemmen van menschen Gods in het gezang en van de stemmen der muziek om God te loven! Daartegenover nu stelt Asaf den wanklank der Egyptische afgoderij. Het was een mompelen en schreeuwen dat ijdel en boos was. En het motief was vijandschap tegen God. Want tegelijkertijd spreekt hij, als in éénen adem van den last en de potten. De schouder van Israel was van den last onttrokken en hunne handen van de potten. Die last en die potten zien op de vreeselijke arbeid der slavernij in Egypte, waar zij de gebouwen der Farao's moesten bouwen. Die potten waren de werktuigen die zij gebruikten om de zware steen te sjouwen tot een last der schouders.

Doch de Heere had hen verlost. Daarom die vroolijke zang en de stemmen der muziek. En onder die muziek was de bazuin de voornaamste. De bazuin is de stemme Gods tot zegen of tot vloek. Er was een bazuingeclank bij het Paaschfeest. De priesters moesten op de zilvere bazuinen blazen. Het was symbool van Gods liefelijke stemme ter verlossing. Doch er zal ook bazuingeclank zijn bij het komen van Jezus. Doch dan is het hoofdzakelijk het proepen van God tegen de goddeloozen. Dan komt Hij ten oordeel.

Van uit de benauwdheden der Egyptische slavernij hadden zij tot God geroepen. En hoewel het scheen eerst alsof de Heere doof was, toch had Hij hunne smeekbede gehoord want Hij riep Mozes en Aäron om Zijn volk uit te leiden. Hij antwoordde Zijn volk "uit de schuilplaats des donders." Dat zal zien op de vuurkolom en de wolkkolom. Wat heeft God wonderlijk en majestieus geroepen in die dagen. Het antwoord der verlossing voor Israel was tevens een vreeselijk woeden tegen de Egyptenaren. Vanuit die schuilplaats des donders heeft Hij gestaard met groote gramschap op de vijanden Zijns volks en heeft hen verdorven. Denkt aan het woord in Exodus 14:24. Daar staat dat de Heere slechts zag op het leger der Egyptenaren. En zie, zij werden verschríkt, de raderen hunner wagenen stieten tegen elkaar en zij werden opgeslokt door de baren van Gods wraak. Doch Israel heeft toen gezongen "blij te moe".

Toen heeft de Heere Zijn volk beproefd aan de

wateren van Meriba. Die naam herinnert ons aan onze schande. De Heere beproefde Zijn werk; doch het vleesch is toen bezweken. Zij hebben, wij hebben daar gemurmureerd. De Heere verzocht ons: er was geen water voor ons; ook was er veel vee dat dorstte. En toen heeft het vleesch van Gods volk getwijfeld aan Gods wondermacht om te verkwikken. Doch Christus verscheen in een Rots die vloeide van heerlijk water. "En de rots was Christus!" I Cor. 10.

Zoo moet ge verstaan wat Asaf zingende zegt: "Mijn volk, zeide Ik, hoor toe, en Ik zal onder U betuigen; Israel, of gij naar Mij hoordet!" Het vloeien van verkwikkend water was een sprake Gods, een sprake die hen vertelde van de groote liefde Gods in het aangezicht van den liefelijken Jezus.

En zoo heeft de Heere Zijn volk gelokt, opdat het Hem zou vreezen. Negatief betuigde de Heere, dat zij geen afgoden zouden dienen. Er mocht geen uitlandsch god gevonden noch gediend worden. Want God is een jaloersch God op Zijn eer. En door hetzelfde bruischende water van den rotssteen, en dat is Christus, zeide God: "Ik ben de Heere Uw God!" Denkt er toch aan, Mijn volk, Ik heb U opgevoerd van uit Egypte. Er was geen andere Verlosser. En hier bij Meriba en op den Sinai roepe Ik U toe: Doe uwen mond wijd open: Ik zal hem vervullen!

Hier hebben wij het hoofdthema van den geheelen psalm. Gods groote goedertierenheid, Gods wonder wil om te zegenen en Zijn volk wel te doen.

De Heere weet, dat wij behoeften hebben. Hij schiep ons met behoeften, met allerlei nooddrift.

De Heere weet, dat nadat wij in de zonde gevallen zijn een veel grootere nooddrift gekomen is. Nu is er de nood van zonde en schuldvergiftenis. Als die niet komt, dan gaan we naar de hel. Nu is er de nooddrift om te loven en te prijzen tot den hemel toe. Nu is er de nooddrift van het eeuwige leven. Nu is er de nooddrift van bescherming en beveiliging tegen den duivel en zijn trawanten. Er zijn bittere vijanden van rondom.

Ik weet dat alles, zegt de Heere.

Daarom: doe uwen mond wijd open. Wie denkt hier niet aan het kleine, jonge vogelte in het nest. Het kan zichzelf niet helpen. Dezelfde idee als bij Agur. Die spreekt van een voeden door God. Dezelfde gedachte. Al wat ons ontbreekt, schenkt God zoo wij 't smeeken. Hij wil er om gebeden worden. Hij schiep en herschiep ons tot Zijn lof. Hij wil een afhankelijk volk, dat door Hem rijk, schoon, zalig en eeuwig gelukkig gemaakt zal worden, opdat zij tot in alle eeuwigheid voor Hem zullen staan om met luider keel Hem op 't hoogst te prijzen.

Doen we dan onzen mond wijd open. Er zijn bij den Heere oceanen van genade en heil. Er is een trouwverbond. Dat wil zeggen, dat wij in Gods Huis

zullen verkeerren. Hij zal het dak van Zijn huis over ons uitbreiden.

De kindertjes zongen hun "opent uwen mond!" en het is goed. De Heere hoorde het en Hij heeft het goedgekeurd.

Hij heeft het kindergezang gehoord en het is eeuwig goed. Jezus heeft het geaccentueerd: Tenzij gijlieden wordt gelijk een kindeken. . . .

Hij hoorde het stamelende vragen, snikkend vragen en kwam aangedragen, snellijk gevlogen: Hij voer U ter hulpe en met Zijne hoogheid op de bovenste wolken.

In deze dagen hooren wij een naklank van een ander vragen. Er is er Een geweest die Zijn mond wijd opengedaan heeft. Hij heeft het zelfs uitgescreuwd. Doch Hij werd niet vervuld. Het was Jezus. Op dien vreeselijken Vrijdag heeft Hij het gezegd, veel smartelijker dan zijn vader David: Mijn God, Ik roep des daags een Gij antwoordt niet, des nachts en Ik heb geen stilte!

En vanwege Zijn smart en bange Godsverlating moogt gij nu Uwen mond wijd open doen. Jezus, Uw Jezus heeft al die zaligheden verdiend.

Opent uwen mond: God, uw God, zal hem vervullen.

Totdat gij allen stille wordt, stille gelijk het gezoogde kind, dat in zalig ruste insluimerde zijnde aan zijner moeders borsten.

Het is o zoo vredig in den hemel!

G. V.

Debate

RESOLVED—that the Underground Movement in Occupied Countries is Revolutionary.

Affirmative:

Because of the timely nature of our subject, the terms used hardly need further elucidation. Ever since the outbreak of the war in Europe such terms as "the underground" and "the occupied countries" have been heard repeatedly on the radio, read in the papers and found on every lip. Who does not realize at once that by "occupied countries" is meant those countries in Europe which have been overrun by the German war-machine and have since been under Nazi control?

The "underground" is also familiar to all as the subversive attempts of the people in the occupied countries to interfere with and destroy by acts of sabotage the hated domination of the Nazis. The underground has made its appearance either as a well-organized

movement of a certain group, or otherwise as the efforts of certain individuals to interfere with the Nazi control. In some cases the movement proceeds according to a definite and well established plan, as was the case in France at the time of the allied invasion. In other cases the individual takes the law in his own hands to work against the enemy in every way possible. Many of these attempts are reported to us in the papers. Some are less drastic than others, as for example, the secret agreement of all the employees in a certain warplant in Holland to blow their noses every five minutes in order to waste precious seconds of the Nazi time, which taken over a whole day for all the employees would amount to considerable loss of time and effort for the enemy. Other attempts are of a far more serious nature, including the destruction of life and property, as for example, transferring a guard into the icy waters of a canal under cover of the night. All these efforts together form the underground movement we have taken under discussion, and which I, as the affirmative, will prove to be nothing less than violent attempts of rebellion against the proper authorities, and therefore purely revolutionary.

Let me concede at the outset that my worthy opponent, who will take up the defence of these subversive actions, has not a single sound argument on his side. From that aspect the subject is hardly debatable.

My argument is as conclusive as it is simple, consisting of but three positive facts. It must be agreed by all that man owes subjection to all those placed in authority over him. Moreover, that there are no exceptions to this rule, no matter who these powers may be. And finally, that any subversive act on the part of the individual against these powers must necessarily be branded as revolutionary.

1. The necessity of obedience to those in authority is based on the fifth commandment. Although the commandment speaks of honoring father and mother, it covers all authority in every sphere of life. Out of the family is born the church, the school, the state and every other conceivable relation of authority and obedience. This is certainly true of the state. The father of the family became head of the clan, leader of the tribe, and ruler of the nation. According to the ordinance of God laid down in creation men do not live pell-mell like rats in the straw, but are governed by those placed in authority over them, to whom they owe all subjection. And let it be said here, that we have about as much choice of determining what power shall rule over us in the state as we have in picking out our own parents before our birth. Both are determined by the providence and appointment of God.

Therefore in article 36 of the Belgic Confession we declare to believe that God "hath appointed kings, princes and magistrates willing that the world should be governed by certain laws and policies; to the end

that the dissoluteness of men might be restrained, and all things carried on among them with good order and decency."

And this in turn is based on the testimony of the Scriptures. The elders appointed to govern Israel in the old dispensation were called gods because it was their calling to exercise judgment "not for man, but for God." Jesus refers to this when He says, "If Scripture called them gods to whom the word of God came. . . .", which can only mean that God invested them by His Word with divine authority to rule in His name. And Wisdom declares, "By Me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth." Prov. 8:15, 16. While Paul tells us that "there is no power but of God. The powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God. And they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." Rom. 13:1, 2.

That is sufficient evidence to prove my first contention, that man owes subjection to all those placed in authority over him.

2. The second statement, that there are no exceptions, no matter who these powers may be, is also readily proven.

The fact that the Nazi war-machine has overrun the continent by brutal force and nefarious devastation offers no excuse for the occupied countries to refuse subjection. Even the fact that these powers openly refuse to acknowledge God and threaten to wipe out religion makes no difference.

We have a similar case in Scripture, when wicked Nebuchadnezzar, who exalted himself as God, succeeded in becoming a world power by subjecting the nations of the world by the edge of the sword. Yet Daniel tells him, "Thou, o king, art king of kings, for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath He given into thy hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Dan. 2:37, 38.

Therefore the Lord demands of Israel by the mouth of the prophet Jeremiah that they shall bring their necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon and serve him. Jer. 27:12.

Nor can the objection be raised that this applies only to Israel, for in the previous verses Jeremiah is instructed to give this same command to the other nations round about, that they also submit to the king of Babylon, upon threat of punishment by the hand of the Lord if they refuse. "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel. . . . I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by my great power and by my outstretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto Me. And now I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, my servant; . . . and all nations

shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son And it shall come to pass, that the nation and kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation will I punish, saith the Lord, with the sword, and with the famine and with the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand." Jer. 27:5-8.

We should not fail to note that Nebuchadnezzar, and Hitler as well, is a tool in God's hand, God's servant, and for that reason must be obeyed, even upon threat of punishment from the hand of God. For they "that resist shall receive to themselves greater damnation."

What is true of Nebuchadnezzar is true of any power that gains supremacy over other nations. They do not attain that power of themselves but receive it from God according to His providence, with the accompanying decree that they shall rule over these nations that have been subjected under them. Therefore the prophet Daniel can say that God "changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and sets up kings." "That the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdoms of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will and setteth up over it the basest of men." Dan. 2:21; 4:17. And God demands subjection to these powers simply because He has placed them in power and given to them the kingdoms of the earth.

Those in authority must be obeyed, the just as well as the unjust, even to the "basest of men", not for their sake, but for God's sake, Who places them in power. The only exception to this rule is when they demand those things of us which are contrary to the command of God. And even then we refuse to obey, because we must obey God rather than men.

All of which sufficiently proves that man owes subjection to all those placed in authority over him, without exception. The people who have surrendered to the opposing forces can only submit. They must necessarily lay down their arms and in every way subject themselves to their new magistrates.

3. Which can leave us but one conclusion, that any subversive act against these powers must be branded as revolutionary.

This conclusion is sustained by the fact that every underground movement must necessarily be an uprising of the *individual* against the powers that be. Even though the former government surrenders under protest, declares itself in exile and surreptitiously orders its former subjects to acts of sabotage, the fact remains that this former government has by the very act of surrender lost all authority over its subjects. And even though these subjects may together set up an organized movement opposing the power that domineers over them, these efforts always remain

the responsibility of the individual, who is also punished accordingly upon detection.

Add to this the fact that these efforts are necessarily done in secret to escape detection of the occupying forces. They are done simply because the people under a foreign yoke refuse to acknowledge that God has placed these powers over them and that they have no right to arise in revolt against them, since only God can give deliverance by just means in His own time and in His own way.

How entirely different was the attitude of David when he was hunted as a beast of the field by the unrighteous Saul. Although David knew that God had taken the kingdom away from the house of Saul because of his wickedness, and although he himself was already anointed as Saul's successor, yet he would not stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed. He patiently waited for the Lord's time, saying, "As the Lord liveth, the Lord shall smite him; or his day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle and perish. The Lord forbid that I should stretch forth my hand against the Lord's anointed." I Sam. 26:10, 11.

And also Israel in captivity in Babylon is told to do the very opposite from committing acts of violence and sabotage against their dreaded oppressor. The land of Canaan lies forsaken, without inhabitant, the city of God and the temple lie in ashes, their property is confiscated, they are torn from their homes and driven into exile and miserable bondage, yet they are told to seek the peace of the city of their captivity. Be it granted that they are ordered to do this for their own peace and security, the fact remains that God orders them: "Build ye houses and dwell in them (in Babylon); and plant gardens, and eat of the fruit of them; take ye wives and beget sons and daughters; that ye may be increased there and not diminished. And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace." Jer. 29:5-7.

If we must speak of an underground movement, let it be the honest effort of the Church of Jesus Christ to openly maintain itself in the Babylon of this world by being faithful to her covenant God and clinging firmly to His promises. Only the Church is assured of the ultimate victory. All other underground movements must be branded as revolutionary.

C. H.

A Few Negative Suggestions:

The brother to whom the negative side of this debate was assigned informed me that he could not see any negative side to this resolution. Hence, he abandoned the attempt to debate with Rev. Hanko.

In order to render the discussion complete, I will, therefore, offer a few arguments that might be presented by the negative party.

First of all I agree with the Rev. Hanko that Scripture teaches that we must be subject to those that are in authority over us. We will not debate this point.

I also agree that it makes no difference in what way those that are in authority come into power, whether by election, by hereditary succession, or by usurpation; always we must be in subjection. And any individual attempt to overthrow the government, or any personal rebellion against the higher powers is revolutionary, and, therefore, to be condemned.

I believe that the biblical illustration of the subjection of Israel to Nebuchadnezzar is to the point.

I grant Rev. Hanko that, in as far as the underground movement in the occupied countries is characterized by individual sabotage and rebellion, and even of murder, it is to be condemned.

But I do not agree that the Rev. Hanko gives us a fair and complete presentation of the underground movement. Let us take Holland for an example. Note, and let the Rev. Hanko refute these arguments:

1. The government of Holland was not destroyed by the Nazi usurper, nor did it abdicate. On the contrary, it fled to England, and was thus removed from its usual and proper place of operation. But it still exists, and is the only rightful authority to whom the Dutch subjects owe allegiance and subjection as far as possible.

2. This government in exile does not only exist, but it also is still in a position to function to a certain extent. This is especially made possible through the radio. The government is able to contact its subjects, to issue its commands to the subjects, and to direct them as to what they ought to do in their peculiar circumstances with a view to the ultimate destruction of the usurper, and their own liberation in the end.

3. Under the direction of their legal government thousands of Dutch subjects have gone "underground" and become organized. They are in contact with their government in England, receive instructions from them, are armed by them, do everything they can to oppose the usurper, and await the moment when they can meet and help the invading forces of their legal government, and hail the house of Orange back into their own country.

4. I contend that this underground movement, organized and directed by their own government in exile, is not revolutionary, but conscience bound to obey the proper "higher powers" now in England, even though they must suffer for it.

5. Rather than compare the underground movement with the subjection of Israel to Nebuchadnezzar, therefore, I would appeal to the example of Absalom's rebellion against David. The rebel was on the throne

in Jerusalem. David fled and even went temporarily in exile. However, he was still in authority, and could rally his forces to quell the rebellion, destroy the usurper, and be restored to the throne.

6. Although granting practically all the contentions of my opponent, therefore, as far as they have reference to individual acts of rebellion and sabotage, I must insist that as far as the underground movement is organized, and under the direction of its legal government, it is not revolutionary.

H. H.

The Purpose Of Abraham's Separation

In answering this question one is automatically giving his view on what the Church is, its relation to the world and to heaven, as well as defining the conception of the Covenant and its development in history. And that, it seems to me, is quite a series of important subjects. So please do not expect that I intend at arriving at any one conclusion and say, "now then, that is the purpose of his separation".

When the question is asked why God called Abraham apart and what may be God's purpose in separating him from his surroundings, various answers are given. We ought to stop and look at a few of them just a moment.

You all recall the little answer which the Primer by Beets and Bosma gives: that God called Abraham apart to preserve the true religion. The idea is that after the Flood idolatry made such an inrush that it became necessary for God to get Abraham out of the Ur of Chaldees and bring him into a little enclosure where the true religion could be preserved. Apart from the fact that Canaan too was idolatrous, and apart from the fact that the true religion, historically at least, was not even preserved that way, apart from that all, this view is dualistic. It makes it seem as if God suddenly became confronted with the perplexing problem of idolatry and to solve it, called Abraham apart. This is dualism.

Premillennialism views the Abrahamic separation as the beginning of a new dispensation in which the Jews became the proper people of God and ever after remain such. Because later the Jews reject Christ God breaks off His relationship with them for a while, but in due time God will return to the Jews and bring them to Canaan. In other words, God by means of Abraham's separation, sets out to give the national Jews the land of Canaan. . . . their rejection of Christ

interrupted this program for a while during which time God gathers a New Testament Church. . . . but after this God will turn again to gather the Jews. And such people excitedly point to the fact that there are so and so many millions of Jews already gone back to geographical Canaan today. Such a view forgets that the true children of Abraham are any and all believers, and that the Canaan which God holds before them when He calls Abraham is not an earthly one but the heavenly one, the Better Country of Hebrews 11:16.

Another prevalent view or error is the Common Grace conception as worked out by the late Dr. A. Kuyper in his *De Gemeene Gratie* (I:349-350) which runs briefly as follows: 1- After the Fall God's primary purpose with history is to restore the original creation ordinance. Sin and the devil sought to wreck the creation ordinance, God goes about to restore it. 2- Common Grace prevailed until we reach chapter 12 of Genesis, but the world became more and more steeped in idolatry. Something must be done to keep things on the right road. 3- Special grace makes its appearance in that God calls Abraham apart, isolates him and the cause for a few hundred years so that it can develop into a potent power. 4- Then, finally, in the New Dispensation the highly developed, potent, long preserved religion returns to its common grace channels, goes out into all the world, institutes crisis, influences all that is devilish, bringing judgment day, and after the final separation making the original work of God bloom in glory before the Throne. Such is, in short of course, his view. Many modern Kuyper advocates have taken this conception and rushed with it into Postmillennialism, teaching that the Abrahamic separation first, and the New Testament return to all nations later, will have its finished fruit in a world won for Christ, where the original creation ordinance blooms. All this makes the Abrahamic separation merely an interlude between two acts, and restored creation ordinances the primary goal of God's work in redemption. Thus losing sight of the election, the Christ and the Better Things in Christ.

In considering what God is doing when He calls Abraham apart it is necessary first of all to bear in mind two things:

The separation is an historical fact and as such it served the purpose of bringing the Covenant to its Old Testament fulfillment. The Covenant with Adam and Noah takes on a distinct significance now that God calls Abraham apart. And this is evident from the fact that as soon as Abraham reaches the land of Canaan God comes to him with what we read in Gen. 17, and discovers to him things which no mortal ear had ever heard before. Such was impossible without the foregoing separation. Here already the election of God expresses itself in separation before it finds its goal in the covenant relationship. Even the land of

Canaan was so situated that at that spot and at no other God's purposes with His Old Testament Church could be realized. At the same time however this Old Testament act is also a type, which finds its higher fulfillment later in Christ, and especially in His ascension, Pentecost and Parousia. The separation of Abraham is really going on all the time, during all the days of God's Church in this world, yea, and in the life of every individual christian. Whosoever confesses the God of Abraham today must feel the power of that Word which saith, "wherefore, come ye out from among them and be ye separate".

In the second place Abraham is the father of all believers, whose Seed principally is Christ Jesus, in Whom we are all blessed with believing Abraham. When God separates Abraham God separates him as the father of all who believe and thus God makes all believers a separate people. Let me put it this way: The only children God has are the children of the separated Abraham. Does not Hebrews 11:13 say so beautifully: "These all died in faith. . . .and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth?". Too many so-called christians are not strangers and pilgrims here. Instead of that they bathe themselves in fleshly lusts, seek the world and under the guise of restoring the original creation ordinances, seek an earthly kingdom. Let these remember that God has no children but those of the separated Abraham. Jesus greets these children when He says: "Ye are not of the world. . . . I have chosen you out of the world". God's elect are a separate people. In the Old Testament this separation was national and geographical, in the New Testament the people of Abraham, through Christ, no more live in a separate country. But they are as truly separate from the nations as Abraham was. . . . in a much more highly developed sense of the word.

To make this article as plain as possible let us take these general facts now and draw a few conclusions.

1. First of all I believe that it is evident to all that the separation of Abraham has its purpose somewhere in the Plan of God in re His Covenant. It somehow serves His Covenant and its development, but it also serves to demonstrate what kind of thing the Covenant really is. When God separates Abraham it becomes plain that God is inaugurating a new period. God begins to deal with His people in a new way. Shem, Arphaxad, Eber, Peleg, Reu, Nahor and Terah had lived and experienced the blessedness of God's friendship, but now, in Abraham, God does something new. God takes His people as a Groom taketh His Bride and He brings them into the isolation of His House. The Groom with His Bride retire, as it were, into one another's fellowship, jealous of one another's love and devotion. The Covenant after all is not an open-house, where any and all may rush in, and where

clean and unclean congregate. . . . nay the Covenant is ideally a relation of love and friendship between God and His people, so glorious and so intimate, that Scripture frequently tells us that it can best be illustrated by the love of a Groom and Bride. Thus God takes Abraham into that fellowship, and retires. When Babel's confusion scattered the families over the face of the earth, God singles out one family and with that family God establishes His Covenant and makes them heirs of all things. Through Jesus Christ, the proper Groom, in Whom we acquired the adoption. This process of election, calling, isolation goes on throughout all history. The Song of Solomon beautifully indicates this same thing. It reaches its fulfillment only when that Word is realized which saith, "Father, I will, that where I am, they be also which Thou hast given me". So Abraham was separated and God reveals that His Covenant is a living relationship of friendship and love, between God and His people whom He calleth thereto through His Word and Spirit.

2. Although we thus have spiritual isolation we do not have Anabaptism. This chosen, called and separated people of God are "in the world" and when Abraham stood in the land of Canaan, he did not hide himself in a corner. Nay, rather, God let all the world see this family. Nation after nation got into contact with him. But, wherever they saw him or heard him he appeared among them as a Friend of God and as a stranger and pilgrim in the earth. Abraham and His spiritual family, of that time and of today, are strangers and pilgrims in the earth, that is, they reveal that they are the Bride and Christ the Groom. I know that of the Ten Virgins, in the parable, five were foolish for they are not all children of Abraham that are called seed of Abraham. . . . but the believing and faithful remnant according to the election appears upon this earth as a family that is spiritually married to Christ Jesus. That way the world has to see them. So that the purpose of Abraham's separation in that respect is that we must stand in the midst of this world and confess that we are strangers and pilgrims here. Canaan wondered at Abraham. How they marvelled at him when he had been promised the land of Canaan but had not a square foot of it wherein to bury his wife. How they wondered at him when he insisted that instead of the land being given him he wanted to buy it with money. The world must wonder at us today. They must not understand us. Jesus saith, "the world knoweth you not". It is too bad when the world does know us, that is, when it can analyze our actions because they are similar to theirs. Let the world see us as strangers and pilgrims here, for our very appearance here as strangers and pilgrims also serves the Cause of God's Covenant. It serves to gather out of that world all those who love God and believe His truth, but it also serves to con-

demn all those who make this world their primary interest. On the basis also of our appearing here as strangers and pilgrims God will afterwhile judge the world. And all this serves the Cause of God's Covenant. As children of Abraham therefore, let us be in the world but having our Home in Christ and His love.

M. G.

Jericho Theology

During the regime of King Ahab and Jezebel the heathen worship of Baal reached its zenith. Jehovah, the God of the fathers exhibited His wrath by visiting Israel with a great drought and consequent famine.

Elijah, the prophet of God, requested the king and the people to gather with him upon Mount Carmel, building two altars there, one for Baal and one for Jehovah, and he who should answer with fire from heaven should be acknowledged as God.

The Baal priests engaged themselves all morning to induce Baal to answer them with fire, but without avail. But upon a short and strong prayer of Elijah. God answered with fire from heaven, proving Himself to be God and Elijah His prophet. I Kings 18.

About 15 years later, under the regime of king Ahaziah, son of Ahab, the king tried to make the prophet of God his captive. For that purpose the king sent out twice captains with forty men each. They found Elijah sitting upon a hill. The two captains addressing Elijah said to him: "Thou man of God, the king said: COME DOWN." And twice Elijah repeated the saying: "If I be a man of God let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty." And both times fire came down from heaven and consumed them all.

By these signs Jehovah showed Israel that He is GOD, and an idol nothing. And yet, notwithstanding, king, priest, prophet and people would not return to the Jehovah worship of their fathers.

In the meantime, God promised His prophet the glory to be soon taken home, commanding him to first anoint Jehu as king of Israel, and Elisha in his place. I Kings 19:16.

It seems that soon after Elijah had that dispute with the three captains, as recorded in 2 Kings 2, that Elijah and Elisha walked toward the city of Bethel, where they came in contact with some of the sons of the prophets.

Proceeding upon their way toward Jericho, they were met with some other sons of the prophets. At Jericho there was a school, what we would call a col-

lege, or a university perhaps, but, howsoever, the students and perhaps some of the professors, purposely set out to meet the two men of God.

Naturally, they had noticed that Elijah had placed his mantle upon a poor uneducated farmer, instead of upon one of the wise and learned men of the gracious Jericho school. It stands to reason that they resented such an action. They were human beings and, of course, jealous.

Therefore, and on that account, their strange remark to Elisha, repeating the same words as uttered by the sons of the prophets of Bethel. They said: "Knowest thou, dumb farmer, that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head today?" (How pious they were, speaking of the Lord). And both times, Elisha feeling their insult, calmly said: "*Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace.*"

Met are yet the same, and, very reasonable that many of our own ecclesiastics act as if they alone are possessors of the Holy Spirit, not deeming it possible that the Holy Spirit is free to express Himself through an uneducated farmer, if He so listed.

The two men of God, continuing their journey, in spite of the remonstrations of Elijah to Elisha to tarry in Bethel, in Jericho, they came by the river Jordan.

Here Elijah took his mantle and smote the river, and the waters divided, leaving a pathway for them to walk over.

Then said Elijah to Elisha: "Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee." And Elisha said: "I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me." (A double portion of the Holy Spirit. O how glorious). This was granted in case Elisha would be permitted to see Elijah taken away.

Walking and talking together, a chariot of fire drawn by horses of fire appeared and parted them asunder, and Elijah went to heaven with a whirlwind.

Elisha beholding this aid: "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof."

Elisha taking up the mantle of Elijah went back and coming to the Jordan, hitting the water with the mantle said: "Where is the God of Elijah?" And the waters parted as before and Elisha went over.

When the sons of the prophets of the Jericho school saw him, they recognized the spirit of Elijah resting on Elisha, and they met and bowed themselves before him. They understood that Elijah had departed to the spirit, but that his body was somewhere cast down upon the mountains or in one of the valleys.

Therefore, they told Elisha that they represented fifty strong men and insisted that he should command them to look for the body of Elijah.

But Elisha knowing Elijah went to heaven with body and all refused to accommodate them in their evil plan.

Yet they refused to listen to the mouth of God,

and at last, to shame them, Elisha allowed them to hunt for the body of Elijah. After a search of three days they came back, but *found him not*.

This is Jericho Theology. Hunting for dead bodies. No, they do not believe the mouth of God. They do deny His Truth. They turn the Word of God into the foolish ideas of the human mind.

Such is *Jericho Theology*. O Jericho Theology was thy spirit not very successful in corrupting our modern colleges and universities? And is Jericho Theology not honored and exalted in our own schools and colleges?

O thou destroyer of the temples of God. God shall once shame, *shame Jericho Theology*.

J. H. Hoekstra,
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Pharaoh's Hardening Process

Our subject implies that the hardening of Pharaoh's heart went through a process of progressive development. The hard heart of Pharaoh became as it were harder in the measure that the mighty strokes of God's judgments came down upon the head of Pharaoh and his servants. Exodus 4-14 gives us a description of that process. And in the New Testament Romans 9 sheds light upon the subject under discussion. The interested reader would do well to read the above mentioned chapters before reading this article.

We are all acquainted with the fact that the hardening of Pharaoh's heart is ascribed both to himself and to God. Some commentators claim that we read ten times of Pharaoh that he hardened his heart and ten times that the Lord hardened his heart. However, this is a very arbitrary division which certainly is in conflict with the historical facts as related in the book of Exodus. Fact is we read oftener of God hardening Pharaoh's heart than of Pharaoh himself hardening his heart. And some texts, as e.g. Exodus 7:22, 8:19 and 9:35 do not state at all who hardened Pharaoh's heart. In these texts we merely read: "Pharaoh's heart *was* hardened."

Perhaps it also should be stated in this connection that in the original several different words are used to express the idea of hardening. Our "Statenvertaling" has brought out the different shading of these words by translating '*verstokken*' (Ex. 4:21), '*verzwaren*' (Ex. 8:15), '*verharden*' (Ex. 7:3). Looking up these verses you will notice they state "God *verstokte* Pharaoh's heart, Pharaoh *verzwaarde* his heart. God *verhardde* Pharaoh's heart." That God *verstokte* and *verhardde* Pharaoh's heart means according to the

original words that He *strengthened* it, (Ex. 4:21), that He made it *sharp*, *hardened* it, (Ex. 7:3). And that Pharaoh *verzuuarde* his heart means that he *made it heavy*, expressing the idea of dull, insensible, (Ex. 8:15). We merely mentioned these three examples to show that the original uses various words which our Authorized Version translates *harden* or *hardened*. This implies of course that the original has a shade of difference in the various words which is not preserved in the translation of the King James Version.

And now a few remarks as to the historical setting. Israel has been in Egypt for a few generations. Another king has arisen who did not know Joseph. And as the children of Israel multiplied very rapidly this new Pharaoh starts to subject them to severe hardships with the purpose to keep them down by an iron rule and to even partially destroy them. However, this devilish purpose ends in utter failure as far as the destruction of the Israelites is concerned. The successor of this cruel tyrant ruthlessly continues the work of his predecessor. Israel becomes a people of bondage, of slavery. Finally the moment has arrived that Israel's God will bring deliverance to His people. The man chosen for the task to bring Israel out of bondage is Moses, the mediator of the Old Testament. After the Lord has prepared Moses for his life's task, first in Egypt, then in the wilderness, He calls His servant Moses to go back to Egypt and do all the Lord commands him to do. And the Lord charges him to go with this significant demand to Pharaoh: "When thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put in thine hand: but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go. And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even my firstborn. And I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn." (Ex. 4:21-23). From these words we learn that Israel is God's son, His firstborn, His peculiar treasure. This implies of course that Pharaoh has made of God's firstborn a slave. And now God, Jehovah, the God of all the earth comes to Pharaoh and tells him by the mouth of Moses and Aaron: "Let my son, so cruelly treated by thee, go, that he may serve Me. He is not thine, he is Mine."—But before Moses and Aaron go the Lord informs them already that Pharaoh will not let Israel go, the Lord will harden his heart and it is only after God has poured out His vials of wrath upon Pharaoh and Egypt that Israel will be delivered by the mighty hand of God.

Moses and Aaron go to Pharaoh as told. They tell him the message of the Lord: "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, let my people go, that they may hold a feast to me in the wilderness." (Ex. 5:1). Pharaoh

realizes immediately that he is not dealing here with a kind request but with a command from the God of the Israelites. His response? We read that in verse two of the fifth chapter: "And Pharaoh said, Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go." And here begins as it were the hardening process of Pharaoh. From the outset he denies that he knows the Lord Jehovah. Not knowing Him why should he let His people go. And even if he did know the Lord he would not let Israel go. The latter is implied in the expression: "*Neither* will I let Israel go." Thus from the outset he as it were challenges God to show that He is the Lord, to manifest Himself as the God who can command Pharaoh, who as the absolute Sovereign even Pharaoh must obey.

We are quite well acquainted with the history which follows this initial command of God and Pharaoh's reply. Hence, I do not deem it necessary to follow the process step by step. Immediately the king goes to work and increases the burden of the Israelites, thereby mocking the Lord and showing his contempt for the God of Israel. Hereupon the Lord pours upon his head and upon the heads of his servants ten great and mighty plagues. At first Pharaoh tries to match the wonderwork of God by calling on his wise men and sorcerers to perform the same signs which are performed by Moses and Aaron. It seems as though he succeeds somewhat for we read: "Now the magicians of Egypt they also did in like manner with their enchantments." However, soon they fail altogether. The plagues of God become heavier, more severe. But Pharaoh is unmoveable as a rock, every time the plague is passed he refuses to let the Israelites go. Naturally, in the measure that God's judgments become more pronounced it takes a harder heart to refuse to listen to the Word of God and heed His command. Pharaoh certainly received an exhibition of the power and glory of the Lord he refused to acknowledge as God. He is even brought so far that more than once he acknowledges that God is God indeed and that he, Pharaoh, has sinned. (Ex. 9:27). Still, the moment the plague is passed and the danger seems to be over Pharaoh refuses to let God's people go. To the very end, even while he is persuading Israel into the Red Sea, he says within his heart: "There is no God." Didn't he know any better. Of course he did, but he refused to bow before the Almighty, he hated the Lord with bitter hatred. And the more and the clearer God revealed himself unto Pharaoh by His word and mighty acts the more he hated Him. It was no lack of knowledge that Pharaoh finally perished in the Red Sea but he was an utter spiritual fool.

The question may now be asked: "How do we explain this hardening process of Pharaoh?" It seems to me it should be emphasized first of all, particularly

with a view to many who disagree with us on this subject, that Pharaoh is fully responsible for the hardening of his heart and, hence, responsible for his sin. He hardens his heart, he deliberately wills to walk in the way of sin. In the entire history as we briefly reviewed it Pharaoh is the rational moral creature whose delight it is to walk in the ways of sin. Had you asked him: "Why do you do this, why do you persist in this evil way, he would have answered: "Because I want to do this, I will oppose the Lord to the bitter end for I hate Him." Still more, he might have said: "I could do otherwise, I could let Israel go, but I refuse to do it because I hate the God of Israel."—Thus it always is with the sinner and his sin. Man is morally free. God's power and God's providence never annihilates man's moral freedom of choice. That's why man as a rational moral creature, as a willing, thinking, deliberately acting person is the author of his sin. We certainly maintain and must maintain the responsibility of man.

However, this does not exhaust the subject we are dealing with at present. Scripture in clear and unequivocal language states repeatedly that God hardened Pharaoh's heart. Before Moses has spoken to Pharaoh the Lord tells him that this is His very purpose with Pharaoh. (Ex. 4:21). And Paul in Romans 9 also emphasizes this very thought. Here we read the words: "For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." (vs. 17).

Commentators in various ways and by many subtle reasonings have tried to minimize the force of these words. It has been said e.g. that God started hardening Pharaoh's heart after he had hardened himself and showed himself to be a hopeless sinner, worthy of God's fierce judgments. Others claim that God permitted Pharaoh to harden his heart. And thus we might mention other attempts to soften the expression that "the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart." However, all these attempts are but in vain and clearly contradict the force and plain meaning of the above expression. The hardening process of Pharaoh teaches us that even though God maintains the ethical nature of man, man's very heart and thoughts and will and action is subjected to the overruling, almighty will and providence of God. God strengthens Pharaoh's heart, God makes it hard. To put it in very plain words: "Just because God hardens Pharaoh's heart, Pharaoh can harden his heart." That is Scripture. This does not make God the author of sin, as some have claimed. But the very fact that God hardens Pharaoh's heart teaches us as clearly as anywhere else in Scripture the absolute sovereignty of God.—Can we fully understand and fathom this doctrine? No, but neither is this necessary

at all. It is the natural, rebellious mind that wants to oppose and contradict this doctrine. However, the believer who confesses a God who is really God and derives great comfort from this doctrine because even though in Pharaoh we are dealing with a 'special case,' the principle implied always holds and is true with respect to all reprobate men. And that is comfort. Of course man hardens his heart, but above man stands God. And through evil men God also maintains His cause and realizes His purpose, even so much so that wicked man can only harden his heart because God hardens him. God does not merely reign supreme in the physical world, as He so clearly demonstrated to Pharaoh, but also in the ethical world, He reigns supreme in every man's heart. That makes God all and man nothing. And thus the Lord is always glorified. He is and remains the Potter, we are the clay. He hath mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth.

J. D.

IN MEMORIAM

The English Men's Society of the First Protestant Reformed Church wishes to express its sincere sympathy to their fellow member, Mr. J. Schipper and his family in the bereavement of his father

MR. K. SCHIPPER

May the Lord abundantly comfort them in this time of sadness and may He fill the emptiness in their hearts with the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Mr. O. Van Ellen, Pres.

Mr. O. Vander Woude, Sec'y.

IN MEMORIAM

The English Men's Society of the First Potestant Reformed Church wishes to express its sincere sympathy to their fellow member, Mr. John Boelema and his family in the bereavement of his father,

MR. JACOB BOELEMA

May the Lord abundantly comfort them in this time of sadness, and may He fill their hearts with the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Mr. O. Van Ellen, Pres.

Mr. O. Vander Woude, Sec'y.