

# THE STANDARD

*Bearer*

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

VOLUME XXII

NOVEMBER 15, 1945 — GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN.

NUMBER 4

## MEDITATION

### A Necessary Likeness

*Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.*

*Heb. 2:17.*

It behooved Him! . . . .

All emphasis this thought has in this part of the Word of God.

It was necessary, it was entirely proper, it was quite inevitable, that the Christ, the Messiah, exactly in order to be the Christ, and to function in that capacity, should be made like unto His brethren.

The text is, first of all, addressed to believers from the Jews, to Christians from Israel, Who had made the transition from the old dispensation, with its shadows and ceremonies, its visible and tangible temple, service and sacrifices, with its expectations and traditions, into the new, with its invisible and spiritual service of the living God; to Jewish Christians, too, who had not entirely forgotten the visible glory and attraction of the old, nor been able to rid themselves wholly of the traditions of the fathers; to Christians, moreover, who, under the stress of persecution and suffering for Christ's sake, revealed a tendency to succumb and to return to the old.

And to the Jews a lowly Christ, a Christ that was in all things like unto His brethren, was an offense. Must not the Messiah be glorious?

Was it not proper for the Christ, Who was to sit on the throne of David, and Who would raise mount Zion to the top of the mountains, Whom all the ends of the earth would honor, and Who would finally

overcome all His enemies and the enemies of Israel, that He should appear from heaven with the glory of an archangel? . . . .

How, then, could this Jesus of Nazareth, mark you well, of *Nazareth* that was notorious for never producing any good thing; this Jesus, Whose father and mother everyone knew, who appeared without form or comeliness, without beauty to make Him desirable; this Jesus, Whose face was marred more than any man's and Whom they had finally nailed to the tree of shame and of the curse,—how could this Jesus possibly be the Messiah?

A lowly Christ was a contradiction in terms!

Yes, indeed, to the Jews an offense . . . .

But also: to the Greeks, the wise men of all ages, who seek after human wisdom and power, after a human solution for the ills of the world, to the proud mind of the natural man, this lowly Christ, Whose end to all appearances is the cross, is foolishness.

Yes, but the divine Wisdom stands in direct opposition to the wisdom of the world. For He will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. How otherwise could it be revealed that He is GOD, the LORD, Who quickeneth the dead, and calls the things that are not as if they were? His foolishness is wiser than men; His weakness is stronger than men. He chose the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, the weak things of the world to confound the mighty things, things that are base, and despised, and which are not, to confound the things that are . . . .

That no flesh should glory in His presence!

This in general.

In this general scheme of things that pertain to God, the tradition of a humanly glorious Christ, or of a mighty philosopher, does not fit. The divine logic pertains to a different scheme, belongs to a different world, than that of the offended Jew, or of the contemptuous Greek, to the world in which man is nothing and God is the LORD!

Hence, the conflict: man decrees that the Messiah

must appear in power and glory from the start, that men may glory in Him; divine Wisdom, on the contrary, declares from heaven: It behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren in all things! . . . .

The foolishness of preaching!

O, God! who hath believed our report? . . . .

Yes, but even if no man believes, the logic of the divine Wisdom is inexorable:

It behoved Him!

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It was proper!

Such is the divine MUST, the eternal necessity of the divine logic of the living God.

For the deepest motive of the divine logic is that God will be glorified as God; and that He may be glorified He will reveal Himself as the LORD; and that He may become revealed, not as a Lord among others, not even as the supreme Lord above all others, but as *the* LORD, beside Whom there is no other, the creature, even man, must become NOTHING, and must be brought into a position in which he will cry out of the depths unto Him. . . . .

All flesh is grass, and the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field . . . . .

The grass withereth, the flower fadeth . . . . .

But the Word of our God shall stand forever!

And in that general scheme of divine logic also the Messiah, the Christ of God, the Servant of Jehovah, yea, above all He, must descend into the depths, and must cry out of those depths unto the living God. Then, and then only, thus and thus only, can He become perfect as the captain of the salvation of many sons of God.

Once before in this chapter, the Word of God employed that same word: it behoved, or it became, it was proper, then with application to God Himself: "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering." Vs. 10. Are not all things unto Him and through Him? And must, then, not all things reveal, and that, too, in the highest possible sense that He is God, the LORD? And is it not proper, then, proper, now, to God Himself, that He choose the deep way to glory, the deepest way to the highest glory, in order that, where man has confessed that the situation is become impossible, and where all glorying of man ceases, He may reveal Himself as the One that calls the light out of darkness, that brings righteousness out of unrighteousness, that quickeneth the dead? And is it not plain, then, that He, in leading many sons unto glory, MUST, with divine logic, decree upon the deep way, the deepest?

And do you not see, then, that it is also proper

to Him, in leading many sons unto glory in that deepest way, that He should make the Captain of their salvation perfect through suffering?

O, and if this Captain of their salvation was to be made perfect through suffering, and if, in this process of becoming the perfect Captain of their salvation, He was to be the blameless Servant of the Lord, it was, above all, and first of all, necessary that He should be a faithful and merciful high priest in things pertaining to God. He must be high priest, the only high priest over the whole house of God. And as such He must build the house of God, the everlasting tabernacle of God with men, in the which the sons of God, His brethren, given Him of God, may attain to the glory God designed for them.

And as high priest He must be faithful.

A faithful high priest He must be. For as high priest He stands in a definite relation to God: He is the Servant of Jehovah. He is under a charge. And in that relation He must be true to Him that sent Him. He must will His will, and do His work. In that relation He must remain constant and stedfast to the very last, no matter what it may require of Him, regardless of the question whither the way will lead. And faithful, a faithful high priest, He must be, also in relation to His brethren, the sons whom the Father will lead to glory.

The things "pertaining to God" He is called to accomplish!

They are the things that pertain to the salvation of the sons of God, His brethren, the realization of God's eternal covenant. They "pertain to God," they are "toward God," they have respect unto God, they concern the glory of His name, the revelation of all His infinite perfections, His love and grace and mercy, His righteousness and justice and holiness, His wisdom and knowledge and exceeding great power, the revelation that He is God,, the LORD.

In the accomplishment of these things He must be faithful even unto death.

The death of the cross!

For He must make reconciliation for the sins of the people, He, the high priest.

Propitiation He must make, a covering for sin. And a covering for sin can only be made by an act of perfect obedience that completely counterbalances, or more than counterbalances the act of rebellion and wanton disobedience that is the sin of the people. And this required that the high priest, the Captain of our salvation, willingly, in perfect obedience of the love of God, should descend into deepest death and hell, there to be still faithful in the love of God. . . . .

Such were the things "pertaining to God".

But, how evident it is, that in this divine economy of things it was necessary that He should become like unto His brethren in all things!

How could He have assumed His place as High Priest, and how could He have made reconciliation for the sins of the people, had He appeared in the glory of Gabriel or Michael?

Their glory would have been of no avail for the things pertaining to God.

The lowly Christ He must be.

In all things like unto His brethren.

Thus it behoved Him!

Glorious divine necessity!

For, and this is the most specific point in the divine program of the things pertaining to God on which this Word would center our attention, now He must be merciful!

And to be merciful it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren in all things!

That this is, indeed, the chief thought is evident, first of all, from the text itself, which should be rendered: "that he might be merciful, and thus be a faithful high priest in things pertaining to God". In other words, mercy was required, was indispensable on His part, in order to be a faithful high priest. Had He not been merciful, never could He have been faithful as high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. And, besides, that this is the truth that must have the emphasis, is clear, too, from what follows immediately: "For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."

Adorable divine necessity!

It behoved Him!

To be the Captain of the salvation of God's sons, He must make reconciliation for the sins of the people, and be made perfect through suffering.

To make reconciliation He must be faithful as high priest to the bitter end, to the depth of hell.

To be faithful He must be merciful.

And to be merciful He must be made like unto His brethren in all things, the lowly Christ!

Merciful, O, how merciful He must be! Mercy is an aspect of love, and Christ loved His brethren. Mercy is that manifestation of love according to which one longs to render the object of his love as blessed as possible; and Christ desired to lead His brethren into the highest, heavenly bliss of God's eternal covenant. Mercy, for that very reason, shines in all its virtue and power, most gloriously, where it finds the object of love in deepest misery and now delivers it out of that misery to lead it to supreme blessedness; and Christ found His brethren in the depth of the misery of sin, and wrath, and damnation, and rebellion, and death, and He raises them to the highest glory of the eter-

nacle of God's friendship, eternal righteousness and life in heavenly places . . . . .

Such was the mind of Christ!

And who was ever merciful as our merciful Christ? Merciful He was to us, while we were yet enemies! And do not hastily pass over these tremendous words! For that we were His enemies means that we made Him feel our hatred; and that He was merciful implies that He felt our enmity against Him as our misery, and He pitied us, and sought our deliverance! We struck Him, spit upon Him, scourged Him, mocked Him, contradicted Him, poured contempt upon Him, —and in it all He experienced the misery of our sin, and pitied all our woe! The more utterly we despised Him, the more deeply He pitied our lot; the more pain we inflicted upon Him, the more fully He felt the misery of our wretchedness; the harder we struck Him, the deeper became His longing and determination to deliver us from that wretchedness that made us strike Him. More merciful He became as we became more hateful, until as we nailed the cruel spikes through His hands and feet, he cried out in prayer: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!"

Adorable mercy of Christ, our Lord!

Unfathomable mercy of the God of our salvation, revealed in the mercy of Christ!

Depth of wisdom and knowledge of the divine program, that leads us to worship such boundless mercy from such hopeless depth of sin and shame!

It behoved Him! . . . . .

O, yes; now we see a little of the divine logic, of the propriety of the lowly Christ, of the necessity that He should become like unto His brethren in all things.

For what does it mean that He became like unto His brethren, the sons God would lead to glory, in all glory? O, yes, it means that the eternal Son of God became weak and mortal man, that He assumed our flesh and blood, and that, too, the likeness of sinful flesh. But, and this is the point here, it signifies that He lived our life, that He thought our thoughts, that He felt our desires, our emotions; that He entered into our world, under the curse of God; that He was mortal as we are mortal, corruptible as we are corruptible; that He suffered all our sorrow, that He felt, as we could never feel, the misery of our sin and death: all without sin! . . . . .

He felt our misery before the face of God!

And thus He could be merciful, our sympathizing High Priest!

And, being merciful, He could endure our enmity and the wrath of God!

Faithful unto the end!

O, my God!

## *The Standard Bearer*

Semi-Monthly, except Monthly in July and August

Published by

The Reformed Free Publishing Association  
1463 Ardmere Street, S. E.

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Communications relative to subscription should be addressed to MR. GERRIT PIPE, 1463 Ardmere St., S. E., Grand Rapids, Michigan. All Announcements, and Obituaries must be sent to the above address and will not be placed unless the regular fee of \$1.00 accompanies the notice.

(Subscription price \$2.50 per year)

Entered as Second Class mail at Grand Rapids, Michigan.

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## EDITORIALS

### The Liberated Churches In The Netherlands \*

In the second point "concerning the covenant of grace", the Netherland Synod of 1942 came very close to expressing the truth, due, no doubt, to the fact that they adhered closely to the language of Scripture. For there it declares:

"That in the promise of the covenant the Lord undoubtedly pledges to be the God, not only of believers, but also of their seed (Gen. 17:7); but that He reveals no less in His Word that they are not all Israel that are of Israel."

It would seem that, in virtue of the "but" that connects the two parts of this sentence, the meaning of this declaration is that the promise of the covenant is only for the "seed of the promise," the spiritual, the elect seed.

However, in the third point under this head, Synod contradicts this position, or, at least, draws a conclusion that would seem to be entirely unwarranted:

"that therefore—in accord with the declarations of the Synod of Utrecht 1905 (Acts of Synod 1905)—'in virtue of the promise of God, the seed of the covenant must be considered regenerated and sanctified in Christ, until as they grow up, the opposite appears'; —although the Synod rightly added that this does not at all mean to say that, therefore, each child is truly regenerated.' "

That this statement, considered as a conclusion from the second point, is illogical and wholly unwarranted, is obvious. Yet, as such a conclusion it presents itself, as is evident from the conjunction "therefore". That the reasoning here is confused and illogical is evident from the following:

1. The last declaration, point 3, clearly speaks of *all* the children of believers when it declares that "the seed of the covenant must be considered regenerated and sanctified in Christ".

2. Hence, taking the two statements, point 2 and 3, together, we may paraphrase them as follows: "Because the promise of the covenant is only for the spiritual, elect seed, therefore we must consider *all* the children of believers as regenerated and sanctified in Christ until the opposite appears."

Logically, the statement should have read as fol-

lows: "Since the promise of the covenant is only for the spiritual seed, and not for all the children of believers, therefore, we can express no judgment concerning the individual children of believers, neither concerning their election, nor concerning their regeneration, until, as they grow up, they reveal themselves in confession and walk."

It is clear, then, that the Synod of 1942 did not mean strictly to maintain and to apply the truth expressed in the second point, that the promise is only for the spiritual seed; but that there was, on its part, a tendency, to say the least, to establish that all the children of believers are true, spiritual seed, regenerated and sanctified. Mark you well, literally they do not declare this. On the contrary, in the last statement of point 3 they deny this. But, nevertheless, the tendency is clearly there to ignore or belittle the presence of the carnal seed in the Church, to consider that all the children of believers are regenerated, and thus to establish the Kuyperian theory that children are baptized on the basis of their supposed regeneration.

This is the objection that is voiced unanimously by the spokesmen for the "liberated churches" against the third point. They claim:

1. In spite of the fact that ostensibly the declarations of 1942 simply repeat the Conclusions of Utrecht 1905 on this matter, they give a new accent and a new meaning to these Conclusions, and virtually adopt the Kuyperian view of "supposed regeneration" as the dogma of the Reformed Churches.

2. While the Conclusions of Utrecht were never considered more than an agreement, a compromise, in which both sides of the then existing factions might find satisfaction; and while, therefore, they were never considered a dogma, binding for all office-bearers and members; 1942 has raised them, with their new, Kuyperian accent, to a binding declaration, which no one dare criticize, and than which no one is permitted to teach anything else in the Reformed Churches, i.e. anything that is contrary thereto.

These are the objections of the "aggrieved," the "bezwaarden".

Are they well founded?

Synodical spokesmen deny this. Unanimously they claim that 1942 adopted nothing more than what was agreed in 1905. Prof. Dr. Aalders, in his letter which appeared in the *Missionary Monthly*, made the same claim.

And in this way, they picture the "bezwaarden" as very unreasonable people, who now vehemently oppose what they always accepted.

Yet, I believe that the matter is not quite so simple. Although I cannot possibly agree with the covenant conception of the spokesmen for the liberated churches (about which later) I believe that their objections

against the decisions of 1942 are not without grounds. Let us consider the following:

1. The Synod of 1942 did not simply and verbally adopt the Conclusions of Utrecht on this point. The latter declare (I translate):

"And, finally, as to the fourth point, that which concerns "supposed regeneration," the synod declares that, in accord with the Confession of our Churches, the seed of the covenant, in virtue of the promise of God, are to be considered as regenerated and sanctified in Christ, until, as they grow up, the opposite appears from their walk or confession (doctrine); that, however, it is less correct to say that baptism is administered to children on the ground of their supposed regeneration, because the ground of baptism is the command and the promise of God; that, further, the judgment of love, according to which the Church considers the seed of the covenant as regenerated, does not at all mean to say that for that reason each child is truly regenerated, because the Word of God teaches that they are not all Israel that are of Israel . . ."

Notice the following points of difference:

a. The Conclusions of Utrecht contain a statement which virtually condemns the theory of "supposed regeneration" as a ground of baptism. The decisions of 1942 do not contain this statement.

b. The Conclusions of Utrecht characterize the consideration of the seed of the covenant as regenerated as a "judgment of love"; the decisions of 1942 omit this statement also.

c. The Conclusions of Utrecht definitely state that the command and promise of God are the ground of baptism; 1942 does not mention this.

d. The decisions of 1942 give all the prominence and emphasis to the one statement of the Conclusions of Utrecht that "in virtue of the promise of God, the seed of the covenant must be considered regenerated and sanctified in Christ, until, as they grow up, the opposite appears." It presents what follows (that this in no wise means to say that, therefore, each child is truly regenerated)—as something "added" and, therefore, subordinate. But this is not honest. Especially, if one remembers that the Conclusions of Utrecht were meant to be a compromise between two opposing factions, a compromise in which each opposing faction (headed by Kuyper and Lindeboom) meant to express its own view, and which, for that very reason, is full of contradictions (though they are somewhat camouflaged),—it becomes all the more evident that a declaration that eliminates many essential elements from these Conclusions, and gives prominence to one, cannot lay claim to being "truthful."



the same expression of doctrine, even though it quotes the Conclusions literally.

e. The decisions of 1942 evidently meant to emphasize that regeneration and sanctification in Christ must be considered as preceding baptism in the elect children of the covenant; but this was condemned by the Conclusions of Utrecht in the following words: "In the meantime the Synod is of the opinion that the proposition that every elect child would therefore be regenerated even before baptism, cannot be proved, neither on the basis of Scripture, nor on the basis of the Confession, while God fulfills His promise according to His sovereign good pleasure, whether it be before, or during, or after baptism, so that it is peremptory to express oneself circumspectly about this, and not to be wise above that which God has revealed unto us."

2. That the decisions of 1942 meant to favor the idea of "supposed regeneration" is also suggested by various expressions in the "Pre-advice of Committee I" and the "Explanation" (Toelichting) which, indeed, are not a part of the official decisions, but which the Synod decided to send to all the churches as an explanation of those decisions. The spokesmen for the liberated churches repeatedly call attention to this fact, and, I think, correctly so.

3. Attention is also called by these men, again and again, to the fact that candidate H. J. Schilder (a nephew of Dr. K. Schilder) was asked to subscribe to the statement that the sacraments seal actually present grace (aanwezige genade) in those that partake of them. If this is applied to baptism it evidently means "supposed regeneration." And this is certainly contrary to the conclusions of Utrecht.

4. That the Conclusions of Utrecht were a mere compromise statement, and never considered as belonging to the *binding* Confessions of the Church, is evident, not only from the introductory statements to these Conclusions, in which the Synod of 1905 plainly stated that it was not proper to make any doctrinal declarations concerning the matters in dispute, but also from the fact that officebearers were never required to subscribe to them, as well as from the fact that they were always freely criticized and even contradicted, which is not difficult because they contradict themselves. Think of the Rev. Diermanse's continued agitation on this point. Spokesmen for the liberated churches, however, repeatedly complain that now the decisions of 1942, which are, besides, a onesided version of the Conclusions of Utrecht are made binding. No one may teach anything contrary to them. And Cand. H. J. Schilder was not admitted to the ministry, because he refused to be bound by these decisions.

I conclude, therefore, that the Synod of 1942 plainly moved in the direction of establishing the Kuy-

perian theory of "supposed regeneration" as a church dogma; and that the spokesmen for the liberated churches protest against this on reasonable grounds.

And Prof. Dr. Aalders, though he did not lie *literally* in his letter in the Missionary Monthly, nevertheless, gave a false presentation of the position of the liberated churches, and of the real situation in The Netherlands.

How about it Dr. Beets? Would it be too much to ask that you, of whom it is reported that you had a printed copy of "Pre-advice I" in your pocket ever since 1939, would, merely for the sake of truth, give the above material a place in your widely read paper?

If you would do so, you would rise still higher in my esteem.

H. H.

Since we do not intend always to refer to specific passages in pamphlets and papers, we here offer a list of literature which serves as the source of our information:

Copie van de Besluiten der Synode inzake de "meningsgeschillen, 1942; Afschrift Brief van Dr. K. Schilder aan den Raad der Geref. Kerk te Kampen; Afschrift Correspondentie Tusschen Dr. K. Schilder en Prof. Dr. H. H. Kuyper; Afschrift brief van Prof. Dr. H. H. Kuyper aan Ds. H. Veldkamp; Acte van Vrijmaking of Wederkeer; In Den Chaos, door Ds. C. Veenhof; De Waarheid Luistert Nauw, door K. C. Van Spronsen; Waar Het Om Gaat, door Ds. J. Dijk; Het Gezag In De Kerk Van Christus, door Ds. L. Oranje; Is de tegenwoordige strijd over de Wedergeboorte Der Kinderkens wel noodig? door Ds. C. Vonk; Kerkscheuring, door Dr. J. Ridderbos; De Nieuwe Inspiratieve Beweging in de Gereformeerde Kerken, door J. E. Van Buuren; Antwoord op de publieke uitnoodiging van Prof. H. N. Ridderbos tot een Openbaar Godsdienstgesprek, door D. J. Buwalda; Open Brief aan Prof. Dr. H. N. Ridderbos, door D. J. Buwalda; Neen! door P. Jasperse; Houden Voor Wedergeboren, door C. Vonk; Eenvoudige Toelichting, door Ds. J. L. Verlare; Wat is Vreeselijk? door C. Vonk; Brief van Antwoord, door Dr. S. Greydanus; De Schorsing Getoetst, door L. A. Hartman, e.a.; Schriftelijke Verklaring aan de Synode, door Ds. D. Van Dijk; Gehoord, Ja of Neen, door P. Jasperse; De Schorsing Van Prof Schilder, door Dss. Joh. Rietberg en B. A. Bos; Reformatorisch of Revolutionair, door A. VanderMeulen en G. Hormann; Korte Bespreking van het Praeadvies van Commissie I, door Ds. S. Greydanus; Snelle Afloop als der Wateren, door Dr. S. Greydanus; Aan de Kerk-eraden en leden van de Geref. Kerken in Nederland, door het moderamen der Synode; Twee Leden, Brief aan den Raad der Gereformeerde Kerk 's Gravenhage Oost; De Verklaring Van Gevoelen besproken en gehandhaafd, door Ds. J. P. VanderStoel, Jr.; Actueele Vragen, door Dr. S. Greydanus; Is Dat Nu Zoo Erg? door H. J. Wijn; Verslag van de vergadering der Classis Zwolle, 17 Mei, 1945; Opwekking of Ophitsing? door A. Vegter; "Dat Ik Niemand Lichtelijk En Onverhoord Oordeele," door Dr. S. Greydanus; Enkele Opmerkingen Over

De Brandende Kwesties In De Gereformeerde Kerken, door B. Roorda; Zijn dan deze dingen alzo? . . . Hoort toe, door Dr. S. Greydanus; Afschrift van een schrijven van Ds. F. A. den Boeft, gericht aan den kerkeraad der Gereformeerde Kerk van Kralingen; Kerkverbond en Kerkverband,, Rede door Dr. K. Schilder; Verslag van de Vergadering van Bezwaarden te Den Haag, 11 Aug, 1944; Verslag van het Eerste Kerkelijke Congres der Gereformeerde Kerken (vrijgemaakt naar Art. 31 D. K. O.); alle nummers van De Reformatie vanaf No. 46, 21ste Jaargang; benevens kleinere geschriften van lokalen aard.

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## The Triple Knowledge

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### An Exposition Of The Heidelberg Catechism

Part Two.

Of Man's Redemption

LORD'S DAY XVII

2

#### The Idea Of Christ's Resurrection (Cont.)

In the eternal counsel of God, the resurrected Christ, the first begotten of the dead, the glorified Son of God in the flesh, stands logically first. In the divine decree He is conceived first, and He "openeth the womb" for every creature. All the works of God are subservient to the glory of this "image of the invisible God." They are conceived after Him, and unto Him, so as to be adapted to Him. And in the perfect, finished works of God, as conceived in the divine good pleasure, He has the preeminence, the firstborn among many brethren, their Lord; and the firstborn of every creature, their everlasting Head. Hence, it is "the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth. Eph. 1:10. And again, He revealed unto us "the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." Eph.

All things in time must serve the realization of this firstborn of every creature. They have their ultimate meaning in Him.

In the revelation of the risen Lord, we see the light of the wisdom of God.

He is the solution of all things.

In His light, in relation to Him, all things must be seen and interpreted. Only when perceived and evaluated in that relationship can we rightly understand the first creation, the first paradise, the first tree of life, the first man Adam; but also the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the probationary command, the temptation of the devil, the fall of our first parents, sin and death, the incarnation and the cross, the deep ways of God unto the realization of His everlasting covenant.

Apart from Him, the risen Lord, as the firstborn of every creature, we dare not attempt to explain them.

If we do, we only conceive of the first creation as a frustrated attempt on the part of God to reveal Himself and attain to His glory in the works of His hands; then, sin and death, the devil and all the powers of darkness can only be seen as so many forces over against the Lord of heaven and earth, existing and operating, perhaps, by His permission, yet really standing in opposition to Him and, to an extent, successful though ultimately they are vanquished; Christ then becomes an afterthought, designed to repair the damage wrought by Satan and sin, to save whatever may be salvaged from the wreckage; and next to this line of salvation, there runs the line of "common grace" according to which the present history of the world is an interim, designed to realize the "original creation ordinance" of God in spite of the attempts of the devil to the contrary.

How different all this is, when, in the light of God's own revelation, we behold all things in relation to the firstborn of every creature, the risen Lord!

Then we understand that, when God created the first world, good and finished though it was in itself, He had in mind the second world, in which all things concentrate in the glorified Son of God. Then we see that first world as an image of things to come, the first paradise as an image of the paradise of God in the new creation, the first man Adam as a figure of Him that was to come. Then we do not place the forces of darkness, the devil, sin, and death, dualistically in opposition to the Most High, but know that they are subservient to His purpose; and that God chose the deep way sin and grace because He had "provided some better thing for us." Heb. 11:40. Then we begin to understand that "it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering." Heb.

ture, and the first begotten of the dead, "crowned with glory and honour."

Then the revelation of the risen Lord means that we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us!

The resurrection of Christ is the revelation of the firstborn of every creature.

That is the idea of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead!

H. H.

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### The Power of Christ's Resurrection

The Heidelberg Catechism, as was remarked before, considers the resurrection of our Lord solely from the viewpoint expressed in the question: "What doth the resurrection of Christ profit us?" And it answers: "First, by his resurrection he has overcome death, that he might make us partakers of that righteousness which he has purchased for us by his death; secondly, we are also by his power raised up to a new life; and lastly, the resurrection of Christ is a sure pledge of our blessed resurrection."

The dominating thought in this answer is that, through His resurrection, Christ is become the living Lord, and that, therefore, He is able to impart all the blessings of salvation which He merited for His Church unto all whom the Father gives unto Him.

This is, no doubt, the meaning of the words "by his resurrection he overcame death." The thought is: He overcame death *in Himself*, and thus He is become the living Lord.

This might be understood in a more comprehensive sense: He overcame *all* death, the power of death itself, physical, spiritual, and eternal. Principally and centrally, this is true. In the resurrection of Christ, we may and do behold *the* resurrection. For it is not *a* man that arose, a mere individual among men, but the second man, the last Adam. By His death He removed the sting of death, sin; and His resurrection is, indeed, the revelation of the victory over death.

Yet, although this is true principally, the final accomplishment and revelation of this power of the resurrection of Christ must wait until the *parousia*, the second advent, for "the moment" of which the Word of God speaks in I Cor. 15:52, when: "the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to

pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

And although the more comprehensive sense is not excluded from the words of the Catechism, yet, it is the intention of our instructor to emphasize the truth that Christ overcame death in Himself, that thus He is the living Head of His body, the Church, and that, as the living Lord, He is able to make us partakers of the blessings of salvation.

We must remember that Christ is not only the mediator of our redemption, in the juridical sense of the word, but also the mediator of our deliverance, through Whom righteousness and life actually are bestowed upon and realized in us.

As the mediator of our redemption He "purchased" all things for us. He represented us in all His suffering and death. He took our place in the judgment of God. Our sins He took upon Himself. He assumed responsibility for our guilt. In that capacity, He became obedient unto death, yea, unto the death of the cross. And by His perfect obedience, He, the Son of God in the flesh, blotted out the guilt of our sin, and merited for us eternal righteousness and life. This part of the work of salvation is finished. All that are in Him have redemption in His blood, the forgiveness of sins, the right to eternal life, to all the blessings of salvation.

But how do we obtain this salvation?

Does the finished sacrifice and obedience of Christ mean that all His work is accomplished? Does God bestow the blessings of salvation upon His people without Christ's mediation?

Indeed not. Christ is the mediator through Whom God accomplishes His whole purpose and counsel of salvation,, not only with respect to our redemption, but also as regards our actual deliverance from all the power of sin and death, and our ultimate perfection. Just as, within the Holy Trinity, God's eternal covenant life of friendship is of the Father, through the Son, and in the Holy Ghost; and just as the work of creation is likewise of the triune God, but so that it is of the Father, through the Son as the eternal Logos, and in the Spirit; so the whole work of salvation is of the triune God, but again so that it is through the Son in the flesh, and in the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Christ. All the benefits of salvation are in Christ. From Him we must receive them. He must impart Himself to us, incorporate us into Himself, quicken us, make us partakers of His death and resurrection, bestow upon us His righteousness and life, preserve us unto the final redemption, and receive us into His glory.

Hence, He must be the living Lord.

Suppose it had been possible (which, of course, it is not!) that, by His perfect obedience in suffering and death, Christ had merited for us the fulness of



salvation, but that, in doing so, He Himself had been swallowed up of death, then the purchased redemption could never have become ours. There would be no channel through which the blessings of grace could reach us.

But Christ is risen!

He overcame death! The bonds of death and hell could not hold Him. He broke through the gates of hell into the glory of His resurrection life. And as the risen One, He ascended up on high, leading captivity captive, that He might bestow all the gifts of salvation upon men. And unto the end that He, the glorious Lord, might impart Himself and all the benefits of grace to His people, the Church, He received the promise of the Holy Spirit, and in that Spirit He returned unto and into His Church, to dwell in her, quicken her, and abide with her forever. "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit."

This is the thought the Catechism means to emphasize when it teaches us that "by his resurrection he has overcome death."

And thus the profit of Christ's resurrection for us, as the Catechism sees it, is threefold.

First of all, He arose "that He might make us partakers of that righteousness which he has purchased for us by his death."

This is first because the blessing of righteousness is fundamental, basic for all the other blessings of salvation. God loves the righteous, but His face is against them that do evil. His favor is upon them that are righteous in His sight, even as His wrath is upon the wicked. Righteousness, therefore, is our great and fundamental need. For we are by nature and in ourselves, sinful, corrupt and guilty, and for that very reason, children of wrath, worthy of damnation, that is, eternal death. We have no right to be set at liberty, to be delivered from the power of corruption and death, as long as our position before the tribunal of the righteous Judge of heaven and earth is that of guilt. Before all things we must have righteousness. Our position before God's bar of justice, our legal status in God's judgment must be changed from that of guilt and condemnation into that of righteousness and justification.

This righteousness Christ purchased for us. By His perfect sacrifice on the cross, by all His obedience as our Lord and Head, He merited for us the forgiveness of sins, perfect justification in God's judgment, the right also to be delivered from the dominion and corruption of sin and to be made ethically, spiritually righteous, and the right to eternal life. Let us note that this righteousness which Christ purchased for us is not the same as the righteousness of Adam in the state of rectitude. Adam's righteousness was his

own as long as he obeyed, the righteousness Christ bestows upon us is never our own, it is always the righteousness of Christ, a gift of grace. It is not based on our obedience, but on Christ's perfect work. It never rests in us, but always in Christ. The righteousness of Adam was amissible, liable to be lost; the righteousness which we have in Christ, having its ground and source only in Christ, the Son of God in the flesh, is established forever: it can never be lost. Adam was created in the state and condition of righteousness, and it was sufficient to sustain him in his earthly position and life; the righteousness of Christ is light out of darkness, justification out of condemnation, life from the dead, and it makes us worthy of that higher glory which Scripture calls eternal life. For it is a righteousness which the Son of God merited for us by descending into deepest death and lowest hell.

Of this righteousness the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is, first of all, the divine revelation, the testimony of God.

For Christ is *risen*, but He is also *raised*.

When the Scriptures declare that He is *risen*, it denotes the resurrection as an act of His own, of the divine Son, Who by and through His resurrection is powerfully set forth as the Son of God, the resurrection and the life.

When, however, the Bible teaches us that Christ is *raised*, it considers the resurrection of our Lord as an act of God with respect to Christ in His human nature. And as such it is the Word of God concerning our justification. For "he was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification". He had assumed the responsibility for our sins, though He was personally without sin and guilt. According to that responsibility of our Mediator, He was worthy of death, though again, as far as His personal relation to God was concerned, He was the object of God's favor. With the load of this responsibility for our sins upon His mighty shoulders, He stood before the tribunal of God in the hour of judgment, and willingly descended into the darkest depth of death, where He suffered all the pain and agony in body and soul that is caused by the wrath of God against the workers of iniquity. Out of that depth of death there was only one way: such perfect obedience that God could declare Him, as Mediator, and, therefore, with regard to our sins, perfectly justified. For just as sin and death, so also righteousness and life are inseparably connected in the judgment of God. When, therefore, God raised Him from the dead, He thereby declared Him, and that, too, as mediator, worthy of eternal life. God set His seal upon the perfect sacrifice of Christ, and declared that He, the mediator, had perfectly satisfied for all the sins He had borne upon the cross that is for our transgressions. He was raised for. on

account of, our justification. The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the gospel of God declaring us righteous, and worthy of eternal life!

H. H.

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## THROUGH THE AGES

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### Pope Leo, The Great

We learn from the New Testament Scriptures, that, in the apostolic church, thus in the beginning, the bishop in the church was a common minister of the gospel. But he did not long remain this. At the close of the second century we find every Christian local church, including the ministers of the gospel and the elders, and also, of course, the deacons, ruled by a new dignitary, who alone bore the title of bishop. It means that the bishop was now an office bearer in the church vested with legal power over the ministers of the gospel. In the church of Christ, legal power is key power, that is, the right or authority to administer the word and the sacraments and especially the right to excommunicate out of the Christian Church. At the beginning of the second century, this power was more and more being exercised only by the bishops in contradistinction to the ministers of the gospel, who were now the legal inferiors of the bishop. This was a strange and lamentable departure from the church Policy laid down by Christ in the New Testament Scriptures. These Scriptures plainly teach the legal parity of those whom it calls bishops, teachers and pastors, elders, and presbyters. They know of no bishops vested with legal power also over the presbytery or consistory. This new power, whose appearance was the beginning of papacy and the foundation thereof, is known in history as the monarchical or hierarchical bishop, and the government by such bishops was given the name "episcopate" from the Greek "epi-skopeoo", meaning to oversee. Simultaneously, the Lord's Supper became transformed into the sacrifice of the Mass. According to the doctrine of the Mass the bread of holy communion, as it lies upon the Communion Table or Altar, is a sacrifice, and as such an unbloody repetition of the sacrifice of Christ. The duties of preaching and teaching were more and more appropriated by the monarchical bishops, and the task of the ministers of the Gospel became sacrificing the Mass, and on this account the Ministers were called priests, which was now their official title, but they continued to be called presbyters. To the deacons, too, were assigned new tasks, strange to their office. In-

stead of caring for the poor—a task which was more and more appropriated by the bishops—they baptized, distributed the sacramental cup, said the church prayers, not seldom preached, and were confidential advisors to the bishops; but they were the legal inferiors of the priests. As to the office of ruling elder, it ceased to exist, as the duties that belonged to this office, were taken over by the monarchical bishop. In this bishop was seen the highpriest of the Old Dispensation, and the Priests and Deacons were held to correspond to the Levitical Priests and the common Levites respectively.

Still other offices were invented and instituted, namely the following. 1. Sub-deacons or under helpers, as assistants to the deacons. 2. Readers, who read the Scriptures in the meetings for public worship and had charge of the church books. 3. The Acolyths who attended the bishops in their official duties and processions. 4. Exorcists who by prayers and the laying on of hands cast out evil spirits from the possessed, and often assisted in baptism. 5. Janitors or sextons. They took care of the religious meeting-rooms and at a later period also of the church yards. 6. Catechists who taught the catechumens or assisted therein. 7. Interpreters. But the interpretation was usually done by the Presbyters, deacons or readers. These were all inferior offices and they formed with the deacons and the priests the Lower Clergy, the Higher Clergy thus including the bishops and all the higher dignitaries.

But we must now concentrate on the bishops. In the first period they had jurisdiction only over the local consistory; but at length the territory over which the church had spread itself was divided into districts or clerical dioceses and in the chief city of each district a bishop was established, whence the city was called the see—from the Latin *sedes* meaning seat. In course of time the district or dioceses assigned to the first bishop became too populous, whereupon they were subdivided and a second bishop selected; and so bishops and dioceses were multiplied according to the wants of the churches. Meanwhile the bishops of the new sees grouped themselves around the bishops of the ancient sees. So did the bishops fall into differing ranks according to the ecclesiastical and political importance of their several seats of authority. On the lowest level stood the bishops of the country churches, who had jurisdiction over all the churches located in their respective districts. The next highest rank was occupied by the city bishops. Among the latter towered the bishops of the chief cities of the civil provinces of the Roman empire. In the East they were called metropolitans—from the Greek, *metra* mother and *polis* city, hence mother city—in the West *archbishops*. They had jurisdiction over the other bishops of the province, ordained them, called the

provincial synods and presided in such synods. Upon them devolved the care of all the churches of the whole province. Above the metropolitans stood the five patriarchs. They were the bishops of the four great capitals of the empire, Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, and Constantinople, to which was added the bishop of Jerusalem. Their joint rule extended over the whole Christian church. Each patriarch had jurisdiction over a number of dioceses, ordained the metropolitan bishops, rendered the final decisions in church controversies, presided in the ecumenial councils, published the decrees of the councils, and thus united in themselves the supreme legislative and executive powers in the church. This was the episcopate in its completed form—a form which it attained by the fourth century. It may be compared to a building, rising from the lower clergy as its base, through rank upon rank of bishops of always greater power and topped by five spires or steeples—the five patriarchs; or it may be compared to a body with five heads. In this conception the lower clergy forms the feet, the bishops of differings ranks the legs and the torso, and the patriarchs the five heads of the body. In a previous article it was pointed out that what contributed to the development of the episcopacy was the commendation it received from the church fathers, especially from Ignatius, bishop of Antioch and Irenaeus.

Thereupon the idea was conceived that the patriarch or the bishop of Rome enjoyed a universal jurisdiction over the whole Christian church, laity and clergy alike including the other four patriarchs. But this is not all. In process of time, the bishop of Rome, who took the name of pope, laid claim to a jurisdiction over all the kingdoms of the earth as well. Church and state were conceived of as forming two sides to the kingdom of Christ on earth, and in this kingdom the pope claimed to be the supreme judicial power, thus under Christ, the head over all things in the church not only but the Lord of every earthly potentate as well. It is through the pope, such is the conception, that Christ exercises His dominion on earth in state and church. These were amazing claims. Still more amazing is the fact that, at times and in a measure, the papacy actually succeeded in realizing its claims. Its success in this direction, the how and the why of this success, makes an astounding story full of intrigue and carnal tactic. This story I now purpose to tell. In a series of articles I purpose to sketch the rise and decline of the papacy in its struggles with the rulers in church and state for world dominion.

As has just been observed, the claim of the papacy to such universal jurisdiction has been realized but partially. Greek Christendom has never acknowledged it and Latin Christianity—the church of Western Europe—acknowledged it for a time only. In the Reformation the papacy was deprived forever of the

best of its domain. So, that to which we now have regard is the rise and the decline of the papacy in the countries of Latin Christianity. These countries are: The British Isles, the Lowlands (Belgium and the Netherlands) Gaul (the modern France) Germany, Italy, and Spain, that the papacy did not advance its authority in the other countries of the Eastern Hemisphere was not due to the fact that it had set a limit to its ambitions. Could the popes have gotten their way, they would have ruled the world from pole to pole and would be ruling the world from pole to pole in this day and age.

The papacy, its ambitions and strivings, is of the earth earthy. As to the idea of world dominion in church and state, it was conceived and born in carnal lust of power. It is not according to the pattern for church organization laid down by Christ in the Scriptures. True, its erection took place according to the determinite counsel of God. Undoubtedly, not a few of the popes through whom it became flesh and blood were true children of God. As do all things, good and bad, it worked for good to God's believing people. It performed useful deeds. Through it Christ promoted the ends of his kingdom in the same sense that he advances the cause of His kingdom through all things good and bad. Thus it served God's counsel, as do all things. But for all this it was and is an unscriptural institution. It bore fruit after its kind and this fruit was evil. The apostles, whose successors the popes claim to be, did not strive after worldly power. They did not lay claim to jurisdiction over all things in the state. But they warned the pastors in the church against entangling themselves in the affairs of this life. I Tim. 2:4. True, the office after which the popes aspired does exist; but it exists for Christ only. He, as seated at the right hand of God in the highest heavens, is King of Kings and Lord of lords and as such the head over all things in the church. But nowhere, certainly, do the Scriptures teach that Christ exercises this dominion on earth through the pope of Rome.

Since the papacy had no army of its own to fight for it, the question is pertinent how it succeeded even partially in realizing its ambition? The question is to be answered thus. The temporal rulers would come to the assistance of the papacy with their armies in exchange for favors sought from and granted them by the popes. What is more, some of the popes themselves were skilled in the arts of war and went forth to battle at the head of troops recruited from their own estates. Secondly, all men, including the mightiest kings, feared the pope's thunderings. For the belief became general that the keys of the kingdom of heaven had been placed by Christ in the hands of the pope so that he had the power to set men in heaven or send them in everlasting desolation as he chose and

as convenience dictated. The preaching by the church so registered in men's minds that this was the conclusion that was being drawn. And the fault lay with the teachers in the church. They obscured the truth by the vain philosophies of men. Thus through the use of these two instruments—the sword power and the key power—the papacy went far in fastening itself upon the state and the church. It went far in this respect also through the use even of the sword power and this despite the fact of Christ's reply to Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom was of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence," John 18:26. Truly, the papacy is an evil institution, and this despite the fact that it performed useful things, and also despite the fact that more than one pope—we cannot otherwise judge—was a true believer, bearing fruit worthy of repentance.

The first pope to lay claim to dominion in the whole church—mark you, in the church not in the state as yet—this came later—was Leo I, the dates of whose pontificate are 440-461. This claim he founded upon his own erroneous interpretation of Matt. 16: 18,19. In his conception, Peter is the rock upon whom the Lord built His church. To him especially the Lord gave the keys of the kingdom of heaven; to the other apostles only in a general capacity. Peter therefore is the prince of the whole church. This primacy (of Peter) was transferrable and actually was transferred to the bishops of Rome and to them only, who, in consequence thereof are, as the successors of Peter, the pastors of the whole church. The fallacy of this interpretation is seen from the statement, that the church universal is built, according to the Scriptures, upon the foundation of all the apostles and prophets and upon Christ as the chief corner stone. Thus the function of them all was to lay, through their infallible teachings, the foundation of the church for all the ages to come, so that with the death of the last apostle—circa 100—this function ceased and with it the office of the apostles, so that the apostles were without successors. They continued to function through the word of God that Christ, through their agency, gave to the church. This must be maintained in opposition to the fundamental idea of the papacy as set forth with unprecedented clarity for the first time by pope Leo I. With unprecedented clearness. This is the correct way of stating the matter, for the seeds of the papal idea are discoverable in the writings of all the leading church fathers. According to Leo, obedience to the pope is necessary to salvation. So did he wholly identify the kingdom of heaven with the Roman hierarchy, in particular with the papacy. And he was bold to make good his claims. In the tone of overlord, he admonished the bishops of the

African church; severely rebuked the bishops of Italy for their laxity in purging their churches of the Manichean and Pelagian heresy; confirmed in his office Anastacius, bishop of Thessalonica, upon the latter's request; and extended his jurisdiction over all the Illyrian bishops, but reserving to them the right of appeal in important cases from the provincial synod to the pope. The African, Illyrian, and Italian bishops acknowledged his authority and likewise the Spanish church, which besought his intervention against the Priscillianists, whom he refuted point by point. But in Gaul he succeeded but partially in establishing his authority, and in the East his effort in this direction failed completely. By the twenty eighth canon of the Council of Chalcedon, the bishop of Constantinople was raised to official equality with Leo, and his earnest protest against this decree was futile.

Leo's success in carrying the idea of the papacy into effect can be explained. Firstly, he was a man of unusual ability. Justly does he bear the title of "The Great" in the history of the Latin hierarchy. In acuteness and depth of thought, in energy of will and spirit, he surpassed all his predecessors and successors down to pope Gregory I. And during the time of his pontificate, he was the only great man in the Roman empire. Nowhere was there a powerful bishop or divine, like Athanasius or Augustine in the former generation. He was the directing influence in the second stage of the Christological controversy. The whole substance of the doctrinal formula by which this controversy was concluded, was taken from his letter to Flavian of Constantinople. He took a leading part in all the affairs of the church, doing battle with the heresies of his time such as the Manichean, the Priscilianist, and the Pelagian. Besides shaping the doctrine and the polity of the church, he saved Rome from destruction by venturing into the camp of the Huns, who were threatening the imperial city. As subdued by his remonstrances and as awed by his venerable appearance, the heathen actually changed their purpose. Leo was a great man. And his feelings at the assumption of his office, which he, himself, describes in one of his sermons, bespeak in him the true Christian: "Lord I have heard your voice calling me, and I was afraid; I considered the work enjoined and I trembled. For what proportion is there between the burden assigned to me and my weakness, this elevation and my nothingness? What is more to be feared than exaltation without merit, the exercise of the most holy functions being intrusted to one who is buried in sin? Oh, you have laid upon me this heavy burden, bear it with me, I beseech you; be you my guide and my support." On a whole, the popes of the ante-Nicene and early post-Nicene periods were earnest men. For the papacy had not yet begun to strive after

worldly power and it was still without its, "States of the Church". Hence, it had not yet become the coveted prize of wicked men and the playball of political factions. The popes were still ecclesiastics, theologians and shepherds, be it chief shepherds, occupied with the affairs of the church.

In explaining the success which Leo had in advancing papal authority, there are still other factors to be considered. There was the importance of the Roman church. It was the only church in the West that was thought to have been founded by apostles, these apostles being Peter and Paul. And the latter had died at Rome. In Rome the early persecutions had been the severest and the church there had endured with vigor. The Roman church was famed for its generosity to poor churches and for its resistance, and this successfully, to heresy, so that already at the close of the second century the feeling was general that every church should agree with the church at Rome. Lastly, this church was the largest single congregation in Christendom and it was located in the capital of the empire.

G. M. O.

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## THE DAY OF SHADOWS

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### The Two Oaths

We saw that in the war against Benjamin, the Israelite nation was overtaken by a catastrophe of the first magnitude. The number slain and wounded, both Benjamites and Israelites, reached the staggering sum of 65,130, and this number does not include the slain women, children, and old men of the tribe of Benjamin. As was pointed out, it was in that period concerning which it was said that the people served Jehovah all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders that saw the great works, which Jehovah did for Israel. It was in that period of covenant fidelity that the nation was scourged by that catastrophic war with Benjamin. Why should the hand of God have rested so heavily upon the nation in such a period? As was said, the question is pertinent in view of the fact that, according to God's promise to Israel, national well-being and covenant fidelity had to go hand in hand. We found that the only explanation of this is that, though the people of Israel were still serving the Lord and were not prostituting themselves before the shrines of idols, their hearts were not right with God. Several examples were given of this lack of true zeal and love for the

cause of God. It became plain that the nation deserved that stroke, for it was carnal. This also accounts for it that before taking action against Benjamin, the men of Israel neglected to offer the required burnt and peace offerings to thereby confess that they, too, were undone sinners as ill-deserving as their brethren—the Benjamites—and thus spared solely for the sake of the blood of their sacrifice. But they had no need of the atonement, for they were righteous in their own sight. Therefore the battle first was turned against them so that 40,000 of their number were destroyed before the Lord gave Benjamin into their hands.

Following this history to the end, we come upon still more evidence that the men of Israel were carnal and that the amazing zeal with which they prosecuted that war against Benjamin rose largely from sinful flesh. Firstly, the sword was not returned to its scabbard until the whole tribe was nearly exterminated. The fleeing Benjamites were pursued, overtaken, and killed and only six hundred of their number were able to save themselves by hiding in the rock Rimmon. Benjamin's cities were burned and their inhabitants—men and beasts—put to the sword. Though the law demanded the taking of these extreme measure, though Benjamin deserved this stroke, the men of Israel might have tempered their zeal with mercy. The Lord Himself had set them several examples in the ages of the past. That the nation still existed was due solely to the mercy of the Lord. For over and over it had made itself worthy of complete extermination through its spiritual whoredoms and rebellions against the Lord. And even now, as was shown, the men of Israel were just as worthy of the severe punishment that was inflicted upon the brother tribe. True, they had brought the burnt and peace offerings and thereby bewailed their sins before God and sought His forgiveness but only after 40,000 of their number had been destroyed. This should have disposed them to consider that there was also forgiveness for Benjamin in the way of repentance in that Christ was among them. That Benjamin, too, now that it had been defeated on the field of battle, might have turned his thoughts to God, and if so could be spared as well as they had been spared, seemed not to occur to them. And so the carnage continued. The sacred narrator frowns upon their doing, for this whole terrible history he incloses between the statement as twice made, "And in those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes."

When it was all over, the men of Israel stood aghast at their own doing. But they seemed to stand firm in the conviction that this was precisely what the Lord had required, namely that they obliterate the whole tribe of Benjamin, and not that they forbear after having inflicted punishment upon the tribe on the field of battle. What the Lord had said to them in re-



ply to their question, "Shall I yet again go out to battle against the children of Benjamin my brother or shall I cease?"—What the Lord had said in reply to this is, "Go up for tomorrow I will deliver them into thy hand." Certainly Benjamin must be punished, and therefore he was given in Israel's hand. But it was still an open question just how far the men of Israel must go in chastising the brother tribe. The tribe was exterminated, or nearly so. Is that what the Lord had commanded? It does not necessarily follow from His reply. It must be held against the men of Israel that, before proceeding to that extreme measure, they failed to inquire of the Lord. Also this failure indicates a wrong disposition on their part. And now that their blind zeal had spent itself, they bewail what had taken place as a national calamity, a visitation of God. And that it was—a punishment inflicted on the whole nation through their own blind zeal. So they went to Bethel and abode there till evening before God, and lifted up their voices and wept sore; and said, "O Lord God of Israel, why is this come to pass in Israel, that there should be today one tribe lacking in Israel?" The question was superfluous. They could know why, discover the reasons, if only they would face the truth about themselves. Their hearts were not right with God as was evidenced, for one thing, by their unwillingness to bring to conclusion the war with the remnants of the Canaanites. So their question remained unanswered. The Lord did not reply, and they, conscious of their national sins, rose early and built there an altar, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. And they also repented for Benjamin their brother. They said, "There is one tribe cut off from Israel this day." Also this lamentation of the men of Israel shows that exceedingly few of the brother tribe had escaped the carnage. The consideration of the loss of this tribe caused them deep grief. They repented, suffered a change of heart and mind. It means that they wished they hadn't gone to that extreme, and decried the zeal that had driven them. And so they set their minds hard at work devising ways and means for rehabilitating the tribe. For they knew that they had not acted under the necessity of a divine command but rather under the impulse of an indignation that was anything but righteous. Certainly, it could not be the will of God that a tribe in Israel be blotted out. But in their blind zeal they had made it very difficult for themselves to do anything at all for Benjamin. First, they were deterred by their rash vow. In Mizpeh they had sworn not to give any of their daughters to the escaped remnant—the 600 refugees in hiding in the rock of Rimmon. Instead of repenting of this oath, which they should have done, they resolved to keep it, yet actually broke it through circumventing it in the following way. In their zeal they had made still another great oath. They also had sworn

that whatever community should not come up to Mizpah to the Lord to fight against Benjamin, should surely be put to death. In their predicament, their minds suddenly reverted to this oath. The keeping of it was the way out of their difficulty. So they wanted to know now whether there was in Israel such a recalcitrant community. They numbered the people and, behold there was none of the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead there. That was the solution to their problem. So they sent thither twelve thousand men of the most valient with the command, "Go and smite the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead with the edge of the sword, with the women and the children. And this is the thing that ye shall do, Ye shall utterly destroy every male, and every woman that hath lain by man." It was not necessary for them to add that the virgins should be spared, that there might be wives for the six hundred refugee Benjamites in hiding in the cave of Rimmin. This was well understood. They refrained from making mention of this because doubtless none of them wanted to admit either to themselves or to one another the true purpose of this expedition, which was not to inflict punishment upon a sinful community in Israel that God might be feared but to obtain wives for the six hundred Benjamites to prevent the loss of a tribe. They needed that tribe for military defense. The narrative does not state that the command that the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead be destroyed was carried out. For that was not the real purpose of the mission. But the narrative does assert that "they found among the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead four hundred young virgins, that had known no man by lying with any male; these they brought them unto the camp to Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan." Then they sent messengers to proclaim peace to the six hundred Benjamites in hiding. And they came forth and received for wives them "which had been saved alive of the women of Jabesh-Gilead." The implication of this statement is, that the rest were destroyed. There is a strange inconsistency that is here encountered. If the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead had made themselves worthy of death, how could the lives of these virgins be spared; and how could they spare them without violating the oath?

But now it was discovered that there were not enough wives to go around. "Then the elders of the congregation said, How shall we do for wives for them that remain, seeing the women are destroyed out of Benjamin?" Also from this statement must be deduced that the slaughter among the non-combatant Benjamites had been truly appalling. All the women had been destroyed out of Benjamin. That those of the six hundred refugee Benjamites who were still without wives might be supplied, the elders in Israel resorted to a most lawless expedient, and to an amazingly sophistical reasoning, thinking that by such means they



could supply the wives that were still lacking without violating their oath. There was a periodically re-occurring feast at Shiloh at which the maidens assembled from the surrounding regions and executed dances at this place. The Benjamites were commanded to lie in wait in the vineyards and catch him every man his wife of these maidens and return with his prize to the land of Benjamin. The exact description of the situation of Shiloh serves to show that it was peculiarly adopted for the execution of the advice given to the Benjamites. Vinehills enclosed the dancing place. There they were to wait, concealed in the thickets, until the maidens appeared. But the Benjamites must have recoiled from such a tactic. They feared that the ill-will of fathers and brothers would be engendered by such an exploit. The elders quiet their fear, and say, "And it shall be when their fathers or their brethren come unto us to contend, that we will say unto them, Be favorable unto them for our sakes: because we took not to each man his wife in the war: for ye did not give unto them at this time, that ye should be guilty." This verse has experienced several interpretations. But the matter is clear. The thought conveyed is doubtless this: Their fathers and brothers will come unto us to contend—to us men of Israel. For it will be evident that we are responsible in that, without our permission, you, Benjamites, would not have dared to engage in such lawlessness. Hence, they will reproach us and their great grievance will be that we brough them under the curse of having violated their oath not to give of their daughters to Benjamin. Then shall we say unto them (the fathers and brothers): Be gracious unto the Benjamites for our sakes. We did not take thy daughters in war, that is, by violence. We purposely refrained from this as otherwise we would have involved ourselves in the curse of a broken oath. But these Benjamites had to be provided with wives. So we allowed them to seize your daughters. But no curse can come upon you, for you did not give your daughters to them.

This, doubtless, is the thought conveyed. So, by such means the men of Israel thought to gain their ends without violating their oath. They seemed not to understand that in spirit the oath was violated indeed. The children of Benjamin did as they had been advised, and "they went out from thence every man to his inheritance". For the times were lawless. Every man did that which was right in his own eyes. For there was no king in Israel. With this notice, the sacred writer closes his history.

G. M. O.

Christus, de Gekruisigde, maakt ilcht het kruis van den Christen.

## SION'S ZANGEN

### Groote Verlatenheid

(Psalm 88)

Het is uiterst moeilijk iets over dezen psalm te schrijven. We zien moeilijkheden van alle zijden. Wie is die Heman? Er worden er twee genoemd in de Heilige Schrift. Waarin bestond zijn ellende? Lichamelijk? Was hij een melaatsche, zoodat dit de reden was waarom alle zijn vrienden en bekenden hem verlieten? Of was zijn ellende van meer geestelijken aard? Waarom wij dan ook lezen van Gods verschrikkingen die over zijn ziel komen als water. Dan zijn er ook afzonderlijk problemen in vele uitdrukkingen die zeer sterk zijn, zooals Doodbrakende, afgezonderd onder de dooden, in den ondersten kuil liggen, tot een grooten gruwel gesteld zijn, enz.

Daar komt dit bij: de meesten der commentaren zien hier een puur menschenlijke smart, spreken niet van het vooruitlijden van Messias. Het wil ons voorkomen alsof we hier te doen hebben met een van de duidelijkste profetiën van den lijdenden Christus, indien niet de duidelijkste van allen. Vraag: waar vindt ge in de geheele Heilige Schrift een lijden geteekend, dat dit lijden van Heman evenaardt? En waar de Schrift in het Oude Testament zeer vaak het lijden der heiligen beschrijft als het vooruitlijden, profetisch, van Christus' lijden, zou dan de Heilige Geest Zich van het mindere bedienen in verwaarloozing van dit geheel eenige lijden van Heman? Dit komt ons als zeer onwaarschijnlijk voor. Gedenkt nog weer eens aan Petrus, die ons door Gods Geest leert, dat "van welke zaligheid ondervraagd en onderzocht hebben de profeten, die geprofeteerd hebben van de genade aan u geschied, onderzoekende op welken of hoedanigen tijd de Geest van Christus, die in hen was, beduidde en te voren getuigde het lijden dat op Christus komen zoude, en de heerlijkheid daarna volgende." I Pet. 1:10, 11. Of gedenkt ook Jezus' eigen woorden tot de Emmaus-gangers: "O onverstandigen en tragen van hart om te gelooven al hetgeen de profeten gesproken hebben! Moest de Christus niet deze dingen lijden, en alzoo Zijne heerlijkheid ingaan?" Lucas 24:25, 26.

Daar komt nog bij, dat vele van die vreemde en onverklaarbare uitdrukkingen in dezen psalm juist verklaard kunnen worden als men den lijdenden Christus hoort klagen in psalm 88.

Deze psalm wordt een lied genaamd. Daar zit een les in. Ge moogt zingen van Uw smart. God heeft gezorgd, dat er psalmen zijn waarin ge zingende van Uw ellende getuigt als een smartelijk gebed tot den

God Uwer zaligheden. Een lied, een treurzang.

Ik ben geneigd om te denken, dat deze Heman dezelfde is, waarvan we lezen in I Kon. 4:31. In dat vers lezen we, dat Koning Salomo wijzer was dan alle menschen, ja, wijzer dan. . . en dan worden de namen vier broeders genoemd, waarvan Heman de tweede is. Ik denk dit, omdat het groote wijsheid neemt om zijn smart tot God te brengen.

Het is een gedicht, dat den kinderen Korachs overgegeven werd om het te zingen voor Israel der eeuwen. En zij zullen klagen onder de leiding van den opperzangmeester.

Ik ben dankbaar, dat er bij staat: eene onderwijzing. . . . Wat een troost, dat er zoo in Gods Woord geklaagd wordt! En er wordt geklaagd om U te leeren hoe ge klagen moet tot God.

Letten we er eerst op, dat die Heman zelf diep geleden heeft. Ook was zijn lijden niet van voorbijgaanden aard. Hij heeft lang, zeer lang geleden. Ik heb gedacht aan Lazarus die bij de poort des rijken neergesmeten werd. Heman zegt immers, dat hij van der jeugd aan doodbrakende is. Dus zijn smart is voortdurend van aard. Daarom is het slot dan ook zoo uiterst droevig. Overal waar de heiligen klagen en roepen tot God vingt ge dat er ten slotte heil kwam, verlossing, licht en vrede. Doch hier is de laatste klank een snik. Als ge den psalm aandachtig bestudeert dan zult ge merken, dat er slechts één lichtstraal in schijnt en die lichtstraal staat boven aan het lied in het tweede vers: O Heere, God mijns heils! Voor het overige is het alles smart, verslagenheid, gevoel van groote verlatenheid. Ik denk, dat daarom het volk, dat zich ten doel stelt om de Heilige Schrift uit te leggen, direkt aan Christus hadden moeten denken.

Doch, zooals ik zeide, eerst letten we op Heman zelf. Hij is een man die vreeselijk geleden heeft. Van Job hebben gelezen, dat de Heere hem eindelijk opzocht en grootelijks verhoogde, doch het einde van Heman is geweest: groote smart tot het einde zijns levens. En toen is hij ten hemel gevaren, omringd van de Engelen Gods. Heman juicht zekerlijk nu voor Gods troon.

Let er ook op, dat Heman geleerd heeft, om alles aan God te verbinden. Er zijn stakkerds die denken, dat zij Heman verklaarden en van hem zeggen, dat hij een zwak geloof had. Wat vreeselijken onzin! Het neemt een zeer groot geloof om te bidden en te klagen zooals Heman doet. Hij heeft zich niet vertoornd op die hem belagen en verdrukken en tegenstaan. Hij verbindt letterlijk al zijn smart aan God. En dat nu, geliefde lezer, is ware Godsvrucht. Wij doen het meestal net andersom. Wij verhitten ons juist op den mensch die stof en asch is. En alleen als de genade Gods vaardig wordt over U ziet ge achter Uw nijldige vijanden den God Uws heils.

Ik denk, dat daarom Heman zulk een aantrekkelijke figuur is in de Heilige Schrift. In hem schittert groote genade Gods. Genade is aantrekkelijkheid. Wie gevoelt zich niet aangetrokken tot den armen Heman? Ik zal U zeggen van waar dat komt. Het is dit: ge hebt het geestelijk-instinkmatig gevoeld: hij vertolkt Uw smart!

Daarom: Heman mocht zeggen, zoovele eeuwen geleden: "Gij hebt vriend en metgezel verre van mij gedaan, mijne bekenden zijn duisternis!" Doch ik ben er van verzekerd, dat hij o zoo vele bekenden en vrienden en liefhebbers van den Heere ontvangen heeft. Weest stil, zoekt Uw plaats op, daar, rondom den ellendige. Het is een groote schare die zich verdringt om toch maar Heman te zien en te hooren, stilte naar hem te luisteren.

En we zeggen niets: we luisteren ademloos toe. Neen, we zeggen niets. Ik heb soms gedacht: hoe konden toch die drie vrienden van Job voor zeven dagen en zeven nachten rondom Job zitten en niets zeggen. Ik zeg dat nu niet meer. Millioenen hebben zich verdrongen rondom Heman en wij hebben geluisterd naar hem, stilzwijgend hebben we geluisterd, want *we zagen dat de smart zeer groot was!* Lezer, wie denkt hier niet aan het Kruis van dien grooteren Heman? En de angstige stilte van drie uur in den donker? Als de Goddelijke Heman Psalm 88 zingt in dien akeligen kreet: Waarom Mij verlaten? wie kan dan spreken? Of vragen? Hij is de Tolk van een eeuwige, droevige klaagzang. Hij verdiept Heman tot in alle eeuwigheden!

O Heere, God mijns heils!

Ik vraag U: wie noemt Heman een zwak-geloovige? Die stemmen verstommen! Aan het begin van zijn groote klacht vinden we alles wat noodig is tot de nimmereindigende zaligheden daarboven bij God. O Heere! In het Hebreeuwsch staat er: Jehovah! Wel, lezer, dat is de Onveranderlijke VerbondsGod, die in dien naam U toeroept: Van eeuwigheid tot in eeuwigheid zal Ik U nimmermeer vergeten! Ook verklaart Heman dien naam. In de volgende phrase staat er God mijns heils! Mag ik dat even lezen zooals het er staat in het origineele? Daar staat: O God van mijn Jozua! En Jozua is het Hebreeuwsche equivalent van Jezus. Wij zouden vandaag tot God schreeuwen en zeggen: O VerbondsJehovah, God en Vader van mijn Jezus! Gedenkt daarbij, dat Heman een uitverkoren vat is. Hij is een van de heilige mannen die door den Heilige Geest gedreven zijn. Dus zijn gebed is hier maar niet een ijdel verhaal van woorden. O neen. Het is door den Geest Gods ingegeven en norm voor ons bidden. Bidt hem maar gerust na. Dit gebed is gebeden naar God, daar Hij (de Heilige Geest) voor de heiligen bidt.

En dan komt de rest van den psalm. Een groote opsomming van vreeselijkheden.

Bij dag en bij nacht roep ik tot U!

En het scheen alsof het tevergeefs roepen was, want in het volgende vers zegt hij: laat mijn gebed voor Uw aanschijn komen, neig Uw oor tot mijn geschrei.

Keert tot Uzelven in, gij allen die dit leest en vraagt Uzelven: Wanneer heb ik dag en nacht tot God geroepen?

We worden al stiller.

Ik ken een Ander, Die het deed. En die Andere is het die achter en boven Heman staat. Doch in Zijn mond is de angst verdiept in het gedurige roepen. Vaak, zeer vaak, is Jezus naar buiten gegaan, alleen. En als Hij dan het woeste van de woestijn gevonden had, viel Hij neder in het stof om te roepen.

Als ik Heman hoort getuigen van zijn aanhoudend bidden, moet ik denken aan der Hebreëen brief: “. . . gebeden en smeeingen. . . . met sterke roeping en tranen. . . .” 5:7.

Ach, óók Heman heeft niet gebeden als Jezus. Of als een onzer.

En toch, we kunnen er in komen als Heman zegt: “bij dag en bij nacht roep ik tot U!” Er is een smartelijk beginsel. Lang, zeer lang geleden heb ik eens iemand hooren zeggen: Ik ben bedroefd, omdat ik niet genoeg bedroefd ben. En dat is waar. Als we altijd zagen, wie en wat wij zijn van nature, zouden we meer ervaren, wat Paulus noemt: de droefheid tot God. Dit laatste hadden we wel kunnen gebruiken tot den titel van dit schrijven. Heman's psalm is de uitstroting van het hart, hetwelk vol is van droefheid tot God.

Zijn bidden is schreien.

En de oorzaak van dit geschrei is dit: Heman wil in grooten vrede opblikken in het lieflijk oog van God. Anders uitgedrukt: Hij wil God zien. Hij ziet God wel, doch God heeft zich in de historie tegen hem gekeerd. Al heeft Heman voor vele jaren geleden onder de verdrukkende hand Gods is toch van toepassing op hem, wat Jesaja zegt: in een kleinen toorn heb Ik Mijn aangezicht van U een oogenblik verborgen. . . .!

Doch wie zal *verklaren* wat de gewaarwording geweest is van Jezus in Zijn bidden? Weet ge wat “dag en nacht tot God roepen” voor Jezus geweest is? Een eeuwige nacht in den eeuwigen dood. Dag en nacht is voor Jezus een eeuwigheid geweest.

O, als ons gebed voor Gods aanschijn komt, en ik dat mag weten, dan is het goed. Als ik weten mag in mijn nacht van lijden, dat des Heeren oor Zich neigt tot mijn roepen, dan is het goed. En juist die ervaring moest Heman missen. Hij wist, dat God de God was van zijn heil, doch de ervaring van Zijn lieflijk Aangezicht moest hij voor tijd en wijle missen.

Onder gewone menschen geloof ik niet, dat ooit iemand meer leed dan Heman, de Ezrahiet.

En hij riep tot God om Hem te mogen zien in Zijn

eeuwige liefde, omdat hij “der tegenheden zat was.”

De tegenheden.

Dat woord komt van een werkwoord, hetwelk be-teekent: in stukken breken. Heman wil zeggen: Mijn ziel is o zoo vermoeid. Want, Heere, geduriglijk breekt Gij mij in stukken! Gij verbrijzelt mij!

Wie denkt hier niet aan Jesaja's woorden in het drie-en-vijftigste hoofdstuk: Doch het behaagde de Heere Hem te verbrijzelen.

De geheele psalm is eigenlijk een beschrijving van de verbrijzeling die van Godswege over Heman kwam.

Doch ook lezen we erin de verbrijzeling waar-mede Jezus verbrijzeld werd.

En daarom ook, beluisteren wij een beschrijving van des Heeren bezoekende hand over ons ten kwade.

Als het U tegenloopt, als ge verbrijzeld wordt en Uw hart breekt van droefheid, verbindt het dan aan God. Hij doet alle dingen. Achter Uw hater staat God. Achter elk schijnend verdriet dat aan Uw ziel knaagt, staat God. Als menschen en dingen en elemen-ten U tegen zijn en U aan stukken breken, zoodat Uw ziel vermoeit en zat wordt van tegenheden, gedenkt dan dit: Mijn Vader in den hemel doet het!

Gaat dan naar Heman en laat hem Uw klacht tot God zenden. Gebruikt zijn woorden voor Uw ziels-verdriet.

Vroeger deden we het en dachten: Heman zingt voor mij! Zoo en zoo is het mij ook. Hij heeft dat vooruit geleden voor ons.

Doch nu zien we dieper en zeggen: Jezus is een barmhartig Hoogepriester. Hij is onzer een geworden en is verzocht in allerlei smart zooals wij. De zonde uitgenomen. Hij weet wat het zeggen wil om zich in slaap te schreien vanwege al ons zielsverdriet. Ik kan Hem van stap tot stap nagaan, wat Hij geleden heeft, want Heman leed het vooruit en Hij is in die smart ingegaan op Golgotha. En Hij hoort mij! Hij heeft medelijden met mij.

En waarom al die smart? Waarom verbrijzelt onze Vader ons?

Och, er zijn vele redenen.

Ik heb meestal aan deze: Hij wil mijn tin op het allerreinste afzuiveren. Hij wil mijzelf doen kennen en, ten uiterste, wil Hij mij Zichzelf doen kennen. Opdat mijn moegestreden hart eindelijk ruste aan 't Zijne!

G. V.

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Give us our bread from day to day,  
And all our wants do Thou supply;  
With gospel truth feed us we pray,  
That we may never faint nor die.

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## IN HIS FEAR

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### The Fear of the Lord

The rubric "Education" covers a vast territory. It deals with the entire bringing up of the child from the moment, practically, that it is born until it reaches the age of maturity and is prepared to take its own individual, responsible place in life. True, even then man continues to be educated, to receive instruction. Speaking generally education does not cease until the end of life itself. All a man does, all he ever sees and hears, all his reading and recreation, all the contacts he makes in the world educate him in one way or another, to the good or to the bad. However, in the more specific and restricted sense wherein the word is meant to be taken in this rubric, "Education" deals with the child and its preparation for life, its physical and mental and spiritual development. The rubric covers the period of infancy and early childhood, those wonderful years of boyhood and girlhood as well as that trying period of adolescence. It embraces the entire calling and influence of that three-fold agency that the Creator has ordained for the bringing up of the child, the home, the church and the school. It requires a study of the child to be taught, its physical, psychological, mental and spiritual makeup, as well as of them who have the responsibility of performing this task, the parent, the teacher and the preacher. It includes all the instruction of our children, direct and indirect, by word of mouth and by example, in doctrine and in practice, in theory and in life, in the knowledge of the truth and revelation of the Word of God as such and its application to all of life. All this must be "in His fear".

The phrase that heads this department and expresses its general theme is exceedingly well chosen. "In His fear" means, of course, "in the fear of the Lord," the Lord being the object here of the action contained in the word "fear". It is certainly true, that the Lord is also the subject, the fountain and source, of this same fear. It must come from Him as well as be directed to Him. Also in this sense it is *His* fear, the fear of the Lord. With a view to our subject this must be well understood. This means that our children must be trained, educated in that fear that they have received from the Lord. To educate means literally and basically "to bring, lead out". It is that fear that is graciously instilled into the minds and hearts of our covenant children by God Himself that must be brought out. This means, furthermore, that unless God Himself grants His fear in the hearts of us and our children there can be no positive fruit and benefit unto

salvation in the education we give and they receive. In fact, without this work of divine grace there can be no true education at all, since in Scripture only that is true instruction that has the fear of the Lord as its center and aim. Nevertheless, as the phrase is consistently used in Holy Writ and is to be understood in this rubric "the Lord" is not the subject of the fear, but its object. The fear is not *from*, but *unto* the Lord. Thus the meaning is that our children must be educated, instructed, trained in all that belongs to the fear that has the living God for its object. That is the burden of the phrase: In His Fear. That is the meaning of the phrase in Scripture. And that constitutes the heart and soul of all education.

That the phrase is taken directly from Scripture and expresses a wholly Scriptural thought is not difficult to demonstrate. Basic as is the fear of the Lord to all Godliness and constituting as it does the entire duty of man, Scripture speaks of this fear, times without number. Synonymous as it is with religion itself there is no concept in all the Word of God that is brought to our attention more frequently and more forcibly both in the Old Testament and in the New.

The word most frequently used in the O. T. Hebrew is the word "yirah", meaning "fear, reverence", and "yare", meaning "to be afraid, to fear, to reverence". Both refer almost exclusively to the fear of God, not of men or things. It is this word that the sweet psalmist of Israel uses when he prophesies shortly before his death, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of the Lord." 2 Sam. 23:1-3. The judges of Israel must let the fear of the Lord be upon them, and in that fear of the Lord they must judge, faithfully and with a perfect heart. 2 Chron. 19:7, 9. To the nobles and rulers of the people Nehemiah spoke in no uncertain terms, "It is not good that ye do: ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the heathen our enemies?" Neh. 5:9. "Unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding." Job. 28:28. It is also the *beginning* of wisdom, and a good understanding have all they that do His commandments. Psalm 111:10. Here the fear of the Lord is synonymous with doing His commandments. Also, "the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether." Psalm 19:9. The fear of the Lord, therefore, is synonymous with the keeping of His judgments. It assures us of all we need, "for there is no want to them that fear Him." Ps. 34:9. "Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord." Psalm 34:11. And then he goes on to say, "Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.

Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it." vs. 13, 14. The fear of the Lord is also the beginning of knowledge, Prov. 1:7, and they that do not choose the fear of the Lord hate knowledge, vs. 29. Of all the latter Jehovah says, "I will also laugh at your calamities; I will mock when your fear cometh. When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me." vs. 26-28. To fear God is to hate evil as and because God hates evil. Prov. 8:13. The fear of the Lord longeth days, 10:27; in it is strong confidence and they that know it always have a place of refuge, 14:26; it is also "a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death", 14:27; it is the instruction of wisdom, 15:33; it "tendeth to life, and he that hath it shall abide satisfied and shall not be visited with evil, 19:23; and by it are riches and honor and life, 22:4. Proverbs, the Book of Wisdom, as is to be expected, is full of this "fear of the Lord". Also for Christ Himself the fear of the Lord is everything, for of the rod that should come forth out of the stem of Jesse it is said, "And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord." Isaiah 11:2, 3. "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the *whole duty of man*." Eccl. 12:13: In all these passages the word used is "yirah", "fear, reverence."

Also used in the O. T. is the Hebrew word "pachad", meaning "fear, terror, dread." Here the element of terror, rather than that of loving reverence is on the foreground. You feel the difference the moment you turn once again to Scripture. Of the wicked it is said, "that there is no fear of God before his eyes," Psalm 36:1; and in Psalm 119:120 the psalmist confesses, "My flesh trembleth for fear of thee; and I am afraid of thy judgments." The difference between the two words is clearly illustrated in Prov. 1:26, 27 and 29. "I will mock," says the Lord, "when your fear (pachar, dread) cometh; as desolation, . . . . For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear (yirah, reverence) of the Lord." Isaiah says of the wicked, "And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth." 2:19. Other Hebrew words are likewise translated "fear", but they are used less frequently, add little or no significance to the general meaning of the term, and are not used in Scripture with application to God.

The Greek words most frequently used in the N. T. are phobos, "fear, fright, awe"; the verb phobeo, "to put in fear, frighten"; the adjective phoberos, "fearful, terrible"; and the related ekphobos, meaning "frightened out (of one's senses, no doubt), greatly terrified." There are also the words deilia, "timidity fear", and eulabeia, properly "caution, circumspection" and used also for "godly fear, reverence, awe." As far as the significance of the concept is concerned, the N. T. has nothing to add to the old.

From all this it should be clear what is implied in that all-important concept "fear", the fear of the Lord. Its deepest ground is that truth of all truths: God is GOD, the immeasurable Maker of the heavens and the earth, the infinite comprehension of all perfection, the eternal, infinite, omnipresent, omnipotent, independent, immutable, incomprehensible GOD. The "fear of the Lord" has that God as its object, is directed to Him, seeks Him, acknowledges Him as God alone. Never does it seek itself or the mere creature. It is all that the creature feels in the presence of the only, living GOD. It is the acknowledgement with one's whole being and life that God is GOD. It is reverence, awe, terror, dread, all that and much more; everything that follows from the acknowledgement of God and the consciousness of His nearness in all His divine power and majesty. Yes, it is also terror, dread—dread of such greatness and holiness and might, dread of ignoring His precepts and incurring His awful and consuming wrath. But it is much more. Rather it is reverent regard for the living God, tempered with awe and fear of the punishment of disobedience. It is awe of what God IS rather than dread of what He might DO. It is the reverence and awe that is born of and permeated with love. It implies that we know our God, know Him as He is and as He reveals Himself in His Word, know Him in all our lives. To fear the Lord means that we seek Him, serve Him, worship Him and scrupulously consecrate our whole lives to that single end. As such it is "the whole duty of man". Eccl. 12:13. Without it the rulers cannot rule and the judges cannot judge. It alone is wisdom and without it is only the utter foolishness of the natural man. It is the beginning, the principle of all wisdom and without it the latter is impossible. It is the beginning of knowledge and without it, whatever the so-called education of the world may accomplish, is only consummate ignorance. It manifests itself as departing from evil, keeping one's tongue from evil, hating evil as and because God does, doing God's commandments, keeping His judgments, doing good and seeking peace. It alone endures forever, while all else is vanity and as a shadow than declineth. It satisfies every need, so that they who know it shall know no want, while without that fear of the Lord there is only calamity and desolation and destruction as a whirlwind. It

prolongeth one's days, gives prosperity and riches, honor and life, but apart from it is only misery, poverty, adversity, dishonor and death; not, perhaps, according to the standards of sinful men, but according to truth. It alone gives blessedness and joy, for "blessed is every one that feareth the Lord; that walketh in His ways", Psalm 128:1; it alone guarantees the friendship of the Highest, for "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him; and he will shew them His covenant", Psalm 25:14; and it alone gives the promise of everlasting life, for "Surely his salvation is nigh them that fear him; that glory may dwell in our land." Psalm 85:9.

What all this means in the sphere of education should be obvious to all. In that fear of the Lord our children must be brought up. Nothing else matters. "Fear" is the keyword in all that can be said about the instruction of our covenant seed. May we know its significance and may "the fear of the Lord" be our sole aim and consideration in all the training of our covenant seed.

R. V.

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## FROM HOLY WRIT

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Eph. 1:3:—"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ."

Verse 3 of Ephesians 1 may well be called the keynote of Paul's epistle to the Ephesians. Having introduced himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and having proclaimed upon the Church of God grace and peace from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the apostle now directs us to the fulness of that salvation which we possess in Jesus Christ, our Lord. The Church must understand that her glory is inseparably connected with Christ. And placing himself at the head of the brethren ("Blessed be the God and Father of *our* Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath blessed *us* . . .") he would have the Church of God join him in his song of praise which he raises in this third verse of Ephesians 1.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." The word "blessing" means literally "to speak well." It cannot escape our attention that the word occurs twice in this text. God blesses us and we bless Him. However, a tremendous difference exists between God's blessing of us and our blessing of Him. This lies in the very nature of the case. They differ in the same measure that the Lord differs from

man. God's blessing is Divine, creative, efficacious; our blessing of God is never creative, efficacious, causal. When God speaks well of us He actually makes us well; when we speak well of God we merely proclaim His greatness and acknowledge His efficacious blessing upon us.

The object of our blessing, according to this text, is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" as connected only with "Father", so that we must read here: God, Who is also the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. However, the original text does not permit this interpretation. We read literally "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." The article "the", inasmuch as it appears but once and then before "God", definitely proves that Jehovah here is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is referred to, of course, according to His human nature, as Head of the elect. For although it is true that this relation of our Lord Jesus Christ to God Triune has its deeper and eternal cause in the Holy Trinity, and that the First Person is the Father of the Second Person in the Triune God, one can hardly declare that the First Person is God of the Second Person. The God and Father in this text is therefore the Triune God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son according to His Divine nature, is in this passage of Scripture specifically the Holy Child Jesus and the Servant of the Lord.

Jehovah is the God of our Lord Jesus Christ. As the Holy Child Jesus our Lord had been brought forth by the Triune God. Hence, it was Jesus' calling to serve and acknowledge the Triune Lord. But God was also Jesus' Father. This not only refers to a relationship of love between God and His Servant, Jesus. Also this is true. Jesus was God's Holy Child, as is also expressly stated in Holy Writ, and was at all times perfectly subservient and obedient to His God. That God was Jesus' Father, however, signifies primarily that the Triune God was for Jesus the Fount and Source of all life and salvation. Jesus was perfectly devoted to His God and Father. But one desire filled His soul. It was His meat and drink to do the Father's will, even when that will demanded of Him the awful way of the cross and of hell. And God blessed Him to the uttermost. It was the Triune God Who strengthened Him from the beginning to the end, raised Him from the dead, exalted Him to the pinnacle of heavenly glory, gave Him a Name above every name, and filled Him with heavenly life and salvation.

This God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, now, hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. The text certainly purposes to emphasize that all our spiritual blessings are inseparably connected with the Christ, that God blessed Christ first and we are blessed only in Him. We are



what we are only because of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

First of all, then, what does the apostle Paul mean when he speaks of "all spiritual blessings"? Many interpretations have been given of this expression. Some would explain "spiritual" in the sense of "psychical", as pertaining to the soul. These blessings are spiritual, then, in distinction from physical blessings. However, it needs little explanation to show that this cannot be the exclusive meaning of the apostle. First of all, this is hardly ever the meaning of "spiritual blessings" in Holy Writ. Besides, the text speaks of *all* spiritual blessings, and we know that the Lord blesses His people according to body and soul. Moreover, the physical aspect of God's blessings is rather expressed in the phrase "in heavenly places". Another explanation would distinguish these "spiritual" blessings from the "earthly" blessings of the Old Testament. The idea of "spiritual" must be understood, then, in contrast with the "natural-earthly" of the Old Dispensation. Israel was earthy-natural; we are heavenly-spiritual. As far as this interpretation is concerned, we would remark, in the first place, that we must exercise the greatest care. The statement that God's blessings in the Old Testament were earthy contains much truth, if only we bear in mind that the earthy aspect of the Old Dispensation was but a typical shell and that God's people then possessed the same spiritual benefits which we enjoy in the New Dispensation. To explain God's blessings of the Old Testament as essentially earthy is characteristically premillarian. Secondly, if the word "spiritual" must be understood in contrast with "earthly" how must we then explain the expression "in heavenly places"? Paul, then, would be guilty of tautology, repetition. It is our conviction, however, that the expression "in heavenly places" does not merely repeat what Paul has stated in the immediately foregoing words, but is a richer development of these spiritual blessings.

These blessings are spiritual, first of all, because they are the fruits of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, and are wrought by Him. They are also spiritual because they are not natural, they do not change the essence of things, the essence of our being and of our relation to the world, but by them our spiritual ethical nature is reversed and our relation to God is rendered perfect. They change our darkness into light, our love of the lie into love of the truth, our folly into wisdom, our ignorance into the knowledge of God, our guilt into perfect righteousness, our corruption into holiness, our unrest into peace, our sorrow into joy, our death into eternal life. These blessings do not feed us with the bread that perisheth but with the Bread of Life; they do not enrich us with earthy treasures. They are blessings of grace and mercy, of righteousness and peace, of holiness and the love of God, of wisdom and knowledge and sanctifi-

cation and of a blessed hope in the midst of a world that lieth in darkness. We read of "all" spiritual blessings because they constitute the fulness of the salvation which God has willed and prepared for His own.

Moreover, the text speaks of all spiritual blessings in "heavenly places". It is true, of course, that these blessings are in heavenly places because we are blessed in Christ, and He is in the heavenly places. However, the blessings are surely like their source and are therefore heavenly in character. These blessings are not merely spiritual in distinction from the natural and carnal, but they are also heavenly in distinction from the mere earthy. They do not merely restore but they also elevate; they do not restore what was once broken and spoiled, but they raise to a higher level, the level of heavenly perfection. For, as far as Christ is higher than the first Adam, the spiritual blessings we receive from Him are higher than all the things of the earth. And so the apostle Paul refers to that fulness of salvation, whereby God, through His irresistible and glorious grace, delivers us out of all the misery of sin and darkness and death into the unspeakably glorious and heavenly liberty and perfection of God's eternal and heavenly tabernacle.

Finally, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places "in Christ". To understand this expression in the text we must bear in mind the headship of Christ Jesus. Christ is the Head of His Church in a judicial and organic sense. As our judicial Head He represents us before the bar of God's justice, assumes our relation to the law of God. And because of this judicial headship of Christ all His work is imputed, reckoned unto us. What He does He does therefore in our behalf and His merits becomes our's according to Divine righteousness—this is imputation. As our organic Head He becomes for us a life-giving Spirit. It not only pleased the Lord that Jesus should merit all things for us but also that we should receive that life only as in a living union with Him. Unto that end Christ Himself is exalted, receives the Spirit beyond measure, and thereby becomes for us that life-giving Spirit.

Now we can understand the thought of this text. That God has blessed us in Christ is, first of all, objectively true as far as Christ is concerned. We were Blessed when He was blessed. God blessed Jesus, spoke His "well-word" upon Him. It was the Divine Word of blessing upon His people which prompted God in sending His Son into the world, in leading Him into the dark depths of the cross and of hell, bearing God's wrath upon our sins. It was the word of Divine blessing which called Christ from the dead, raised Him into glory, and gave Him a place at the pinnacle of heavenly glory. Blessed are we *in Christ*

inasmuch as in His death our sins were atoned, our guilt was paid, our justification and eternal life were merited. Blessed were we in Christ because He was glorified with a glory unspeakable; and inasmuch as His glory is our glory we may and can say that at His resurrection and glorification our spiritual blessings were effected.

However, that God has blessed us in Christ Jesus is also subjectively true, as far as we are concerned. We are blessed with all spiritual and heavenly blessings in Christ, i.e., we receive these blessings only *in Christ*, in living union and fellowship with Him. When God calls us out of darkness into His marvellous light, engrafts us into Jesus, and we become one plant with Him, we begin to live through faith out of Jesus. Then we taste the forgiveness of sins and all the spiritual blessings of salvation. Then we taste light in the midst of our darkness, holiness in the midst of our corruption, life in the midst of our death. And, in Christ, we receive a living hope, embrace the heavenly renewal of all things in principle, and look forward to that day when we shall be translated into the glory which the Lord has prepared for us in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Blessed by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. He is the Giver; we are the recipients. Praised be His Name, now and forever.

H. V.

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## PERISCOPE

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### *Commendable*

If members of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. take the advice of the leaders of their presbyteries and synods, they will postpone all plans to build new buildings or to add to old ones until their denomination becomes able to extend help to fellow Christians in the devastated areas around the world. This policy was decided upon recently at a meeting held in Chicago. Leaders asked that all local building plans be deferred until the denomination reaches its goal of raising 27 million dollars for restoration and assistance of Churches abroad.

### *German Protestants Reorganize*

Both the Lutheran and Reformed Churches in Germany are diligently working towards complete reorganization. Leaders of both Churches met in Con-

ferences recently to affect this reorganization. One such conference, called by Martin Niemoller, met at Frankfurt while another large group met at Treysa. An almost complete reorganization of Protestant forces in Germany was the result. Both groups joined forces to form the new Evangelical Church of Germany, which will have its headquarters at Stuttgart. This new union replaces the former German Evangelical Church.

The following three statements of policy were decided upon: 1. The Churches will work in closer union but remain separate groups. 2. The union will exclude those ministers and congregations who supported the Nazi regime but leaves room for their inclusion if they show repentance and renounce their errors. 3. The union proposes to disavow the old policy of detachment from political and social realities and concentration on Creed and Confession. It was expressed that in this way the Church must lead Germany to "genuine Christianity and a genuine democratic social order." The question of demanding state support for Church schools was discussed without definite action being taken.

### *De Hervormde Kerk-Netherlands*

Within a few months the Netherlands Reformed Church will hold its first General Synod since 1618. Its purpose will be to reorganize its Church government on a confessional rather than a purely administrative basis. Forty-five delegates, consisting of thirty ministers and fifteen elders named by the various classes, will meet in Amsterdam to consider breaking off ties with the State. These ties have existed since 1816 when King William I imposed a statute on the Reformed Church that substantially defined its government. The King's action made a Synodical Commission a purely administrative body. The result was, according to one spokesman, that the Church formed at the great Synod of Dordt 1618-19, "lived by its regulations instead of its Creed." Plans are to adopt a new Church Order, which it is expected will take about three years to prepare. It is planned that the new order will restore the validity of the three historical confessions of the Church adopted at the Synod of Dordt.

### *Pope Endorses Communism*

Pope Pius XII in an address to the women of Italy repudiated Capitalism and virtually gave his blessing to Communism. During the course of his address he asked: "Can a woman hope for her real well-being from a regime dominated by Capitalism?" In answering his own question he pointed out at great length the picture of social and moral ruin caused by develop-

ments under Capitalism and left no doubt of the condemnation pronounced upon it by the Roman Church. Observers see in this attack another indication of the fact that the Roman Church is attempting to end the social and political systems of our Western world and to erect corporative organizations of state and society upon which the papal blessing will be bestowed.

### *Netherlands*

According to Major J. M. Tinley, Chief of the Food and Agricultural Subsection of American Civil Affairs Mission to Holland, Holland's food situation is at present "better than in any other country in northwestern Europe except Denmark." He warned, however, that for the next two years the Netherlands will continue to face an extremely difficult situation. He pointed out that at the time of liberation the average Netherlander was twenty pounds underweight.

Although the Netherlands railroad system lost about seventy five percent of its tracks and almost half of its locomotives in addition to a great quantity of its freight and passenger cars it is slowly returning to prewar levels. All lost track, about 1,500 miles of them, have already been repaired or restored. The main difficulty at present is the almost complete absence of bridges over the many waterways.

It is also reported that the coal mines in Limburg province have reached their highest production since the country's liberation. They are approaching a goal of 26,900 tons daily output. Though all of this is encouraging it is stressed that the situation is still desparate. The great need is for clothing of all kinds.

### *"Proving" The Bible*

Time and again while casting about for material for this month's column we ran across the following news item. Eleven early Christian burial urns have been discovered in a cave on the Jerusalem-Bethlehem road. Archeologists say these may provide the oldest record of Christianity. Inscriptions on the urns contain historical confirmation of the trial and crucifixion of Christ. The inscriptions are in Hebrew and Greek and date from the 1st century A. D. They appear to be lamentations on the passion and death of Christ written by Jewish disciples, perhaps eyewitnesses of the event. Though they have not yet been fully translated, common names as Miriam, Simeon and Matti, and definite references to the crucifixion are evident. Great hopes are held that they will vindicate and "prove" the authenticity of the Scriptural record.

Such accounts always remind us of the close of Christ's parable of the rich man and Lazarus. "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

### *Christmas Trees*

Perhaps you have noticed that this month's material has been a straight news report with practically no comment. We feel that the material has been of such a nature that our readers can judge it for themselves. The same is true, of this, our closing observation. It is a quotation from *The Banner* of November 2, 1945, written by the Rev. N. J. Monsma in answer to a question concerning the Christian's attitude towards the Christmas tree. He writes as follows: "It appears from history that it has ever been difficult to maintain the Christian character of the observance of Christmas. . . . Indeed, it seems as if the observance of this day gets out of hand very easily . . . . It is hardly necessary to describe the present character of the observance of Christmas in our land. All agree that the day is becoming commercialized by Jew and Gentile alike. Moreover, externalism reigns, so that only the things which can be observed by the senses receive attention, and the actual event which is supposed to be celebrated and which is so beautifully and centrally described in the Bible is either neglected or misinterpreted.

Now, in this setting the Christmas tree finds a place. This tree became popular in Germany during the 17th century and from Germany the custom has spread. The vogue is anything but Christian. It originates from the ancient Teutonic yule-tide and yule-tree, as does also the use of the mistle-toe, considered a ceremonial plant by our Teutonic ancestors. The yule-tree was used by these pagan races in connection with the celebration of the winter solstice (about Dec. 22). An evergreen was usually lighted and placed before a dwelling. Since the sun takes its turn at this time of the year and makes for the spring and summer seasons again, the tree was considered an emblem of new life. It was, therefore, a feature of nature worship and highly idolatrous.

All those loving the Lord Jesus should be able to draw their own conclusions. Nothing can be said in favor of the Christmas tree from a biblical viewpoint. The Bible does not speak of it, and does not so much as suggest the custom. As far as the origin of the custom is concerned it appears to be idolatrous. As far as its effects are concerned it may prove to be dangerous in that it threatens to supplant the real object of our joy on that day. Fact is that in a great many homes such is actually the case—the tree so fascinates the minds that Christ and His birth are neglected."

W. H.

## FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE CONFERENCE

Held at Hull, Iowa  
October 10th and 11th — 1945

## RECEIPTS:

Randolph, Wisc. ....	\$ 9.85
Redlands, Calif. ....	30.90
Oskaloosa, Ia. ....	15.78
Doon, Ia. ....	7.28
Oak Lawn, Ill. ....	11.30
Rock Valley, Ia. ....	9.40
Orange City, Ia. ....	7.80
Hull, Ia. ....	24.87
Bellflower, Calif. ....	17.35
Hope, Mich. ....	14.62
1st, Grand Rapids, Mich. ....	280.59
4th, Grand Rapids, Mich. ....	22.45
Holland, Mich. ....	17.01
Pella, Ia. ....	15.00
Edgerton, Minn. ....	20.75
Kalamazoo, Mich. ....	12.26
Sioux Center, Ia. ....	10.11
Manhattan, Mont. ....	27.55
Creston, Grand Rapids, Mich. ....	17.80
South Holland, Ill. ....	20.00
Cassel, S. D. ....	65.30
Garner, Ia. ....	10.00
Hosmer, S. D. ....	50.00
Highmore, S. D. ....	19.75
Eureka, S. D. ....	50.00
Rev. E. Buehrer ....	10.00
A Gift ....	10.00
Collections ....	147.31

.....  
Total Receipts .....\$955.03

## DISBURSEMENTS:

Conference Comm. Expenses .....	\$ 29.49
Travel Expenses, Delegates .....	707.00
Catering .....	92.01

.....  
Total Disbursements .....\$828.50

Balance on hand, Oct. 12, 1945 .....\$126.53

## Note:

1. The South Holland delegate advanced the above mentioned \$20.00, not knowing how much the collection amounted to. A later report will be given.
2. Hudsonville and Grand Haven will collect later, which also will be reported later by your committee.
3. The balance on hand will be applied to the publication of the Conference papers.

The Financial Committee:

Rev. William E. Korn, Menno, S. D.  
Rev. Gerrit Vos, Edgerton, Minn.

## ANNIVERSARY

On October 25, 1945, our beloved parents:

BEN PASTOOR

and

ALICE PASTOOR, nee Hoorn

celebrated their 45th wedding anniversary.

It is the earnest prayer and hope of us their children that the Lord may grant them His peace in their remaining years and an abundant entrance into His eternal kingdom.

Mr. and Mrs. John Klaver

Mr. and Mrs. Sidney De Young

Mr. and Mrs. William B. Pastoor

Mr. and Mrs. John A. Pastoor

and 11 grandchildren.

Grand Rapids, Michigan.

## IN MEMORIAM

After a lingering illness the Lord took unto Himself on the morning of October 18

RALPH VANDER VEEN

at the age of thirty years.

We do not understand the deep ways of God, but we know that God's way is always good. The Lord leads each one of His own by His own counsel, and afterward takes them to glory. The way of each child of God is different; the way in which the Lord led Ralph was the best, the right, the only way for him.

May the Lord comfort the bereaved widow and her four children, together with the parents and other immediate relatives.

This is our earnest prayer for the bereaved family. May God grant it abundantly.

The Holland Ladies' Aid of Redland,

Rev. P. De Boer, Pres.

Mrs. P. Kooiman, Sec'y.

## SPROKKELINGEN

Er is geen schuld, dat Satan moeilijker met verzoeken kan doorboren, dan lofzang en gebed.

In Christus ontmoet de zondaar Gods als ader, en Gdo den doemwaardige als zijn door Jezus' zelf verlost en in Hem verkorene.

Een gezicht van zonden, zonder een gezicht op Christus, is nog geen bekeering.