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MEDITATION

Election At The Cross

*And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.
Luke 23:42.*

Lord, remember me!

The cry of the violent!

The prayer of the mighty that take the kingdom of heaven by force!

For this evil-doer that had been crucified with our Lord (was it not at His right hand?) is a spiritually strong man who, at the moment when all things are against him and against the kingdom of heaven, puts up a tremendous struggle to enter into that apparently lost kingdom!

He was the last of those "violent" men of whom our Lord had spoken when He upbraided the men of that generation. Matt. 11:12 ff.

They stood in sharp antithesis, these mighty men, to those spiritually weak and effeminate and miserable creatures that had no interest in the kingdom and the things concerning it, that never entered and never sought to enter, no matter how favorable the circumstances might be, and no matter who preached the approach of the kingdom of heaven; and who for ever sought to justify themselves by laying the blame of their failure to seek and to enter precisely on the circumstances and on the preachers of the kingdom-gospel.

Like the children sitting in the marketplace they were, who called unto their fellows: "We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented."

John the Baptist had come mourning. For he was not the Bridegroom, but only His friend, whose calling it was to prepare the way before him. And he lament-

ed the sad estate of the heritage of the people of God at the time when the Bridegroom came to them, and when the promise was about to be fulfilled. Hence, he came mourning. The last of the Nazarites was he. In the desert he established his pulpit, and locusts and wild honey he ate. Into literal separation from the world he called the people of God. For he proclaimed that the axe was already laid to the root of the old dispensational tree, and was about to be cut down to the ground. Yet, while he called them away from the old things that were ready to vanish away, he pointed them to the new things that were about to come, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, and he preached that the kingdom of heaven had come near. . . .

And they, the miserable, had said that he had a devil!

They had piped before John, and wanted him to dance, but John had refused. He came neither eating nor drinking. And the result had been, that they had not sought to enter into the kingdom of heaven as it had come near in John!

And Christ had come eating and drinking!

He was no Nazarite, for He was the Bridegroom. He was not afraid of the world, for He came to overcome it, and to establish the kingdom of heaven. He was the Lamb of God that could take the sin of the world upon His mighty shoulders, and remove it, take it away for ever. He did not assume that ultimately impossible position that one must go out of the world to be saved, but He came to vanquish the power of darkness in the world, that He might save the world, God's own world. And so, He came eating and drinking.

And they judged that He was a glutton and wine-bibber!

And again they failed to enter into the kingdom of heaven! They always assumed the wrong attitude: before John they piped, and he could not dance; before Jesus they mourned, and He would not mourn!

But ever since the days of John the "kingdom of

heaven" had suffered "violence, and the violent" had taken "it by force."

They wanted the kingdom. Whether it was preached and brought nigh unto them by one that could not dance, or by Him that could not mourn, all during that period from John to the cross and exaltation of Christ, when the kingdom was about to come but had not yet appeared, they stormed the door of the kingdom of heaven, and clamored for entrance. John had come, and they went out into the desert to hear him, and to be baptized of him; Jesus had come, and they had acknowledged that He had the words of eternal life. . . .

Of these "violent" the penitent thief is the last!

More adverse than ever were, at that moment, the circumstances with a view to the realization of the kingdom of heaven.

In desperate straits was he himself.

Yet, hear the cry of the violent: "when thou comest into thy kingdom. . . .

Lord, remember me!

Mighty cry!

For, from the viewpoint of things that are seen, literally everything was against the prayer of this thief!

Or did it not appear as if the kingdom of heaven was, at this moment, more remote than ever, if not an utterly desperate cause; the kingdom, at least, as it had been preached and represented by this Man of Sorrows that was suspended from the middle of the three crosses on Golgotha?

Was not this cross His condemnation, His defeat?

Were, after all, the children that sat in the market place not justified in their attitude over against both John and Him? O, they were still present here on Golgotha. And they still piped and mourned! And at present it appeared as if they were the strong, rather than those others that had attempted to take the kingdom of heaven by violence. For they had done much more than merely pipe and mourn. They had carried out their own program. They had set out to demonstrate that they were justified when they called John a devil, and Christ a glutton and winebibber. On Jesus of Nazareth, who would not mourn to their lamenting, they had laid hands. And they had led Him to His utter ruin. All the vials of their insatiable hatred they had emptied over His head. And now, as He hung on the accursed tree it appeared that their cause had the victory, and that they had actually been successful in their attempt to prove that *His* program of the kingdom was utterly impossible!

And they are present on Golgotha, these miserable children of the market place!

And still they pipe and mourn. Still they insist

that John had a devil, that Jesus was a glutton and winebibber, a deceiver, a friend of Beelzebub, a blasphemer, and that the cross is proof of all they have ever said of this man! Hear them mock and jeer: "If thou art the Christ, if thou art really the King of Israel, if thou art the Son of God, if God will have thee, if thy cause is right and just, and we are wrong. . . . come down from the cross, save thyself!"

Hark, even one of the evil-doers opens his mouth to join these miserable wretches of the marketplace: "If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us!"

All, scribes and Pharisees, priests and people, soldiers and passers-by, and now also His fellow-sufferer on His left, are unanimous in condemning His cause, in declaring that He is not the Christ, and that there never was a kingdom of heaven, nor ever will be, such as He proclaimed. All join in the chorus of these children of the marketplace, singing and shouting that He cannot save Himself and that, therefore, He surely cannot save others. He cannot come down, He cannot, He cannot, He cannot. . . .

The kingdom, His kingdom is a lost cause!

No one present there at the gruesome spectacle of satanic fury dare open his mouth to the contrary!

No one?

Are the strong that take the kingdom of heaven by violence all dead or utterly discouraged?

Hark?

The other evil-doer opens his mouth to speak. There is a moment of silence, as a hush falls even upon the furiously raving mob. And in the stillness the prayer of the "violent" is heard:

"When thou comest into thy kingdom!

Lord, remember me!"

Marvellous prayer!

Wonderful, indeed, when viewed as the lonely cry of this evil-doer at that moment, and in distinction from and opposition to the unanimous mockery and jeering of the "world" at Golgotha.

Marvellous all the more, when compared with the railing of his fellow criminal hanging on the other cross.

The latter, too, utters a petition, the prayer of the ungodly: "If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us!" He, too, would fain be saved, but from his suffering and condemnation, not from his sin. He, too, had his Christ, but his Christ was the anti-Christ, that must have power to oppose the living God and His righteousness, and that was able to establish a world of prosperity and freedom from suffering in rebellion against God. He hated his cross, but not his sin. He hated his condemnation, but did not humble himself. He was filled with sorrow, but it was the sorrow of the world,

not after God. And to be sure, he hated that silent sufferer on the middle cross, Who apparently was innocent, yet uttered no complaint; Who could even utter a prayer for those that nailed Him to the cruel tree. No, he did not pray in the hope that his prayer would be heard. He did not believe that this man was the Christ. Surely, He was not the Christ he needed, sought, wanted, to deliver him from the cross. Nevertheless, even in his railing and bitter hatred against that Christ, he revealed the thoughts of his own heart in his conditional petition: "If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us."

The prayer of the ungodly!

And upon the dark background of this wicked petition, the prayer of the penitent thief appears all the more marvellous: Remember me, O Lord, when thou comest into thy kingdom!

For did it not signify, even as he clearly expressed it in his rebuke of his fellow in crime, that at this late hour he had absolutely broken with the world out of which he had come, and that "the world was crucified" to him, and he unto the world?

But wonderful this prayer is, too, and above all, when we consider its contents!

O, I am well aware that we are in danger of reading this petition in the light of our fuller understanding of the crucified and risen Lord, and to put into it a meaning and clarity of comprehension which, before the consciousness of the penitent evil-doer, it cannot possibly have had. And yet, it cannot be denied that in this petition of the malefactor there are all the elements of true repentance, and of a true knowledge of the Christ of God. Yea, apart from the question just how much this penitent thief understood of his own prayer, there is in his petition the manifestation of a light of understanding such as even the disciples did not have at this moment!

Does he not, in his rebuke of his fellow malefactor, confess that he is justly in his present condemnation, and that, in this just judgment he fears God?

Does he not express his knowledge of the Christ as the Righteous, when he declares that He has done nothing amiss?

But above all, does he not somehow apprehend the resurrection from the dead, when he implores the Christ to remember him when He shall have come into His kingdom? To be sure, he looks beyond the cross of this Sufferer on the central tree of agony. When all looks hopeless, when all men loudly declare that this is not the Christ, that His kingdom will never come, and that the cross is the demonstration of the absolute hopelessness of His cause, this malefactor appears to be unshaken in his conviction that through this Man, yea, even through His cross, the kingdom of God will come!

When thou comest into thy kingdom!

By faith, by hope against hope, he knows that the

crucified One is on the way into His kingdom!

And upon the mercy of the dying Christ, that will live and inherit His kingdom, he casts himself!

Remember me, O Lord!

Wonderful prayer!

Election on Golgotha!

For how otherwise would you explain this wonder?

With man this prayer of the penitent thief is absolutely impossible and inexplicable.

All man's theories about the free will of man, choosing to accept a well-meaning offer of salvation, must suffer shipwreck here.

For, first of all, there is no offer here whatever. No preacher there is here that persuades both thieves to accept the Christ, to repent of their sin, and to believe on the dying Saviour. There is no other gospel here than the spectacle itself of the dying Christ, suffering silently, and praying for the transgressors.

Besides, from any human viewpoint there is no difference between the two thieves.

Both were malefactors. They were in the same condemnation, and that, too, justly. Both were in the throes of death. If the fear and agony of death are at all efficient to bring men to repentance, both will have to humble themselves in dust and ashes before God. Both are breathing their last in the immediate presence of the dying Christ. Yet, the one takes sides with the enemies of the Saviour, the other rebukes both them and him. The one takes his place with the miserable on the marketplace, the other takes the kingdom of God by force. The one is hardened, and in the bitterness of his rebellious spirit rails against the Christ; the other receives mercy, and casts himself upon the dying Lord for salvation.

How to explain?

There is but one answer: sovereign grace!

Sovereign; for while even in the darkness of the hour of judgment on Golgotha election breaks through the gloom to save the one thief, reprobation becomes equally evident in the hardening of the other.

The one is taken, and the other is left!

For God is merciful to whom He will be merciful, and whom He will He hardens!

Grace, for only divine grace distinguishes the penitent thief from the other. Grace that mightily took hold of his inmost heart, there to break the power and dominion of sin. Grace that wonderfully enlightened his eyes, not only to see his own sin, but also to behold the dying Christ as the living Lord, as His Saviour and Deliverer even through the death of the cross!

The things that are impossible with men are possible with God!

Glorious grace of God!

H. H.

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EDITORIALS

The Text of a Complaint

The Committee appointed by the presbytery of Philadelphia to prepare an answer to "The Text of a Complaint," has finished its task, and through the kindness of one of the committee members I received, upon request, a copy of the proposed answer. My hearty thanks for this kindness.

"The Answer" is a pamphlet consisting of almost forty pages. Its form is neat. Its contents are lucid. One does not have to guess just what the committee means. As to its order, it naturally follows the various points advanced in the "Complaint". The first point, that concerning the incomprehensibility of God receives the lion share of the attention of the committee.

Since I received this copy of "The Answer" while I was discussing the first point of the "Complaint", the former arrived just in time for me to combine the two in my discussion. By following this method we will more readily obtain a clear conception of the difference between the position of the complainants and that of the respondents.

Let us learn, then, from "The Answer" just what is Dr. Clark's view of the incomprehensibility of God. We quote:

"The view of the Complaint is that 'God because of his very nature must remain incomprehensible to man'; it is 'not the doctrine that God can be known only if he makes himself known and in so far as he makes himself known.' Moreover all knowledge which man can attain differs from the knowledge of God 'in a qualitative sense and not merely in degree.' Thus God's knowledge and man's knowledge do not 'coincide at a single point.' A proposition does not 'have the same meaning for man as for God.' Man's knowledge is 'analogical to the knowledge God possesses, but it can never be identified with the knowledge' which God 'possesses of the same proposition.' 'The divine knowledge as *divine* transcends human knowledge as human, even when that human knowledge is a knowledge communicated by God.' 'Because of his very nature as *infinite and absolute* the knowledge which God possesses of himself and of all things must remain a mystery which the finite mind cannot penetrate.' This latter statement does not mean merely that man cannot penetrate this mystery unaided by revelation: it means that even revelation by God could not make man understand the mystery, for the preceding sentences assert that it is the nature of God that renders him incomprehensible, not the lack of a revelation about it. As

the analysis proceeds, these quotations with the argument from which they are taken will be seen to imply two chief points. First, there is some truth that God cannot put into propositional form; this portion of truth cannot be expressed conceptually. Second, the portion of truth that God can express in propositional form never has the same meaning for man as it has for God. Every proposition that man knows has a qualitatively different meaning for God. Man can grasp only an analogy of the truth, which, because it is an analogy, is not the truth itself.

"On the other hand Dr. Clark contends that the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God as set forth in Scripture and in the Confession of Faith includes the following points: 1. The essence of God's being is incomprehensible to man except as God reveals truths concerning his own nature. 2. The manner of God's knowing, an eternal intuition, is impossible for man. 3. Man can never know exhaustively and completely God's knowledge of any truth in all its relationships and implications; because every truth has an infinite number of relationships and implications and since each of these implications in turn has other infinite implications, these must ever, even in heaven, remain inexhaustible for man. 4. But, Dr. Clark maintains, the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God does not mean that a proposition, e.g., two times two are four, has one meaning for man and a tentatively different meaning for God, or that some truth is conceptual and other truth is non-conceptual in nature." pp. 9, 19.

This, according to the committee, is "the crux of the issue." They have a good deal more to say in defense of Dr. Clark's position, but we need not quote more. We rather make a few remarks:

1. It still seems to me that the question involved, considered by itself, would be a very interesting subject for a theological conference, rather than a basis for complaint against the licensure of a candidate for the ministry. Of course, if this first point of the complaint is introduced here as a basis for what follows, and if it was the real purpose of the complainants to persuade the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to adopt the Arminian doctrine of the Christian Reformed Church as expressed by the Synod of Kalamazoo in 1924, particularly the view that God is gracious to the reprobate, and that the preaching of the gospel is a well-meaning offer of salvation on the part of God to all men, in other words, the doctrine that God sincerely seeks the salvation of those whom He will not save,—this first point is quite important. For this Christian Reformed doctrine, itself a plain contradiction, is based on the contention that there are contradictions in Scripture, and that it is possible for faith to accept contradictions, that is, you understand, contradictions for man's mind, not for God. And in that light one

can understand that the complainants must maintain the position: *a proposition does not have the same meaning for God as for man.* The Complaint leaves the impression that it was chiefly written by Christian Reformed men, that are trying to defend the Christian Reformed tradition in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, and to introduce into the latter the errors of 1924. In fact, this impression is so strong, that I make bold to conjecture that the Complaint was written by more than one author, and that I could point out the writer of the last part merely on the basis of internal evidence. I would consider it deplorable if the Orthodox Presbyterian Church would yield to this temptation.

2. From "The Answer" it is plain that the issue does not concern the truth of God's incomprehensibility as such, but an interpretation of that doctrine. And I agree with "The Answer" when it states that the complainants make a false claim when they insist "that throughout Christian theology this doctrine has but one definite meaning," that theirs, the complainants' view "is that one definite meaning, and that Dr. Clark in disagreeing with them rejects this uniform element in Christian theology." pp. 8, 9.

3. To say that any proposition does not have the same meaning for God as it has for man is, it appears to me, (1) A rationalistic contention. The complainants do not derive this proposition from Scripture, nor will they ever be able to find Scriptural ground for it. (2) A statement which can only mean that we can never know the truth about anything. Certain it is that the meaning a proposition has for God is the only true meaning; if for us it has another meaning, we simply have not the truth. (3) A denial of the truth of revelation. That our knowledge of God is finite, and that even through revelation we can never comprehend God, the infinite One, has always been held by all theologians. But if what God revealed to us has a different meaning for Him than for us, God is not only incomprehensible, but also unknowable. Then revelation itself is not true and reliable.

4. And so, it still seems to me that the issue between the complainants and the presbytery of Philadelphia is not the incomprehensibility of God, but the question whether revelation itself is intelligible to us. To deny the latter is to destroy the very foundations of theology.

H. H.

NOTICE

Classis East will meet in regular session Wednesday, April 4 at 9:00 at the First Protestant Reformed Church, at Grand Rapids, Michigan. The consistories will please remember that this is the last meeting of Classis before the next Synod meets.

D. Jonker, S. C.

The Evangelical and The Reformed Church

In closing this discussion for the present, I must refer once more to the conference of last fall in South Dakota.

The occasion of this conference was, according to available information at the time, the desire on the part of some of the brethren of the former Reformed Church in the United States, to find a new church home. They could not agree and go along with the merger. They, some of them, had come into contact with our churches. The question arose in their soul whether they could not find the new home they sought in our fellowship. To find an answer to this question was the purpose of the conference.

And our discussion was entirely directed toward that end. We had not come together with the purpose in mind to accomplish or even to prepare for a union. The conference was wholly without official character. And the immediate purpose was to become acquainted with one another with a view to finding an answer to the question whether there would be a possibility of uniting, not on a new or common basis, but on the basis of our Protestant Reformed faith.

Hence, undersigned explained briefly the doctrinal stand, as well as the history of our churches. Some of the brethren of the Reformed Church in the United States explained to us their stand. And interesting was the discussion that followed.

In general, I may state that our meetings were enjoyed by all the brethren. Apart from the question of any possible concrete results, the fellowship we had together, and our discussions on various subjects of immediate doctrinal and church-political interest, were refreshing and edifying. A brotherly spirit prevailed. We shall not soon forget that conference. And it ought to be repeated before long.

But it also became very clear that the time was not ripe for a union on their part with us.

There are several reasons why this would be inadvisable, at least for the time being, reasons of a practical, as well as of a doctrinal and church-political nature.

But the chief reason is, of course, that from a doctrinal viewpoint they are not ready to join our churches.

On this, I think, we were all agreed at the close of our conference.

It is true, that there were some ministers who were very close to us in doctrine and spirit. And this is especially true of the pastor at whose friendly home I might make my stay during the days of the conference, and in whose church at Kassel our conference was held,

and of his friend in Scotland.

But they are exceptions.

We advised the brethren, therefore: 1. Unconditionally to sever their connection with the Evangelical and Reformed Church. 2. To confer together as soon as possible with a view to a possible reorganization on their own, Reformed, basis. 3. To establish the relation of sister-churches with our churches, that we might continue to have contact with one another. 4. To send their young men, if they so desired, to our seminary, as long as they had no theological school of their own. 5. In this way to become prepared, if it be the will of God, in some future time, to unite with us.

Our prayer is that God may bless them in their efforts.

H. H.

The Triple Knowledge

An Exposition Of The Heidelberg Catechism

Part Two.

Of Man's Redemption

Lord's Day XIV

2.

The Flesh And Blood Of The Children.

Concerning the human nature which the Son of God assumed, the Heidelberg Catechism teaches us that He "took upon him the very nature of man, of the flesh and blood of the Virgin Mary. . . . that he might also be the true seed of David, like unto his brethren in all things sin excepted." There are, in these words, especially four elements that must always be emphasized in our confession concerning the human nature of Christ, and which we must briefly discuss in this connection, namely: 1. That it is a real and complete human nature. 2. That it is an individual and *central* human nature: He was born in the very center of the line of the promise, the seed of David. 3. That it is a weakened human nature: He came in the *likeness* of sinful flesh. 4. That it is a sinless human nature: He was made like unto his brethren in all things, sin excepted.

The *Confessio Belgica* emphasizes the same truths, when it declares that He "took upon him the form of a servant, and became like unto man, really assuming the true human nature, with all its infirmities, sin excepted . . . and did not only assume the human nature as to the body, but also a true human soul, that he might be a real man. For since the soul was lost as well as the

body, it was necessary that he should take both upon him, to save both. Therefore we confess (in opposition to the heresy of the Anabaptists, who deny that Christ assumed human flesh of his mother) that Christ is become a partaker of the flesh and blood of the children; that he is a fruit of the loins of David after the flesh; made of the seed of David according to the flesh; a fruit of the womb of the virgin Mary, made of a woman; a branch of David; a shoot of the root of Jesse; sprung from the tribe of Judah; descended from the Jews according to the flesh; of the seed of Abraham, since he took on him the seed of Abraham, and became like unto his brethren in all things, sin excepted, so that in truth he is our Immanuel, that is to say, God with us." Art. XVIII.

That our Lord assumed a real human nature means, first of all, that He was very really *born*, not created, and that, too, according to body and soul. Even though He was conceived without the will of man, and born of a Virgin, His was not a strange, or specially created human nature, but He took upon Him our flesh and blood. He was organically connected with us. As to His human nature, He did not come from without, but was brought forth by us. He did not stand next to men, but among them, and was of them. He partook of the flesh and blood of the children. He was flesh of our flesh, blood of our blood, bone of our bone. This must be maintained, because it is the plain teaching of Scripture. According to the message of the angel to Mary she would conceive in her womb, and bring forth a son, Luke 1:31. That which was conceived in her developed in the womb of Mary like the seed of any other human being, and its growth required the same length of time, for while Joseph and Mary were in Bethlehem, "the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son." Luke 2:6,7. When Mary visited her cousin Elizabeth, before the birth of Christ, the mother of John the Baptist, filled with the Holy Ghost, greeted her in the following words: "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" Luke 1:42, 43. Moreover, Scripture teaches us that "when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, *made of a woman*, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Gal. 4:4, 5. And "forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also 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.

From the above passages of Holy Writ, it is also evident that the organic unity of Christ with us was necessary unto our redemption. He must bear our

sin, and suffer death in our stead. If this were to be done, the punishment of sin must be born in our nature. The same human nature that had sinned must bear the wrath of God to the end. If Jesus had not been of us, if His human nature had been especially created, He might have been similar to us, but He would, nevertheless, have stood outside of us. And even as He would have been extraneous to us, so His death would have been suffered entirely apart from us. It could not have been *our* death. In that case, God would really have left the human race in Adam in their sin and condemnation, and created something entirely new. Then we did not die with Christ, neither were we raised with Him, and our life cannot possibly be hid with Christ in God. The truth, therefore, that Christ really assumed the flesh and blood of the children, is essential to the gospel of our redemption.

But, in the second place, the truth that Christ assumed a true and real human nature also implies that this human nature is complete, that is, consists of body and soul. We must not conceive of the incarnation of the Son of God in such a way that by this wonder of grace the divine nature came to inhabit a human body, took the place of the human soul; or even that the Person of the Son of God took upon Him a human body and a human soul, but that the divine nature took the place of the human mind or spirit. The whole human nature He assumed in His incarnation. He was completely human, even as He is truly divine. That this is true is evident from all we read of the revelation of Jesus Christ in the days of His flesh. And more than once our Lord speaks of His soul expressly. Shortly before His death, He declares: "Now is my soul troubled." John 12:27. And as He entered into the garden of Gethsemane, He complained: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." Matt. 26:38.

It would seem that the theory of creationism meets with a serious difficulty here. According to this theory, as you know, the soul, in the case of the birth of every individual human being, is created by God, while the body only is conceived and born by and from the parents. However, in the case of the incarnation, we confess that the whole human nature, both body and soul, was assumed by the Son of God from the virgin Mary. In His case, therefore, the soul is also born, and not created. It would appear, then, that creationism is wrong, and that we are bound to adopt the view of traducianism, the theory that in all cases the whole human nature is brought forth through conception and birth by the human parents. And yet, we are loath to accept that also the human spirit is propagated through generation and birth, because it would seem that by adopting this view we would destroy the very spirituality of the soul, and change it into the flesh and blood.

It seems to me, therefore, that we must seek to

avoid both, crass creationism and literal traducianism. Of course, let us admit it from the outset, when we deal with the questions concerning the human soul and body, we are facing deep problems, problems that are, ultimately, impossible of solution. The relation between soul and body is a profound mystery. Yet, it may be possible, on the basis of Scripture, to formulate some conception that will cover and explain all the facts, especially that of man's creation, and that of the incarnation of the Son of God. It would seem that the theory of creationism is guilty of completely separating soul and body; while, on the other hand, traducianism must lose the spiritual identity of the soul. Another distinction, therefore, would appear to be more to the point here. I mean the distinction between *person* and *nature*. Certain it is that it is this distinction which we face in the incarnation of the Son of God. He was a human being without being a human person. In His case the divine Person of the Son of God took upon Himself a human nature, but not a human person. Hence, it is certainly correct to say that in His case the Person came from God, the nature from the virgin Mary. But if this is true of the incarnation, it must also be true of the birth of every human individual: the whole nature is born, the person comes into being by an act of God.

And this would seem to be in harmony with what Scripture reveals to us concerning the creation of man in Gen. 2:7. ⁽¹⁾ God formed *man*, not merely his body but the whole *nature* out of the dust of the ground; but He also breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. And thus, that is, by this one but twofold act of God man became a living soul. He did not form a body, in order then to breathe a soul into it, but He formed the whole man and made him a living soul. With His own fingers God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and by His in-breathing He made him a rational, a *personal* being, in distinction from the animals who also are living souls. Now, in a similar way, in the conception and birth of a human being, the *nature*, the whole nature, all that God originally formed from the dust of the ground, comes from the parents; while by a special act of God's providence, like unto the original in-breathing of God in the creation of Adam, that nature is formed into a *personal* being. The nature comes from the parents, the person from God.

At all events, thus we must conceive of the incarnation.

From the virgin Mary, the Son of God assumed, not a human body merely, but the whole human nature, both according to body and soul.

But we said, and our confessions emphasize the fact, that He assumed a *concrete* and *individual*, though a *central* human nature. He was the "true seed of

David." According to the Belgic or Netherland Confession, he was "a branch of David, a shoot of the root of Jesse, sprung from the tribe of Judah, descended from the Jews according to the flesh; of the seed of Abraham."

To us this clearly implies, in the first place, that He assumed a very concrete and individual human nature. There are those who deny this and who insist that Christ's humanity was *general*. He did not assume a certain concrete form of the human nature, but *the* human nature in general. He was not *a* man, but *Man*. Just as we speak of the general concept *the tree*, in distinction from all specific trees, so we must conceive of the humanity of Christ as being *the human nature*.

Thus Dr. A. Kuyper dictated to his students:

"The human nature which Christ assumed was not concrete. With us it is. With each of us the human nature bears a definite, concrete stamp, determined by our individual ego. The human nature in the abstract sense is that which is common to us all. The general human nature is, so to speak, the wax into which each man impresses his own stamp. Christ, however, assumed the abstract and unstamped human nature, while He possessed the divine nature concretely." ⁽²⁾.

Again:

"The view that Christ was *a* man is Nestorian. . . . To be sure, Scripture teaches everywhere that Christ was man, and that He bore the human nature, but that He was an individual, that among the variations of the seed of Adam there was also the variation-Jesus—is absurd. In the seed of Adam were all the variations of human life, of nations, generations, and persons. And over against this, the Scriptures witness and say that Christ was the second Adam; He was out of Adam *as Adam*, that is, as one who like Adam carried within Himself endless variations, namely, those of all the elect of God. Because of this every child of God knows that he is in Christ, that he died and is raised with Christ, that he draws his life out of Christ, even as the sinner out of Adam". . . ⁽³⁾.

The same view is set forth in *De Gemeene Gratie* by the same author, II, 138, 139.

The Scriptural ground on which this conception is supposed to be based is especially threefold: 1. The statement in I Cor. 15:45 that Christ is the second Adam. Let it be noted here at once that Christ is not called the *second*, but the *last* Adam, and that He is such, not in virtue of the fact that in the state of humiliation he bore a general human nature (even if this could be asserted of Adam, which it cannot, it does not apply to Christ in the flesh), but because He represents all His own, and, as the quickening Spirit is

⁽²⁾ Dictaten Dogmatiek, Locus de Christo, III, 33.

⁽³⁾ Op. Cit. p. 7.

⁽¹⁾ Cf. Vol. I, p. 100 ff.

able to impart Himself to all the elect. 2. The fact that Christ is called the Son of man. It is emphasized that He is never called *a* Son of man, but always *the* Son of man. And this is supposed to teach us that, while we are all sons of man, He is *the* Son of man in the sense that he assumed a general human nature. He was not a man among men, but the man in the abstract sense of the word. However, if the name Son of man is derived from Dan. 7:13, as is generally accepted, it does not refer to a supposed general and abstract human nature in distinction from the specific forms of the human nature other men have, but to the Messiah as He is destined to inherit the glory of His everlasting kingdom. And this is corroborated by such passages as the eighth Psalm in connection with Heb. 2:6-9. 3. The fact that Scripture presents the Lord as the Head of the Church, His body. This implies that, even as we partake of the nature of Adam, so we also really partake of the nature of Christ. But according to this theory, this is possible only if Christ is not a mere individual, a man among men, but *the* Man, and that He assumed a general human nature. But this argument overlooks the fact that we are not partakers of Christ according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit, and that this union became possible, not in virtue of a supposed general human nature, which He assumed at His incarnation, but in virtue of His exaltation, and through the Spirit that was given Him. According to the flesh, we are not of Him, but He is of us.

The most serious objection to this theory of a general human nature in Christ is, no doubt, that it really implies a denial of the reality of our Lord's humanity. What is a general human nature? It is something that does not concretely exist, an abstraction that exists only in the form of a conception, but that has no real, no tangible existence. Thus I can speak of *the* tree as a concept. I can probably say that *the* tree has reality in the mind of God. But in reality *the* tree is nowhere. It exists only in various forms and types of trees, oaks, maples, poplars, etc., and these various classes again exist only in individual forms. The same is true of the human nature of our Lord. To say that it was general is tantamount to saying that it did not concretely, historically exist, that it had no tangible reality. But this is, indeed, absurd. It is evident that our Lord, according to the flesh, had a very concrete form of the human nature. In the days of His flesh He certainly could have been photographed. He had a concrete body. He was of a certain, measurable height, weighed a certain number of pounds, had a certain color of eyes, was white, not black or yellow, and possessed certain definite features by which He was recognized in distinction from His fellowmen. It may seem absurd to mention all this, but the fact is that these concrete statements could

never be predicted of a general human nature. And what is true of Jesus' body is equally applicable to His soul. Even though the gospel narratives are not at all interested in a "Life of Jesus," and although it is certainly true that one looks in vain in them for a description of His character, the conclusion is not warranted that Jesus had no character, that He had a "general" human soul. That the gospel narratives are not interested in a *Leben Jesu* is due to the fact that they mean to be the revelation of Jesus Christ, the incarnated Son of God, Who died for us and rose again, and is seated at the right hand of God. But it certainly must be maintained that, both according to soul and body, our Lord possessed a real, concrete, definite form of the human nature. He was of the seed of David, the Son of Mary, and it is not at all presumptuous to say that He looked like His mother.

Rather than assuming that Jesus possessed an abstract, general human nature, we hold that the Son of God assumed the flesh and blood of the children, that is, that He took hold of the human nature in the very center. This is in harmony with Scripture. He assumed His human nature, not from the Romans, or from the Greeks, not from the sons of Ham, or from the yellow race, but from the seed of the promise, in the line of the covenant. He is the seed of the woman, the son of Adam, but in the generations of Adam, He is the seed of Seth, not of Cain. He is of Noah, but in the generations of Noah, He is of the seed of Shem. And again, in the generations of Shem, He is of the line that culminates in Abraham; in the generations of Abraham, He is of the seed of Isaac; and in the latter's generations, He is not of Esau, but of Jacob. Gradually, in the generations of Jesus Christ the line becomes narrower, and more defined. The line runs through Israel, but in Israel it is the tribe of Judah that bears the Christ in its loins, and within the tribe of Judah the house of David is pointed out as the everlasting royal line that must culminate in the Christ. And this royal line of David culminates finally in the virgin Mary. Thus the generations of Jesus Christ are like a pyramid, with its base in the seed of the woman and its apex in the virgin Mary. And in the fulness of time, the Son of God took hold of the very heart of the seed of the promise, and thus assumed the flesh and blood of the children. A very definite and concrete, but at the same time a central human nature Christ took upon Himself in assuming our flesh and blood.

H. H.

Some present day form of Calvinism and fool's gold have this in common that both only glitter.

H. H.

The Philistines Offend Anew

In our previous essay we determined the meaning, necessity, and moral character of Samson's seeking occasion against the Philistines. His seeking occasion against the Philistines 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. As we saw, they were not the fiercest men among the adversaries that the people of Israel, in the past, had known, and whose cruelty they had experienced. The rule of the Philistines was reasoned in comparison; and the men of Judah acquiesced in their dominion and were tributary to them without complaint. Philistines and Israelites got along well together. The only one who wanted war was Samson. He was eager for war, for the Lord had commanded him and the Spirit of God was moving him. But, as was said, it would not do for him suddenly to slay peace-loving Philistines. They must offend, in some way, make themselves conspicuous through cruel treatment of their slaves as the Pharaoh of the Exodus had done ages past and recently the Midianites. But the Philistines did not offend. So what they failed to give him, Samson sought—he sought occasion against them. He threw himself into their company and propounded his riddle. Being treacherous, proud and lustful men, the riddle became unto the assembled guests a snare. They ploughed with Samson's heifer. That was their offence; and it formed the occasion that Samson wanted. He now had something tangible on the ground of which he could attack them, and he went down to Ashkelon and slew thirty Philistines. That was the signal that the conflict had begun. But there is this question. Might Samson knowingly and willingly occasion, through the expounding of that riddle, the sinning of reprobated Philistines whom he was commanded to destroy that God's people might be free? Samson's doings *as such* were not wrong. Moses must have purposely occasioned the rebellion of Pharaoh in proclaiming to him the command of God that he let the people of Israel go. For previously the Lord had revealed to Moses that He would harden Pharaoh's heart. The proclamation of God's will and of his gospel always is a savor of death unto death unto men singled out by God for destruction. And every preacher, disposed as he should be, wills that his word have exactly that effect. We believe therefore that the sacred narrator justifies the tactic of Samson and that the justifying statement reads, "It was of the Lord that he sought occasion against the Philistines. And though the Philistines slain were not the guests who had offended, that slaying, as was said, is to be justified on the following grounds. 1) All the Philistines deserved to die quite apart from the treachery of Sam-

son's thirty guests, being, as they were, wicked men, defiers of God and oppressors of His people. 2) The Lord had ordered them destroyed. 3) The command had come to Samson. Hence, he warred the warfare of God and this by faith, according to the testimony of the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews. His war-
ring that warfare was a good work performed from the principle of faith.

There is clear evidence in the narrative that, in falling upon the Philistines, Samson was not moved by sinful spite but acted under the constraint of faith. Instead of slaying the thirty guests who had reviled him in the matter of his riddle,—instead of slaying these offenders, which he would have done had he been moved by a carnal thirst for revenge, he slew thirty Philistines in Ashkelon. When he discovered that, during his absence, his father-in-law had given away his wife to another, he went forth and set fire to the wheatfields of his father-in-law's Philistine neighbors. His anger burned against the Philistine nation and not merely against the few individual Philistines who trespassed against him personally. His grief was the bondage of his people and not merely his own personal injuries. It was for the sake of his God and his people that he fought that war. That the conflict assumed the appearance of a private quarrel carried on by him under the impulse of a private grudge for the purpose of satisfying personal grievances was unavoidable. The men of Judah were not with him in that war. They declined to assist him, to fight at his side under his leadership. Thus he was the lone hero, one against the many. And the many—the Philistines—wanted no conflict, for the men of Judah were their willing slaves. The only one they were opposed to is Samson, for the man would not behave. Hence, the whole conflict concentrated itself on his person. He was the only one to attack and the only one attacked. And he had to seek occasion not once but continually. And each new attack on his part occasioned a new offence on their part so that they continued to provide him with grounds for prolonging the conflict. Indeed his exploits are quite unlike anything else in the Scriptures. But these liberal commentators who in their folly hold this against the man, should understand that it could not well be otherwise. The man himself, as a warrior of God was quite unlike any other warrior in Scripture. And the circumstance under which he had to war his warfare were quite unlike the circumstances under which each of the others warred his warfare. No one wanted war but he. Thus we should have nothing but words of censure for criticism of the man such as we come upon in the following excerpt. "His—Samson's—honor lay in being an open enemy to the Philistines, his dishonour in making underhand excuses for attacking them. It was base to seek occasion against them when he married the woman at Timnah,

and from one act of baseness he went on to others because of that first error. And chiefly Samson failed in his fidelity to God. Scarcely ever was the name of Jehovah dragged through the mire as it was by him. The God of truth, the divine guardian of faithfulness, the God Who is light, in Whom is no darkness at all, was made by Samson's deeds to appear as the patron of murder and treachery. We can hardly allow that an Israelite was so ignorant of the ordinary laws of morality as to suppose that faith need not be kept with idolaters; there were traditions of his people that prevented such a notion." It is absurd to speak of Samson as making underhanded excuses for attacking the Philistines. To say that he was in the need of an excuse is to deny that God had commanded him; it is thus to set forth his warfare as murderfeast and the man himself as ranking among the notorious outlaws of all history. Certainly it was sinful of him to form a covenant of marital love with that woman at Timnah. That was a forbidden marriage. For the woman was a Philistine. Besides, it was wrong of him to marry that woman in order to place himself in a position to seek an occasion against the Philistines. And this was doubtless his purpose. But marriage was not instituted for such a purpose. All this must be freely admitted. Yet his Philistine guests had no reason to complain of him. That he found occasion against them was due solely to their treachery, and not to any underhandedness on his part. The occasion that they had given him he uses not against his wife toward whom he had assumed the obligations of husband, not against the men of Timnah with whom he had eaten and toward whom he had assumed the obligations of a host but he used that occasion against the city of Ashkelon. He could thus not be accused of withdrawing himself from obligations that he had assumed. For between himself and the Philistine nation no treaty existed. What must be censured in him is not his seeking occasion against the Philistines and not certainly his waging war against them, but his seeking occasion against them in a forbidden way, in the way of a forbidden marriage.

Having set out on that way, his first wrong act—his marrying that woman in Timnah—led to another. Having recompensed the treachery of his Philistine guests with garments snatched from the corpses of their countrymen slain by his own hand, Samson, instead of returning to his wife, went up to his father's house. But in process of time, he went back to his wife. That his absence was long seems to be indicated by his visiting his wife with a kid. That has all the appearance of an apology. What did he apologize for if not for his prolonged absence. Samson may have left his wife with his mind fully made up not to return. Judged by the ethical standard of Christ, his doing was wrong. True, she was a heathen. What is more, she had betrayed him in the matter of his riddle. But

he knew what to expect before he married the woman. Her treachery did not justify his leaving her. For Christ says, that if a man leaves his wife except for adultery he commits fornication. Samson's doing easily can be explained. His anger was kindled; and it burned against the whole Philistine tribe including of course his wife. And it was the anger of hatred. He was antagonistic to that woman even before he married her. He was antagonistic to her people, he being a true Israelite as to the heart of his disposition and they being Philistines. He hated them for what they were—enemies of God and oppressors of his people. In the depth of his being, he hated their way of life, their vanity and profanity. Being the kind of a man he essentially was, he could not be at home in the society of such men. Even apart from the treachery of his wife and guests, he loathed the whole Philistine brood. The treachery had merely served to accentuate in his mind the moral worthlessness of this people. But he had married that woman, because he was a man of gross sensuality. She pleased him well. This was one reason, the other reason being that he sought occasion. But having used her to satisfy his lust, and having betrayed him in the matter of his riddle, he had enough of the woman. And he forthwith left her and returned to his father's house. But why did he go back to the woman? Because his disposition was too noble to cherish anger long? Because, as only small souls bear grudges, he was not that kind of a soul? Because being the noble soul that he was, he had forgotten the wrong that was done him and now thought that the Philistines were no longer mindful of the wrong they had done? Thus because he felt as if nothing had happened? Did he visit his wife kindly disposed as ever? And did his conciliatory feeling actually declare itself in the kid that he brought? So judge those well-meaning interpreters overly eager to discover a noble motive in all that the man does. True it is that, as to the heart of his disposition, Samson was a man of true nobility. He loved God; and under the constraint of his faith and as inspired by the Spirit of God, he battled the oppressor in order that his ungrateful brethren might be free—his brethren, who, even while he was jeopardizing his life for them, decreed that he should die. But that he went back to the woman, as no longer cherishing anger; as having forgotten the wrong that was done him, and thus for the purpose of effecting a real reconciliation between himself and his cast-off wife, cannot be true. He might not forgive and forget the wrong that they had done to him and was doing to his people, thus forget that they were Philistines and as such the enemies of God. It was his calling to remember, to set their sins before him, and to make war upon them for God's sake. Craving their friendship and in that crave casting their sins behind him, would have been equivalent

to his denying his calling, repudiating God and turning against his own people. For the friendship of the world is enmity against God. How could such an attitude and doing be reconciled with his faith? It could not. There is much to censure in this man, but to charge him with such atrocious sins is to maintain that he was reprobated. But he was not reprobated. Despite his sinful tactics and sensuality, he was a true believer. But how could so much that is censurable and loathsome dwell alongside of faith in the man? It didn't, at least not peaceably. Like every true believer, he must have loathed himself with growing intensity for all that moral evil that dwelt in his flesh. He must have repented of his sins. The sacred narrative, certainly, lends no support to the view that he spent the years of his life in riotous living in company with harlots. Being a man of glowing health and uncommon physical vigor, his besetting sin was sexual immorality. But according to the sacred narrative he offended but three times during his judgeship that lasted twenty years. This must be mentioned not to minimize the man's guilt but to set forth the man in a true light.

But why did he go back to his wife? Undoubtedly he was seeking another occasion against the Philistines for prolonging his warfare with them. He may have made it his business to know what would be done with his wife during his absence; for all the time he was seeking occasion against the adversary. Having heard that his father-in-law had given her to another, he resolves to put that offence to use. Soon he was on his way to the woman with a kid. The sacred narrator reports that, when Samson arrive din Timnah, he said, "I will go in to my wife in the chamber." From the sequence it appears that what the narrator here tells us is that Samson gave to the matter of his return to his wife wide publicity. He wanted all Timnah to know, Philistines and Israelites alike, so that what he is reported to have said, was uttered not merely in the audience of his father-in-law but in the hearing of several others. It need not be denied that his father-in-law was genuinely surprised and dismayed to see Samson. "Verily," he said to him, "I thought that thou hadst utterly hated her; therefore I gave her to thy companion," to one of the thirty guests who had formed Samson's retinue on the marriage-feast and who had ploughed with his heifer. There were indeed grounds for including that Samson hated his wife and had permanently left her. Thus, being a Philistine, a man with little feeling for the sacredness of marriage as a divine institution, the father-in-law of Samson gave his married daughter to another—to one of those companions—in all likelihood as threatened by the Philistines. For the Philistines were spiteful men. But now that Samson had suddenly returned, his father-in-law is afraid, afraid of Samson and of the Philistines.

What was he now to do? He dare not restore his daughter to her lawful husband for fear of the Philistines. So he forbade Samson to go in to his wife. But what was he to do with Samson? He dare not order him to be on his way without making up to him. So he entreated Samson to take to him the woman's younger sister. Behold the maiden. She was even more comely than the woman he had married. What more could a man desire in the way of a woman. He still had the best of the bargain. "And her father said, I verily thought that thou hadst utterly hated her; therefore I gave her to thy companion: is not her younger sister fairer than she? Take her I pray thee, instead of her." But Samson declined. For he was again seeking occasion against the Philistines. "He said to them, This time shall I be blameless from the Philistines, if I do them evil." So reads the Hebrew text. "And he said to them. . . ." To whom? Doubtless, not to his father-in-law—the use of the plural pronoun *them* forbids this view—but to his own brethren, whom he sought out and faced after having gone forth from the presence of his father-in-law. It was to them that these words were addressed. They had severely denounced, it must be supposed, his previous exploit, his slaying of the thirty Ashkelonites. In their view that slaying was uncalled for. He himself, they may have told him, had been to blame in the matter of the riddle. The Philistines were not hurting them. Why then attack them and thereby revive the old antagonism between Philistines and Israelites? Why couldn't he be law-abiding as they were? So did they remonstrate with him. They refused to regard his prodigious strength as the token of his being the outstretched arm of God for their deliverance. They willed not to be delivered. They were satisfied with their bondage. His saying to them, "This time shall I be blameless from the Philistines. . . ." was his reply to their unbelief and spiritual lethargy. Let them consider, he would say, the treachery he was experiencing at the hands of those uncircumcised, and with it let them consider their own disgraceful bondage, and then let them say whether, in their view, the grounds were wanting to justify his animosity toward those men. He had just been wronged by them anew. They had forced his wife and her father to take the step they took. They did it because he was an Israelite. Did that mean nothing to them? But they could throw back into his teeth that he had played right into their hands by marrying into that Philistine family. They could demand of him that he justify that marriage in the light of definite divine prohibition known to all. It is unquestionably true that he had weakened his position among them, through that doing. What influence could he have with his brethren, as a champion of the cause of his God, as judge in Israel, after having set them such an example? It is well that he

sought an occasion against the Philistines. But rather than seek that occasion in the way of a forbidden marriage, he should have waited for the Lord to give him the opening that he sought.

He now did the Philistines another evil. He "went and caught three hundred jackals, and took torches, and turned tail to tail, and put torches in the midst between two tails. And when he had set the torches on fire, he let the animals go into the standing corn of the Philistines, and burnt up both the shocks, and also the standing corn, with the vineyards and olives." What would his brethren now have to say. It behooved them to keep silence. Seeing that they had refused him their support, they had no one to blame but themselves that he now turned to the beasts of the forest for his confederates, constitute three hundred jackals his army against the common foe. Swift as the wind, the animals, crazed by the burning torches, that wrapped their tails in fire, ran through the standing grain, to seek freedom for themselves. The damage inflicted was great. And it demonstrated anew that in Samson the Philistines and Israelites had to do with no ordinary man.

The Philistines had done nothing about the slaying of the thirty Ashkelonites. But the destruction of all that standing grain was a calamity of the first magnitude. They asked, "Who hath done this?" And they answered, "Samson, the son-in-law of the Timnite, because he had taken his wife, and given her to his companion." The answer came from the enquiring Philistines themselves. Beholding their ruined grain-fields, their thoughts turned immediately to Samson as the doer of the evil work. But instead of attending to him, they burned his wife and her father's house and thereby provided him with another occasion for attacking them anew. Though they had done this, with a view to appeasing his anger, yet will he be avenged of them, and after that he will cease. So he smote them with a great slaughter and went down and dwelt in the top of the rock Etam. Then the Philistines decided to take action against Samson. They demand of the men of Judah that they deliver him into their hands, which the men of Judah agree to do and also actually did as to their intentions. Samson slays a thousand Philistines and his war with them temporarily ended.

These reactions of the Philistines to Samson's attacks call for closer inspection and careful analysis. These reactions have meaning, as also the reactions of the Israelites. But this calls for another article.

G. M. O.

A hollow sounding barrel and some Calvinists, who for evermore talk *about* Calvinism, are similar.

H. H.

Maar Mijn Volk Wou Niet!

(Psalm 81; Tweede Deel)

Het lied van den 81sten psalm ruischte zachtken daarhenen. Er werd gezongen van de opwekking om toch vooral te juichen om Godswil. Hij is de kracht van onze kracht. Zijn groote daden die Hij gedaan had aan de Schelfzee werden bezongen in dit schoone lied, zijn groote verlossingen die Hij bewerkt had voor Israel. Hij had hunne schouder verlost van den last en alle hunne benauwdheden in groote liefde weggenomen.

Daarom hoorden we verder de lieflijke stem van God die Zijn volk toezong: Hoor naar Mij, Mijn volk en Ik zal onder U getuigen! De lieflijke stem Gods lokte Israel tot Zich en Hij zeide: Ik ben Uw God: doe uwen mond maar wijd open. Ik zal hem vervullen!

Tot zoover zijn we gekomen.

Maar nu hebben we wat anders. We hooren nu iets grievends. Ik heb het boven dit stukje geplaatst in den vorm van den berijmden psalm: Maar Mijn volk wou niet naar Mijn stemme hooren! Israel verliet Mij en Mijn geboon; 't heeft zich andre goon, naar zijn lust verkoren!

Dat is het smartelijke van dit stuk.

We zullen twee vreeselijke verzen afschrijven. Ze luiden als volgt: "Maar Mijn volk heeft Mijne stem niet gehoord, en Israel heeft Mijner niet gewild. Dies heb Ik het overgegeven in het goeddunken huns harten, dat zij wandelen in hunne raadslagen."

We beluisteren hier een zwaar probleem. En het probleem heeft twee elementen die verklaard moeten worden. Het eerste is: Israel hoorde de stem Gods niet; zij wilden geen Goddelijke dingen. Het tweede is: God gaf *Zijn volk* over in het goeddunken huns harten, zoodat zij ten slotte wandelden in de raadslagen huns harten. Hoe moet dit verklaard?

Jezus zegt, zoovele jaren later: Mijne schapen hooren Mijne stem en zij volgen Mij. En hier zegt God: Mijn volk heeft Mijne stem niet gehoord. Hoe kan ik dat met elkander rijmen? David bezingt de lust van al Gods volk als hij zingt: 't Hijgend hert der jacht ontkomen schreeuwt niet sterker naar 't genot van de frissche waterstroomen dan mijn ziel verlangt naar God. Evenwel zegt God hier, dat Zijn volk Zijner niet wilde. Hoe kan men dat verstaan?

En wat het tweede element aangaat, zegt Jezus: Ik geef hun (Mijne schapen) het eeuwige leven, en zij zullen niet verloren gaan in der eeuwigheid, en niemand zal dezelve uit Mijne hand rukken. Mijn Vader die ze Mij gegeven heeft, is meerder dan allen, en niemand kan ze rukken uit de hand Mijns Vaders! Maar hier staat, dat God Zijn volk overgeeft, neen, overgegeven heeft in het goeddunken huns harten, eene uitdrukking

die elders ongeteekend staat van de verworpenen. In Rom. 1:24, zegt God van de verworpenen: "Daarom heeft ze God ook overgegeven in de begeerlijkheden hunner harten tot onreinigheid. . . ." Hoe kan God hetzelfde zeggen aangaande Zijn volk, dat Hij van eeuwigheid bemint; het volk, dat niet gerukt kan uit Jezus' en Gods hand? Mozes zegt van dat volk: "en van onderen eeuwige armen. . . ." Waar zijn die armen van God in het moment van Psalm 81? Ziet, mijne broeders, dat is het huidige probleem.

Om deze schijnbare tegenstrijdigheid te verstaan, moet men voor de aandacht houden, dat niet alles wat Israel heet, ook werkelijk Israel is. Er zijn veel verworpenen onder het historische Israel. En als het getal der verworpenen in Israel onrustbarend toeneemt, zoodat de openbaring van dat volk in de wereld bijna uitsluitend kwaad en boos is, dan noemt God Zijn volk naar den verworpen bolster. Om een historisch voorbeeld te noemen, toen Nebukadnezar kwam om Israel weg te voeren naar Babel werd Israel genoemd en behandeld naar den verworpen bolster. De uitverkoren kern was er nog wel, doch hun aantal was zeer gering, zóó gering, dat men het haast niet meer gewaar werd. En toen heeft God ook gezegd: Mijn volk hoort Mijn stem niet; Mijn volk wil Mij niet langer. Dat was toch wel duidelijk? Jeremia sprak in Gods naam en de stakkerd werd vertrapt voor zijn moeite. Men hoorde Gods stem in die dagen niet meer, want het groote meerendeel was verworpen en hard van harte. Toen gaf God hen over in het goeddunken huns harten en zij wandelden in hunne raadslagen. God streed niet meer voor hen, zoodat, toen de Babyioniërs kwamen, werden zij als natie weggevoerd in smartelijke slavernij. En de verkoren kern, klein, zwak, lijdend, moest meelijden met den verworpen bolster.

Dezelfde zaak vindt ge in Jesaja 63:10. Daar staat: "Maar zij (nl. Israel) zijn wederspanning geworden (nl. door de geslachten heen. Let op dat: *geworden*), en zij hebben Zijnen Heiligen Geest smarten aangedaan: daarom is Hij hun in een vijand verkeerd, Hij zelf heeft tegen hen gestreden." Hier wordt God eenvoudig weg de Vijand van Zijn volk genoemd. En het kan alleen verklaard, door te zien en te zeggen, dat Israel soms genoemd wordt naar den verworpen bolster. Zoo kan men ook zien, dat het verworpen Israel zelfs zijn heerlijken naam behoudt in de hel. De rijke man werd door Abraham aangesproken met den naam van *kind!* En Jezus zegt elders: Doch de *kinderen des Koninkrijks* zullen buitengeworpen worden! Niet anders is het in Psalm 90. Daar wordt smartelijk gezongen door Mozes: Wij vergaan door Uwen toorn en wij worden door Uwe grimmigheid verschrikt! Geen wonder! In het meerendeel had God geen welbehagen en zij werden ter neder gesmeten in de woestijn! I Cor. 10.

Ziet gij het niet, lezer, dat gij de organische beschouwing moet hebben van Israel, de Kerk, het volk van God, om den Bijbel te kunnen verstaan? Normaal genomen, wordt de Kerk genoemd naar den verkoren kern; en ook dan zijn er moeilijkheden, zoo moeilijk, dat sommige onervaren en domme menschen verlost worden om de Gereformeerde kringen te verlaten om rond te doelen in Baptische kringen, of te luisteren naar de verwarde klanken van mannen zooals Dr. De Haan der undenominational churches. En het eerste struikelblok is dan de doop van jonge kinderen. Er staat dan toch maar, zoo zegt men, "Almachtige, barmhartige God en Vader, Wij danken en loven U, dat Gij ons en onze kinderen, door het bloed van Uwen lieven Zoon Jezus Christus, al onze zonden vergeven. . . hebt." Hoe kan dat ooit gezegd en gebeden, zoo vragen die arme zielen. Wij weten toch wel beter? Alle gedoopte kinderen gaan toch niet naar den hemel?

Beziet men die zaak echter uit het organisch oogpunt, dan wordt het zeer duidelijk. Eerst, er staat: *Wij danken U!* De verworpene vader en moeder, de naam Christen van alle eeuwen, die óók vooraan in de kerk staat om zijn verworpen kind ter doop te houden, ik zeg, die man en die vrouw bidden toch immers nooit? Ook dan niet, als zij den mond daadwerkelijk opendoen en die boven aangehaalde bede meeprevelen? En als zij zeggen: ons en onze kinderen alle onze zonden vergeven hebt, is het eenvoudig een leugen in hunne rechterhand. Wanneer zal men dan eens verstaan wat Paulus zegt in Romeinen 9:8: ". . . maar de kinderen der belofte (wonderkinderen, gelijk Izak) worden voor het zaad gerekend."

Zoo nu moet ge die vreeselijke verzen van Psalm 81 verstaan. Israel wordt hier genoemd naar den verworpen bolster. Het ware volk Israel, dat onder hen was, wordt eenvoudig voor tijd en wijle verzwegen. Zij gaan onder, met den bolster die groot en dik was in goddeloosheid, in den smeltkroes der ellende. Doch weet dit, dat God hen nooit vergat. Ook in Babel, in Egypte, in de huidige verdoemde en hoerachtige tijden zijn er de 7000 die altoos zullen weigeren om te buigen voor de Baäls.

Let nu eens goed op en ik zal een voorbeeld geven, hetwelk de zaak zeer duidelijk maakt. Daniel en zijn drie vrienden zijn ook met Israel naar Babel verbannen. Dacht gij voor een oogenblik, dat God ooit Daniel overgaf in het goeddunken van Daniel's oude hart? Gij weet wel beter. Al moest hij naar de leeuwenkuil en zijn drie vrienden naar de vurige oven, God verliet hen nooit. In het eerste geval zond God een Engel om den muil der leeuwen toe te stoppen en in het andere geval ging Jezus met hen in het vuur wandelen. En de koning heeft gesidderd, want God kwam zeer dicht bij hem. Hallelujah!

Doch het verworpen deel van Israel wandelde in het

goeddenken huns harten zoodat er velen geweest zijn die bogen voor de stomme afgoden.

Nu zal het gemakkelijker zijn om die klagende stem van Jehova te verklaren. God klaagt: Och dat Mijn volk naar Mij gehoord had, dat Israel in Mijne wegen gewandeld had! In kort zoude Ik hunne vijanden gedempt hebben, en Mijne hand gewend hebben tegen hunne wederpartijders. Die den Heere haten, zouden zich Hem geveinsdelijk onderworpen hebben, maar hunlieder tijd zoude eeuwig geweest zijn. En Hij zoude het gespijsd hebben met het vette der tarwe, ja Ik zoude u verzadigd hebben met honig uit de rotssteenen.

Eerst, weet ik wel, dat de vraag opkomt: Hoe kon God zoo klagen? Hij is toch de Almachtige? Hij kan toch alles doen wat Hem behaagt? Het hart van elk menschenkind is in Zijn hand als waterbeeken; Hij kan het leiden waarheen Hij wil?

Met een glimlach zou ik willen antwoorden: God klaagt hier niet vanwege het feit, dat Hij machteloos is om mensch of duivel te temmen. Hij is de Almachtige en Hij kan alles wat Hem behaagd. Die zoo vraagt ziet het goede oogpunt niet. Dit is het antwoord: Het gaat God aan Zijn hart, dat het ware Israel lijden moet. Als Hij van uit de diepte van den kuil Micha en Jeremia hoort schreeuwen en klagen, dan zegt God: Och, dat Mijn volk naar Mij geluisterd had, dan had Mijn lieve volk der verkiezing niet zoo behoeven te klagen. Deze wondere omlaagdaling van Israel (Klaagliederen van Jeremia) dient Mijn raad: het moet zoo, om te komen tot het glorieuze einde. Evenwel, het gaat Mij aan Mijn hart, dat het ware Sion zoo lijdt.

Om dit punt duidelijk te maken zou ik U willen verzoeken om mee te gaan naar het kruis. En ik vraag U: Hoe denkt gij allen die dit leest, dat het God te moede was bij het hooren van die schreeuw, die bange schreeuw van Messias? God is niet hard, doch teeder en zacht, zachter en teederder dan ik het ooit kan zeggen of bezingen. Des Heeren Geest werd smart aangedaan toen Hij Israel overgaf. Om Zijns volks wil.

Tweedens, is het niet duidelijk, dat als Israel wandelt in Gods wegen hetzelfde Israel ook gezegend wordt? Denkt aan David's en Salomo's tijden. Toen werd den vijand onderdrukt, toen zag men de vette tarwe en dronk men honig uit den rotssteen.

Eindelijk, die smarten hebben ook een einde. Slechts "voor een kleinen oogenblik heb Ik u verlaten, maar met groote ontfermingen zal Ik u vergaderen; in een kleinen toorn heb Ik Mijn aangezicht van u een oogenblik verborgen, maar met eeuwige goedertierenheid zal Ik Mij uwer ontfermen, zegt de Heere uw Verlosser.

Want dat zal zijn als de wateren Noachs, toen Ik zwoer dat de wateren Noachs niet meer over de aarde zouden gaan: alzóó heb Ik gezworen dat Ik niet meer op u toornen noch u schelden zal. Want bergen zullen wij-

ken, en heuvelen wankelen, maar Mijne goedertierenheid zal van u niet wijken, en het verbond Mijns vredes zal niet wankelen, zegt de Heere uw Ontfermer. Gij verdrukte, door onweder voortgedrevene, ongetrooste, zie, Ik zal uwe steenen gansch sierlijk leggen, en Ik zal u op saffieren grondvesten; en uwe glasvensters zal Ik kristallijnen maken, en uwe poorten van robijnen, en uwe gansche landpale van aangename steenen. En alle uwe kinderen zullen van den Heere geleerd zijn, en de vrede uwer kinderen zal groot zijn." Jes. 54:7-13.

Die dingen zijn vandaag nog net zoo.

Israel wordt vandaag toegezongen: Looft God, zingt Zijne sterkte! Speelt op de luit en op de harp, want uw God is groot in Sion!

Vandaag en tot de laatste snik van het laatste kind van God zal men gedenken, dat God Israel verlostte uit Egypte der dienstbaarheid.

Ook nu nog roepen we onze kindren toe: Opent uwen mond! God zal hem vervullen!

Ten huidigen dage is het ook waar, dat Israel wou niet naar Mijn stemme hooren. Israel, wat de bolster betreft, ligt te aanbidden voor de afgoden die het zich verkoor. Denkt hier ook eens aan de afgoden van het afgodische Israel der drie punten: een god die de goddeloozen bemint! (Let er op, dat ik het woordje *god* met een kleine letter neerschreef.)

En ook het trouwe Israel, de uitverkorenen, doen mee naar den ouden mensch.

Daarom komt God met Zijn plagen, met Zijn oordeelen. Daarom stookt de Goddelijke Goudsmid het vuur Zijner wrake en gaan we allen in den smeltkroes. klaagt God: Och, dat Israel. . . .

Dan hoort ge de smartkretten der getrouwen; en klaagt God: Och, dat Israel. . . .

Maar het einde, mijn broeder, is de hemel voor Gods kind.

Through pain and trouble Thou hast led and humbled all our pride. But, in the end, to liberty and wealth Thy hand did guide! Oh, I always will love this glorious song! The end of it is: O let the Lord, our gracious God, forever blessed be! Dat is onze hemel, daarboven bij God!

En de kindertjes stemmen nog: Opent Uwen mond. . . .

G. V.

MINISTERS' CONFERENCE

The Protestant Reformed Ministers' Conference will meet Tuesday, April 3 at 9:30 A.M., in the First Protestant Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan. Program:—"The Inherently Modernistic World View of Common Grace"—J. A. Heys. "The Idea of Conscience in the Epistles of Paul"—H. Hoeksema,

The Outward Man and The Old Man

To the world the title of this essay assigned to us must indeed sound strange. At the very best it must appear to the world to be a "catchy" title whose purpose is to attract attention and arouse in one the curiosity necessary to induce a reading of this essay. He who is not acquainted with Scripture must indeed misunderstand the above title.

The child of God who is well versed with the Scriptures is well acquainted with these terms. Especially is the expression "old man" familiar to him. He knows at once that this expression refers to the old man of sin and is the opposite of the new man in Christ. Unless his Scriptural knowledge is very small, he will also at once recall that Scripture speaks of an outward man and of an inner or inward man.

Upon reading the title, one feels an implied question and that question is not merely: What is the outward man and the old man?, but it is more specifically: Are those two men one and the same? Does Paul mean the same thing by both expressions?

A consideration of the passages of Scripture where Paul speaks of these two concepts will show at once that these two are not one and the same. In writing to the Corinthians in his second epistle he speaks directly of the outward man in chap. 4:16. This is the only passage where he speaks literally of this outward man. There are other passages where he speaks of the inward man literally. Besides speaking of this inward man in II Cor. 4:16, he also speaks of him literally in Romans 7:22 and Ephesians 3:16. Passages which literally speak of the new man are II Cor. 5:17 and Ephesians 4:24, while the old man is literally spoken of in Romans 6:6, Eph. 4:22, Col. 3:9 and II Peter 1:9.

This passage in II Corinthians 4 which speaks of the outward man is very interesting for our discussion, for it not only speaks of this outward man literally but also speaks literally of the inward man. Here we find them both placed side by side. The text reads, "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day."

In the context Paul has been speaking of the persecution and affliction he had suffered for Christ's sake. His treasure of the ministry he has in an earthen vessel—his body—and in this earthen vessel he suffered much. Here are a few of the expressions he penned down: "troubled on every side. . . perplexed. . . persecuted. . . cast down. . . always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. . . for we which live are always delivered unto death." Having now this physical suffering and this process of physical death in mind he says that his outward man perishes, and at the same time his new man is renewed day by

day. Plainly he has his physical life in mind apart from any moral element and is not speaking of the mortification or the putting to death of his members as he did in Col. 3:6 in connection with which he continues in verses 8 and 9, "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds" Thus the perishing of the outward man is not the spiritual act of putting off the old man. This perishing is not even an act of Paul but something that comes over him or occurs to his body. It is the physical perishing of the body as it is in the process of returning to the dust, from whence it came, because of these physical sufferings he was experiencing.

What then is the outward man? It is man purely from a physical, material viewpoint, man as he is formed from the dust of the ground and is dependent upon all the things of this earth for his physical life, not apart from God but because God has made him thus and through these things upholds his physical life. It is man as he through his body and the sense organs in that body comes in contact with the world wherein God placed him, as a physical being apart from any ethical consideration. The inner man we would then say is man from the viewpoint of his soul life, man from a spiritual viewpoint, or man as he with his soul and the innermost portion of his being faces not the world about him but his God and creator.

In the creation of man no doubt our starting point should be found to come to a correct understanding of these different expressions of old man and new man and outward man and inward man. For man was created much differently than the animals. He was *formed* out of the dust of the ground by God, and God *breathed into his nostrils the breath of life*. Through this unique creation he became according to Gen. 2:7 and I Cor. 15:45 a *living soul*. This made him differ from all the other creatures God has made on this earth. By virtue of this creation he possessed an inner man wherewith he faced his God, loved Him and knew Him, and an outward man or physical side. He was so created that he consisted in body and soul. This cannot be said of the animals, for according to Gen. 9:4 their soul is in their blood. They have only an outward life, facing this world, and are not able to know and love God. There is no spiritual side to their existence, and when their blood is shed, their soul dies and the end of their existence is reached. Man, however, being formed by God and having the breath of life breathed into his nostrils by God, became a rational, moral creature created in God's image. By this unique creation God placed in man something not to be found in the animals, something that continues after the body returns to the dust, something that in Gen. 2:7 and I Cor. 15:45 is called the *soul*. This soul

wherewith man communes with God in his heart, loves Him and knows Him, or when speaking of the ungodly wherewith he hates Him, we would say in the inner man, as he faces his God and Creator; while the outward man is the body, apart from any ethical consideration, wherewith he comes in contact with the world and faces it. We hasten to add, of course, that this is but a logical distinction and not a physical division of man. You cannot take a knife and separate the outward man from the inner, as you would the outward apple—its peeling—and the inner apple—its pulp. Nor must so conceive of it so that they exist apart from each other. The soul dwells in the body and uses the body, so that without physical life the soul can do nothing here on earth, and our glorification is not complete till the soul is reunited with a glorified body. Thus although the outward man is man from the viewpoint of his physical life, his body, in distinction from the soul, yet that body, or outward man can and most assuredly is used by the inner man, the soul in an ethical, spiritual way. Although the outward man as such is a concept without any spiritual implication, yet it receives spiritual content in as far as it becomes the instrument of the inward man, the soul. The whole man becomes guilty before God, and he is cast according to body and soul into eternal desolation, for he sins against God with his whole being. Facing his God with the inward man, his calling is also to serve God with the body as it faces the world wherein God places him. Yea, so closely related and so inseparable are these two that it is only as long as he really faces God in love in the inward man that he can also serve Him as he faces the world with his outward man.

Our first conclusion then is this: All men, the elect but also the reprobate, have both an outward and an inner man. This can not be said of the old man and the new man. Only in the elect, and then only in the regenerated elect can a new man be found. All men have an outward man, an inward man and an old man. But through the grace of God in regeneration a fourth man—the new man in Christ—is implanted in His children.

What then is the old man of sin? If he is not the outward man, nor the inward or inner man, who is he? First of all, we would answer thus: The old man is the person or ego—that is, that within man which is the subject of all he does, that which controls the soul and through it controls the body and is called in Scripture the “heart”—as it uses both the inward man and the outward man in the way of sin. As we remarked above, man was created in God’s image so that according to the inner man he faced God in love and knew Him and consequently, facing the world with the outward man, he served God with all his body and strength. He fell however and instead of facing God in love, his soul stood in a relation of hatred and re-

bellion to God. He still continued to have an inward man—his soul—wherewith he faced God, that is lived a spiritual life, for he did not become an animal through his fall and he continued to have an outward man. Now however his spiritual life became one of spiritual darkness. Thus all men are by nature, born with body and soul yet with a soul that knows not God, loves Him not and uses all his physical life and contact with this world in the way of sin. The person of man as it uses body and soul thus in the way of sin, we would say is the old man of sin. The adjective “old” refers then to the fact that he is first in us. We are born with our person using the whole nature in this way of sin. That is the first spiritual activity of man. With this activity he enters the world by his natural birth.

The new man in Christ then is the same person as it receives a new principle of life, a new will and ability to face God once more with the soul in love and through that soul to use the body with all its members in the service of God. This is something *added* to man as he is born by nature and is the principle of the life of *Christ*. Hence it is called a *new* man in *Christ*.

That it is the same person is plain from such a passage as Rom. 7:15 where Paul declares, “For that which I do I allow not; for what I would do I not; but what I hate, that do I.” He admits that his ego or person, that which in him says “I”, performs both of these deeds. The person uses body and soul in sin and in the way of God’s precepts. As he behaves with these according to his nature, he is the old man of sin, but as he behaves with these through the power of the new life in him, he is the new man in Christ.

Thus it is that Paul can say in II Cor. 4:16 that while his outward man perishes, the inward man is renewed day by day. Paul can say that because he has been regenerated. His inward man—his soul—can be refreshed and renewed day by day because he has been regenerated by the grace of God. Although his physical life is slipping from him because of all these afflictions he is suffering, his spiritual life—the inward man wherewith he faces God—is refreshed or renewed, that is, because there is this new principle of life in him which loves God and knows Him, his communion and joy with God in the inward man becomes sweeter to him. These afflictions in the outward man hurt, and he does not deny it. But as he continued in the next verse, his “light afflictions which are but for a moment” work for him “an exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” By the grace of God and because there is a new man within him, these afflictions in the outward man drive his inner man to closer fellowship with God, which is glory for him, for being created in God’s image man’s glory is to have fellowship and communion with his God and Father. And presently when the outward man has perished completely, the soul leaves and enters into a closer fellowship with God

in heavenly glory. Thus it is that while his outward man perishes, the inward man is renewed, and his afflictions in the outward man work for him an exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Knowing that these afflictions work this glory for him, the inward man is renewed day by day. Notice verse 18, "While we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things which are not seen." If Paul looks with the old man of sin, he shudders and complains of his misery, but when he looks with the eye of faith which belongs to the new man in Christ at these same afflictions and sees them in the light of that eternal glory—the things not seen—his inward man rejoices and is refreshed and strengthened to continue serving God.

We conclude then by saying that the outward man and the inward man are the two sides of the natural life of man, the purely physical, earthly, material side and the spiritual side. The new man and the old man are this spiritual side from its ethical moral viewpoint. According to the outward man we face this world and according to the inward man we stand responsible to God Whom we face with that inward man. The concepts new man and old man have to do with the way in which we face God, whether in love or in hate, and with the way in which we employ both body and soul.

J. A. H.

A Need For a Calvinistic Conference

It was with this conviction that I accepted an appointment to be on a committee to work out plans to have a conference in southern California. This invitation was extended last August and since that time up to the present there have been approximately five meetings held by this committee. It was composed of ministers of four denominations of California.

The problem that appeared was the problem to have speakers suitable to all for the program which was tentatively set for July 1945. The minister of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church objected to having any ministers of the Presbyterian Church of the U.S.A. for the obvious reason that they differed with them doctrinally. It was my suggestion to have speakers from each denomination. This, however, was strongly opposed by the ministers of the Christian Reformed Church, although it was agreeable to the men of the Reformed Church and the Orthodox Presbyterian. The argument given was that such a conference at which all Churches would be represented on the speaking program would only result in a conference bringing out doctrinal differences instead of presenting a united and positive front to the world. The Christian

Reformed men would have agreed to have speakers other than from their Church to avoid this. It was my opinion that this could be avoided. I agreed to have them choose the subjects for the program and assign them to whichever speaker they saw fit and even to eliminate the period of discussion after the speeches, but that we ought to have speakers from all our churches.

Because of differences of opinion it seemed advisable to me to present my view in writing. This was read by all except the minister from the Reformed Church. The minister from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church showed this to his colleagues and to his presbytery, and replied by letter that his presbytery felt that if they were going to have a public program we should present a united program. However, that they also were in favor of a conference of ministers to discuss doctrinal differences.

At the last meeting it was decided to have a conference which would not air our doctrinal differences but which would present a united program. A list of speakers was suggested and included were speakers from the Reformed Church, Orthodox Presbyterian, and Christian Reformed. There was none from the Protestant Reformed.

It became apparent to me that further effort was in vain, and so I informed them of my future absence from their meetings.

I had given the promise that should they have a speaker from our Church, he would not criticize the Christian Reformed Church nor bring up any personal history but would speak his convictions as based upon the Word of God.

This is probably of interest to readers of the Standard Bearer. The following is a copy of my view presented to them. May other Calvinists express themselves.

"This writing is occasioned by the problem which appeared in our attempt to work out a program for a Calvinistic Conference. We are ministers of four denominations in Southern California—Christian Reformed, Reformed, Orthodox Presbyterian, and Protestant Reformed—appointed out of an initial meeting of more ministers of the same groups to work out a program upon the basis which was subscribed to by all present at the first meeting. As far as I remember, the original motion was to support a Calvinistic Conference which would defend and propagate our Reformed Creeds.

The first move in Southern California to have such a Calvinistic Conference came from the Ministers' Conference of the Christian Reformed Churches of Southern California. They followed the movement which appeared in other parts of the country. Beginning with the first Calvinistic Conference in America held in Paterson, N. J., in June 1939, the movement

continued and the second Calvinistic Conference was held in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in June, 1942. And recently a local Calvinistic Conference was held in Jackson, Mississippi. The Ministers' Conference of the Christian Reformed Churches appointed a committee which sent out invitations to all possible Reformed groups to attend such a proposed meeting to discuss the desirability and possibility of arranging such a conference in California. This first meeting was held in August of 1944. The problem of really getting together as different denominations already appeared at this first meeting. Nevertheless, a motion was made and subscribed to by all present to have a Calvinistic Conference which would defend and Propagate the Reformed Creeds.

The same problem appeared upon the different meetings of the committee appointed to work out such a Conference. The problem is to arrange subjects and speakers which will meet with the approval of all the committee and which will agree with the original basis and aim of the Calvinistic Conference.

Because I am interested in a Conference and concerned in the discussion that has taken place I wish to set forth my ideas in writing.

First of all it is necessary that we consider the situation. It is this. We are from denominations with differences of doctrine. Especially is there the difference between the Christian Reformed Church and the Protestant Reformed Churches. While both subscribe to the three forms of unity, the three creeds of the historic Reformed Church of the Netherlands, there is a very fundamental difference at least in the interpretation of them as officially declared by the Christian Reformed Churches in their Three Points. It is maintained by the Protestant Reformed Churches that these three points are not an interpretation but a departure from the Reformed truth as expressed in the three historic creeds. There is also a difference between these churches on the one hand and the Reformed Churches on the other. The Reformed Churches do not take as positive a stand as to these three creeds and refuse to recognize the part of the Canons of Dort which is called the rejection of errors. The Orthodox Presbyterian denomination does not have the same Dutch background as the three mentioned above. It, however, has adopted the historic Calvinistic Creed, the Westminster Confession. It remains to be seen in how far they stand firm in their defense of historic Calvinism and in how far they agree with the tenets of the Reformed Churches of the Dutch tradition. (This last is merely my personal opinion; I am not thoroughly acquainted with the background of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and am open to correction.)

In the second place, we must realize that such a conference of these four groups has never been under-

taken. There have been attempts at a conference among Christian Reformed and Protestant Reformed but these were not successful. There have been two American Calvinistic Conferences but these were not representative of all groups who adhere to historic Calvinism. If it is our desire to merely have several Calvinists speak and deliberately refuse a voice to those who desire to make a contribution, it is no longer a conference. We may speak of it as a series of lectures sponsored by some Calvinistic Churches. A true Calvinistic Conference implies that all distinctive Calvinistic groups, those who are committed to the defence and propagation of the historic Calvinistic creeds, confer together about the distinctive issues of Calvinism. Again it can be said, a conference of this type has never been attempted in America, that is, a conference which placed the issues of Calvinism squarely before itself to see whether Calvinism could long endure.

Concerning this situation it has been the answer of some that we do not wish to arouse denominational wars, but we wish to present a united front. But it seems to me that it ought to be seen that it is impossible to present a united front when there are differences which show lack of unity. These differences are not because of different fields of labor, nor because of some minor misunderstanding. These differences are confessional. Because they are confessional we can no longer speak of ignoring them when we seek to have a Calvinistic expression made to the world. Before a united front can honestly be presented to the world a united front has to be made. You may imagine that we can unite on cardinal points and so be silent as to our differences. But then you do not see the reality. If you mean by the cardinal points, the expressions simply given of early Christianity as expressed in our Apostolic Creed you have denied the spirit and truth of Calvinism. You have ignored the cardinal points as they are interpreted and maintained in the Calvinistic Confessions. We are a group supposedly united to defend the Calvinistic creeds and not to become vague or soft in our endeavors. To maintain such a position in these days of difference among Calvinists, that is, to say that we can go back to primitive Christianity and present a united front, is to show one of two things: either a lack of understanding, or a desire to dim the torch of the Reformers.

My position is not that a conference is not desirable, nor that a conference is impossible. On the contrary, my position is that a conference is obligatory and possible. It is possible if we as ministers of different churches have the spirit and truth of Calvinism and the will and desire to have others see the light. If we make a basis of unity for the conference and an aim toward which we work, which is subscribed to by all, we ought not to have any further suspicions or objections as to the question who participates. Further-

more, we ought to welcome and afford opportunity as openminded, intellectually honest, firm believers in the truth of our own position, to all who differ with us in the same avowed adherence to the historic Calvinistic creeds. Such a natural implication of a serious attempt at a conference first of all implies that each of the churches here represented at this committee be welcomed wholeheartedly to the speaking and discussion program. It appears that these are all that had the zeal to proceed with us. However, if there are yet others, we should afford them opportunity also.

It appears to me that this is not the opinion of all of our committee and therefore I sincerely beg you all to consider this point, that this position about the nature of a conference is the only natural implication of any conference. It is the position of our basis already subscribed to. It was the basis and aim of the first American Calvinistic Conference in 1939. Allow me to quote from the publication of their proceedings. "The basis of fellowship is that of historic Calvinism as expressed in its classic creeds." "The objective of this conference is to rally positive Calvinists to state, to defend, and to propagate historic Calvinism in this, our age."

L. D.

Relation Between the Four Kinds Of Faith

The four kinds of faith are well-known to us. We have all heard of saving faith, historical faith, temporal faith, and miraculous faith. It is our purpose in this essay, not to discuss these four kinds of faith in detail, but to emphasize the relation which exists between them. And we expect to point out that, proceeding from saving faith, we can speak of a historical, temporal, and miraculous faith in a sound, Scriptural sense of the word. It is possible, we believe, to view these three kinds of faith as rooted in saving faith and as having therefore a sound, spiritual content.

First of all, however, what is meant as such by these four different kinds of faith? Saving faith, I am sure, in the light of the nature of this essay, needs no further elucidation. It is the living bond, essentially and also revealing itself as such, uniting us with the living God through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Historical faith is an objective acquiescence or agreement with the truth as revealed in the Word of God, without necessarily being rooted in the love of God. This historical faith does not merely imply agreement with the historical portions of the Word of God, but with

the truths as contained in the Scriptures, also with regard to sin and grace. Temporal faith refers to the phenomenon that one is touched in his emotion, or (and) in his mind and will, whereby that person apparently embraces the Christ with spiritual fervor and enthusiasm, tastes the gifts of the Holy Spirit, is enlightened by the Spirit of the Word and of the Church of God, tastes the powers of the world to come, without necessarily implying a change in the heart or in his inner life. The word "temporal" in the expression "temporal faith" does not mean that this faith, in distinction from the historical and miraculous faith, is essentially temporal or temporary. The other kinds of faith are also temporary. This faith, however, refers to a faith whereby a person is affected in his emotion, mind, or will. It is called "temporal faith" because it is brief, temporary. It would undoubtedly be more proper to speak of temporary faith rather than of temporal faith, inasmuch as "temporal" refers to time but "temporary" refers to that which is but for a moment, is clear from the parable of the Sower upon which, among other portions of Holy Writ, it is based. The joy which characterizes this temporal faith, is only for a moment in distinction from the real Christian joy which is eternal. Miraculous faith we may define as the assurance or certainty that God will perform a miracle either through me or another or in my behalf. Whenever we think of miraculous faith we divorce it from a true, saving faith. We think of it as a faith without a change of the heart, the mind, or the will. As such it excludes the Christ and merely refers to a persuasion that the Lord will perform a miracle either through one or in my behalf.

The relation between these four kinds of faith is, of course, determined by the relation in which saving faith stands to the other three. For the sake of clarity let us view these four kinds of faith as being present in one individual. If such an individual has saving faith his temporal, historical, and miraculous faith will necessarily be altogether different than if saving faith were absent. However, whether a person has saving faith or not, a definite relation will exist between the four kinds of faith.

Historical faith, without saving faith, is, of course, nothing else than an objective acquiescence or agreement with the truths of the Word of God. However, we must bear in mind that there is a definite relation between this historical faith on the one hand and the unbelief of the sinner. The one vitally affects the other. If it be true that one cannot believe without having heard and that saving faith cannot be exercised therefore except in the sphere of the truth, it is equally true that the exercise of unbelief is impossible except in the sphere of historical faith. And, according to Scripture, a person's unbelief will reveal itself ever increasingly in the measure that his historical faith

becomes fuller and richer. If therefore on the one hand a person's historical faith renders his unbelief inexcusable, his unbelief will come to a more complete manifestation in the measure that he knows about the Scriptures.

Temporal faith is a persuasion of the truths of religion which is accompanied with some promptings of the conscience and a stirring of the affections, of the mind and of the will. Temporal faith, in distinction from saving faith, is, of course, not rooted in a regenerate heart. It differs from historical faith in the personal interest it shows in the truth and in the reaction of the feelings upon it. Besides the parable of the Sower of the Seed in Matt. 13 also Heb. 6:4-8 speaks of this temporal faith. Great difficulty may be experienced in the attempt to distinguish it from true saving faith, although the child of God can certainly possess the personal assurance that his saving faith is genuine. It is possible, however, that they who possess this temporal faith may believe that they have the true faith. All temporal faith is not necessarily hypocritical. We may safely say, I am sure, that temporal faith, as divorced from the true saving faith, is grounded in the emotional life and seeks personal enjoyment rather than the glory of the living God. He who possesses this temporal faith is self-centered. Man, then, from an intellectual point of view, is fascinated by the glories of the kingdom of Heaven. He accepts these facts of the Scriptures so that temporal faith is possible only on the basis of an historical acquiescence or agreement with the Word of God. And is it not a fact that, from the viewpoint of misery and suffering and death, the House with its many mansions can fascinate man's natural intellect and emotions! God's Kingdom promises relief, does it not, from all sorrow and woes. It holds before us an eternal bliss and happiness. However, this temporal faith seeks not the glory of God but merely the satisfaction of man. It will therefore disappear when tested by the fires of affliction and persecution.

Miraculous faith may be either active or passive. In the former sense it implies a persuasion wrought in the mind of a person that God will perform a miracle by him or through him. In the latter sense it is a persuasion that a miracle will be performed in our behalf. This miraculous faith, as generally known among us (think of faith-healing for example) is exclusively carnal, earthly, man-centered. The miracles performed are always to the advantage of the "believing", and that in the earthly sense of the word. And this lies in the nature of the case. Divorced from saving faith it, too, centers in man and trusts in a God who will work miraculously to man's advantage.

I believe, however, that we can also view these four kinds of faith as inseparably connected in a positive, spiritual sense of the word. We can speak of a tem-

poral, historical, and miraculous faith in a good sense, as rooted in a true, saving faith, and governed by it. I need not dwell at length on saving faith. It is the spiritual bond uniting us with God in Christ, through which the child of God receives and experiences the blessed fulness and glories of salvation in Christ Jesus.

The relation between this saving faith and historical faith is self-evident. The exercise of the one without the other is impossible. It is true, of course, that a mere external knowledge of the Scriptures does not necessarily guarantee a saving faith. This we know and it speaks for itself. But it is also a fact that a saving faith without the knowledge of the Scriptures is quite impossible. The Spirit, to be sure, works irresistibly in the hearts of the people of God. But He works in our hearts and operates in our consciousness only through and in connection with the revealed Word of God in the Bible. A mystical operation of the Spirit as divorced from the Scriptures does not exist. We cannot consciously believe and trust in One Whom we do not know. However, this relation between saving and historical faith implies more. It is not only true that we can taste the fulness of Christ only through the Scriptures, but it is also a fact that a continuous study of the Word of God is necessary for our growth in saving faith. Through the Scriptures we become ever greater sinners and the Christ must ever loom correspondingly larger and more glorious.

We can also speak of a temporal faith as rooted in a true, saving faith. It is probably true that the Holland speaking peoples are not generally emotionally inclined. And this undoubtedly has its advantages. Emotion can be a dangerous menace. To *know* whom we have believed must and indeed does transcend the emotion. Yet, on the other hand, emotionalism in a good sense can hardly be denied. Does our salvation not involve us in the possession of something which far transcends all human understanding? How amazing it is to be delivered, for God's own Name's sake, out of the depths of eternal despair into the unspeakably glorious liberty of the people of God! Does it not touch our deepest emotion to be able to say that "unto me, the chiefest of sinners, grace has been shown", the grace of fellowship with the alone blessed God? The true, saving faith is certainly not a dead intellectualism.

Finally, what is the relation between a true, saving faith and miraculous faith? It can hardly be denied that Scripture speaks repeatedly of a miraculous faith. The heroes of faith, passing before us in review in Hebrews 11, certainly revealed their unwavering confidence in the "miraculous" power of God. Throughout that chapter we read of those Old Testament children of God and of their faith in that which human ear and eye could not reveal unto them. They held fast to

the invisible and to that which is invisible. It is this thought which receives the emphasis repeatedly in that beautiful chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews. The birth of Isaac out of the dead Sarah (and the same is recorded of Samson), the collapse of the walls of Jericho through the faith of the children of Israel, etc., speak loudly of the faith of God's people in the living God who, through them, would perform the miraculous. Faith, God's gift unto His people, exactly because it is trust and confidence in the living God is, throughout Hebrews 11, the means through which God repeatedly saves His own. This does not mean, we understand, that God, through them, would perform miraculously in their earthly and carnal behalf. It does mean, however, that rooted in their true, saving faith, they revealed a steadfast confidence that God would finish His work in them, fulfill His promise unto them, and miraculously lead them into His eternal salvation, and that notwithstanding the apparently contradictory appearance of all things. Moreover, how can it be otherwise! For the grace of God is that power of the love of God even as it leads us, through curse and death, into everlasting glory. Saving faith must necessarily be a miraculous faith. It is true that we are saved in principle. But we are still in the body of this death, surrounded on every hand by the earthly and the sinful. Seemingly all things are against us. We are heirs of eternal life and, behold, we die. We are citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven but to the dust we must return. Saved by grace, the child of God, because of his true, saving faith, looks forward to its eternal completion and believingly embraces the promise of God, that He will miraculously lead him through all things into the eternal and glorious liberty of the children of God.

H. V.

The Anabaptists

Besides the Lutheran and the Reformed movements of Protestantism, there was in the days of the Reformation a third general movement, the Anabaptist. Though the name Anabaptist is not today used with reference to any existing church denomination, the movement has exerted tremendous influence upon various denominations, even some of Lutheran and Reformed origin.

The name Anabaptists, meaning literally "Rebaptizers", was the nickname given to the adherents of the movement by their opponents. This name was appropriate because their most evident distinguishing tenet was opposition to infant baptism which they all held to be unscriptural and therefore not true

baptism. They baptized all who joined them and since the majority of converts had been baptized before in their infancy, this in practise meant "rebaptism". Hence also the name, Anabaptists or "Rebaptizers".

Their History.

Schaaf-Herzog's *Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge* treats the history of the Anabaptists under two separate headings. First it speaks of the Sober Anabaptists, whom the article largely clears of all blame of fanaticism, and of whom it claims the present day Baptists are the worthy successors. Then it discusses the Fanatic Anabaptists, whom the article in question wholeheartedly condemns. Though it is true that all the Anabaptists of the Reformation era were not the out and out radicals that e.g. John of Leyden was, nevertheless the movement as a whole was characterized by radicalism and excesses from its very inception. Luther had trouble with these radicals in Wittenberg, where with the help of Karlstadt they had succeeded to gain a firm hold. After Luther's intense labors these radicals were cast out, but they had done harm to the Lutheran cause, and surely helped to precipitate the horrible Peasants' War that grieved Luther so deeply and made him adhere to the state authorities for church reform even more than before. After Anabaptism was uprooted in central Germany by the Peasants' War, Anabaptism gained a hold in Zwinglian Switzerland, which became for a time the nursery and hotbed of Anabaptism. From there it spread to central Europe, though it was not as radical in southern Europe as it revealed itself a bit later in northern Europe. It was Netherlands, that later produced Arminianism, that now in John Leyden produced the most fanatic form of Anabaptism. "In A.D. 1534, John of Leyden set up his Anabaptist kingdom in Münster with endless glitter and display, and sent out messengers over all the world to gather the 'people of God' together into the 'new Zion'" (Kurz, Vol. II, page 391). John of Leyden caused himself to be proclaimed king, declared polygamy to be the law. Apostles were sent out to proclaim the millenium. The entire attempt ended in the most absurd interpretation of Scripture, blasphemous assumption, and riotous indecency. Münster was besieged with an army and the "millennial reign" came to a speedy and bloody end.

This unfortunate affair had a sobering influence upon the excited enthusiasts, so that they resolved to abandon their revolutionary and socialistic tendencies. They continued, however, to regard Calvin and Luther as half way reformers, and to denounce them as still deeply rooted in the antichristian errors of the papacy. Hence, they were persecuted alike by Lutherans, Reformed and Catholics. Not seldomly

they were drowned, in mockery of their re-baptizing views.

It was a Hollander who was the leader of Anabaptism in its most fantastic and excessive form, it was a Fries who collected their scattered remnants, and saved them from destruction by a calm and sensible reformation. This was the work to which Menno Simons, set himself after 1536. "For twenty five years he shepherded the scattered Anabaptist societies in Germany and the Netherlands. He purified them of fanatical errors, encouraged them in their sufferings, won large additions to their numbers by his preaching, and drew them together into a great brotherhood. This took from him the name Mennonite." In Russia and in Germany there are Mennonite groups, and immigrants from there have brought Mennonite settlements to America. Some of these are in Pennsylvania, others in Ohio and Indiana. Not reformation but separation is their aim, and this separation assumes the form of "world-flight" in a literal sense of the term. Not infrequently they wear a garb peculiar to their group, some use only hooks and eyes on their apparel (buttons are too worldly), etc.

Their Tenets.

The denial of infant baptism was the most evident distinguishing mark of the early Anabaptists. They denied paedobaptism not only on the ground that they could find no direct mandate for it in the New Testament, but also on the ground that children could not have faith and conversion, at least could not reveal it, and therefore might not be baptized. Habmaier claimed that according to the Scriptural test the proper order of Christian development is, preaching the Word, hearing, belief, baptism, works (*Walker, A History of the Christian Church*, page 367). This is, of course, the pietistic view dominant in Methodist and Baptist circles, that were historically influenced by Anabaptism.

In close connection with this tenet stands also the Anabaptistic view of the church. The early Anabaptists believed in the separation of church and state, and in this respect were closer to the Scriptural view than Luther and Calvin who both still entertained the idea of the state-church. However, the Anabaptists endeavoured to make a thorough distinction between the kingdom of nature and the kingdom of grace, the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the world, of the unconverted and the converted, so as to restore a visible kingdom of saints by gathering together all true believers from all sections of the utterly corrupted world into a new holy communion of regenerated. The church consists only of regenerate believers, their seed have no place unless in the way of conscious faith and baptism.

True Anabaptists entertain definite views in regard

to the relation of church and state. These two must not only be separate, but believers ought to have nothing to do with any sort of magisterial office or civic rank. The secular powers which the civil magistrates exercise concerns only the unrighteous and evildoers. The Christian must keep himself far from it, really has no need of it, and may never take an oath or bear arms. The state arises from sin and is evil.

This tenet finds its source in "the absolute antithesis of creation and re-creation, of nature and grace, of world and kingdom of God." Bavinck in his *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek*, Volume IV, page 275 says, "Het Anabaptisme ging uit van de volstreekte tegenstelling van schepping en herschepping, natuur en genade, wereld en Godsrijk en beschouwde de geloovigen daarom als menschen, die in de wedergeboorte iets gansch anders geworden waren en daarom gescheiden van de wereld moesten leven. Zijn program was niet reformatie, maar separatie; het wilde een afgezonderde kerk. Eeuwen lang was er geene kerk geweest, maar enkel Babel, en Babel moest verlaten en gemeden worden. In Münster zeide men, dat er in 1400 jaren geen waar Christen was geweest. De ware kerk was eene kerk van heiligen, die na persoonlijke belijdenis gedoopt waren en door onthouding van eed, oorlog, overheidsambt en allerlei andere wereldsche practijken in spijs en drank, in kleeding en verkeer van anderen zich onderscheiden." Fundamental to Anabaptism is the antithesis of nature and grace. In reality, as the Reformed have always confessed, this is definitely not the antithesis. Nature is not inherently evil. The natural is in itself good, may be used though not abused, and is a creature of God. The antithesis is not nature and grace, but sin and grace, as Augustine first put it.

The radical Anabaptists also entertained seriously erroneous views in regard to revelation. "The Anabaptists exalted the internal word at the cost of the external. Already in 1521 the antithesis of Scripture and Spirit was made and this antithesis became an abiding characteristic of Anabaptism. The Holy Scripture is not the true Word of God, but only a testimony, the true, real Word is that which the Holy Spirit speaks in our heart. The Bible is only a book of letters; Bible is Babel, full of confusion; it cannot work faith in the heart, only the Spirit teaches us the true Word. And if that Spirit instructs us, then we can miss the Scriptures, which are only a temporary help which the spiritual man does not need. Hans Denck identified that internal Word with the natural reason and pointed to many contradictions in Scripture. Ludwig Hetzer deemed the Scripture entirely unnecessary. Knipperdolling demanded at Münster that the Scriptures be entirely set aside that they might live by nature and spirit alone. Mysticism became rationalism. . . . it led to the entire rejection of revelation

and Scripture." Bavinck, Vol. I, page 437.

Anabaptism's antithesis of nature and grace naturally leads also to peculiar views in regard to regeneration and the character of the new life. Regeneration is something new, of a higher order, entirely other than the natural. Menno Simons consequently also taught that Christ took that other nature, not from Mary, but from heaven. Christ came through Mary as a channel. Naturally, so conceived, Christ did not really assume the flesh and blood of the children.

An Appraisal.

We ought to continue to be thankful that we belong to the sons and daughters of the Protestant Reformation stemming from Calvin.

For, first of all, Calvin emphasized the true view of revelation. Calvin emphasized the need of the Scriptures. It is true that we need the enlightenment of the Spirit within, but this is wrought where the Word is. The Spirit within leads the Christian to the Scriptures. To the Word and to the Testimony! Anabaptism from its very beginnings left this firm ground and slipped into the bog of subjectivism and pietism. Hence from its numbers arose some prophets who claimed they had direct revelations from heaven and demanded obedience for their erroneous and often carnal views. Others of course eventually landed in the mire of rationalism, pure and simple. Calvinism, emphasis upon the Scriptures is the safeguard, and makes for a healthy, virile, Christianity.

Secondly, Anabaptism errs in its antithesis of nature and grace. This is, definitely, not an antithesis. Nature is not inherently evil, and something to be avoided. Neither is the state necessary because of sin (neo-Calvinists claim that it is; I would not hesitate to maintain, is essentially Anabaptistic on this point); it is the sword-power that was given into the hands of the state because of sin. The state itself is an outgrowth of the family, tribe and clan; a creation ordinance. There is nothing inherently wrong in taking government office. And all nature is in itself good, though subjected to the curse. The antithesis to be maintained is that of sin and grace. In every sphere of the natural life that battle is to be fought. *No world-flight but world-fight!*

Again, Anabaptism early characterized itself by apocalyptic excesses, millennial dreams. These are foreign to sound Reformed truth. Those that go on with these are the lineal descendants of the Anabaptists.

Not the Protestant Reformed Churches are guilty of Anabaptism. But many of the American churches, Baptist, Methodist, etc. with their individualism, their infant baptism, their Biblicistic tendencies, their millennial views, are the outgrowth of Anabaptism in more than one sense.

I am thankful for the Reformed heritage.

P. D. B.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On March 1, 1945, our beloved parents,

MR. M. DE JAGER

and

MRS. M. DE JAGER (Sybersma)

commemorated their 40th wedding anniversary.

We, their children and grandchildren, extend to them our hearty congratulations. We are grateful to God for what He has given us in them: their example, their prayers, their patience and good counsel. May we all take heed to walk in the Way in which they have instructed us and may the remainder of their days be filled with that Peace which is promised to them that fear God.

Their Grateful Children:

Mr. and Mrs. H. De Vos

Mr. and Mrs. S. Ennema

Mr. and Mrs. S. De Jong

Corp. Steve De Jager

Pvt. and Mrs. Arthur Wassenaar

S. Sgt. and Mrs. Albert J. Dykstra

Jeanette De Jager

Orange City, Iowa.

and 12 grandchildren.

IN MEMORIAM

The Consistory of the Roosevelt Park Protestant Reformed Church herewith expresses sincerest sympathy to brother and former elder, W. Koster and family in their bereavement in the passing of their son,

DICK

May our Covenant God supply them richly with His grace, and comfort them with His Word and Spirit, sanctifying them through this way of affliction.

The Consistory:

M. Schipper, Pres.

D. Ondersma, Clerk.

IN MEMORIAM

In memory of our brother and co-worker,

RALPH SCHAAFSMA

the Board of the Reformed Free Publishing Association wishes to extend its sympathy to the bereaved. May God give them peace.

II Cor. 1:3—"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort."

Board of the R.F.P.A.