

# THE STANDARD *Bearer* A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

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## MEDITATION

### God Verzoekt Niemand

*Niemand, als hij verzocht wordt, zegge: Ik word van God verzocht; want God kan niet verzocht worden met het kwade, en Hij Zelf verzoekt niemand. Maar een iegelijk wordt verzocht als hij van zijne eigene begeerlijkheid afgetrokken en verlost wordt. Daarna de begeerlijkheid ontvangen hebbende baart zonde; en de zonde voleindigd zijne baart den dood.*

*Jak. 1:13-15.*

Niemand zegge! . . . .

Ach, 't kon wel eens zijn, dat iemands booze natuur hem zou verleiden om zoo te spreken.

Men zou, met eene schijnbaar bindende, desniettemin foutieve en diep zondige redeneering, zooiets zelfs wel kunnen afleiden uit hetgeen Gods Woord hier in 't verband ons had geleerd.

Had Jakobus zijne lezers niet opgewekt om het toch vooral voor vreugde, voor groote vreugde, voor louter vreugde de achten, als ze in velerlei verzoeking en vallen? En had hij in het onmiddelijk verband niet nogmaals gezegd, dat die man zalig is, die de verzoeking verdraagt, daar hij, als hij beproefd zal zijn geweest, de kroon des levens ontvangen zal?

Hoe gemakkelijk, hoe als vanzelf, hoe geheel logisch geredeneerd scheen het dan wel, om een stap verder te gaan, en te zeggen: "als ik verzocht wordt, dan word ik van God verzocht." Hoe geheel in dezelfde richting, als waarin Gods Woord zelf in het verband had gewezen, scheen zulk een stap! De verzoeking is eene oorzaak van groote vreugde. Ze zijn dan ook van God. Alles, ook de verleiding tot zonde staat onder Gods oppermachtig bestuur. Als ik dus verzocht word, ook als die verzoeking haar booze vrucht der zonde in mij voortbrengt, dan is zij nog altijd van God. We moeten

immers Gods souvereiniteit handhaven en belijden ten einde toe? Ergo, ik word van God verzocht!

't Loopt als vanzelf! . . . .

Er schijnt geen ontkomen aan.

Zelfs schijnt het, alsof men in diezelfde richting nog een stap verder nemen moet.

Ook dan immers, als wij verzocht worden tot het booze einde, zoodat we in 't slijk der zonde ons wentelen, is de verzoeking altijd nog van God, en blijft ze nog steeds een oorzaak van groote vreugde. God doet het goede er uit voortkomen, en aan het einde van dien weg der verzoeking ligt de kroon des levens. Laat ons dan de verzoeking om haars zelfs wil zoeken, navolgen, voor groote vreugde achten, en laat ons het kwade doen, opdat het goede er uit voortkome! . . . .

Niemand zegge!

Wacht u er wel voor om zoo te spreken!

Want in de eerste plaats is het niets minder dan Gods slastering om in den Heilige, den Vader der lichten, van Wien immers alle goede gave en volmaakte gifte afdaalt, de bron en oorzaak uwer zonde te zoeken, en Hem den eigelijken Verleider te heeten.

In de tweede plaats is zulk spreken niet de vrucht van eene logische en bindende redeneering, maar van uw booze natuur en vleeschelijke lusten.

En in de derde plaats, zoudt ge den weg door uw spreken aangeduid nu ook inslaan, en ten einde toe bewandelen, dan zoudt ge aan het einde niet de kroon des levens, maar den dood vinden, de eeuwige rampzaligheid.

Laat het u dus gezegd zijn: wacht u wel, dat ge al-zoo niet spreekt!

Ook al schijnt het u, onder den invloed van uw boos vleesch, nog zoo zuiver toe, om aldus te redeneeren, spreek zoo nimmer!

Niemand zegge: ik word van God verzocht!

Het zij verre!

God verzoekt niemand!

Hij kan niet met het kwade omgaan.

Mocht het u ooit toeschijnen, alsof het met volkomen zekerheid beredeneerd kon worden, dat God u verzoekt tot het kwade, ga dan toch vooral even met uwe redeneering op God terug!

Ge had het immers met God te doen?

Ge wildet immers, in geheel uwe redeneering van God uitgaan. Ge beredeneerdet immers, dat God de hooge en absoluut Souverein is, Die alles met volkomen vrijmacht bestuurt, zonders Wiens wil er in 't gansch heelal niets geschiedt, Die ook alle booze machten onderwerpt aan Zijnen wil, en alzoo bestiert, dat ze zich zonder of tegen Zijnen wil niet kunnen roeren of bewegen?

Welnu, in die bedoeling zijt ge te prijzen.

Uw fout ligt niet daarin, dat ge in geheel uw den en leven wilt uitgaan van God. Integendeel, dat is het beste, het veiligste, dat ge doen kunt.

Maar wel lag uw fout daar, dat ge juist niet van God uitgingt!

O zeker, ge gingt wel uit van Gods vrijmacht en absolute souvereiniteit. Maar ge vergat daarbij; dat uw God niet een booze, maar de vlekkeloos heilige en goede Souverein is! Hij is een licht, en er is gansch geen duisternis in Hem! Hij wordt van het kwade niet verzocht, en daarom kan Hij dan ook niemand tot het kwade verzoeken.

Wat toch is een Verzoeker?

Hij is niet dezelfde, hij is de volkomen tegenstelling van een Beproefer.

O, het is waar, het oorspronkelijke woord, dat in den tekst, en in heel dit eerste hoofdstuk van Jakobus' brief voor verzoeking en beproeving wordt gebezigd is één en hetzelfde. Het is ook waar, dat naar den vorm verzoeking en beproeving veel gemeen hebben. Beide bestaan daarin, dat ze den weg der gerechtigheid, den weg van Gods Verbond, voor het vleesch moeilijk maken; en dat ze daarentegen den weg der zonde gemakkelijk en aantrekkelijk maken voor den ouden mensch. Ge wordt om Christus' wil gesmaad, gehaat, vervolgd, van naam en positie in de wereld beroofd, ge wordt als het ware van alle zijden geperst, om den weg des levens te verlaten, en dan naam uws Heilands te verloochenen; en ge wordt beproefd, maar ook verzocht. Eer en aanzien rijkdom en genot worden u aangeboden, als ge slechts een knieval wil maken voor den god dezer eeuw: en ge wordt beproefd, maar ook verzocht.

Eng is de poort, smal is de weg, die ten leven leidt.

Wijd is de poort, breed is de weg, die ten verderve voert. . . .

Maar zie nu, er is bij die overeenstemming in vorm, toch ook een diepgaand en principieel verschil tusschen beproeving en verzoeking.

Beproeving spreekt altijd de waarheid, verzoeking is van den vader der leugen. De beproeving stelt u wel voor de antithese; edoch, ze waarschuwt u, om in weerwil van allen tegenstand in den weg der these te blijven wandelen: "Gij zult daarvan niet eten!" En ook:

"Ten dage, dat gij daarvan eet, zult gij den dood sterven!" Maar de verzoeking spreekt de leugen: "de boom is begeerlijk, de vrucht is aantrekkelijk, goed om te eten, om wijs te maken." En ook: "Gij zult den dood niet sterven, gij zult als God zijn, kennende het goed en het kwaad!"

De beproeving is een daad der liefde. Ze wil u een beproefd karakter geven, lijdzaam maken, uw geloof versterken, u in de gelegenheid stellen om het kwade te overwinnen, om de genade Gods, die in u, op het heerlijkst tot openbaring te doen komen, tot prijs en eer en heerlijkheid in de openbaring van Jezus Christus. De verzoeking echter is een daad der vijandschap tegen God, en tegen u. Ze wil u afvoeren van den weg des levens, Gods werk in u verwoesten, Gods naam lasteren, u storten in het eeuwig verderf.

De verzoeker heeft het kwade lief en haat het goede. Hij is iemand, die zelf verzocht kan worden, en verzocht is geworden tot het kwade, door het kwade altijd weer wordt aangelokt, en daarom ook een behagen heeft in degenen, die met hem het kwaad beminnen en doen.

Maar hoe zoudt ge dan ooit van God kunnen zeggen, dat Hij u verzocht, tot het kwade verleidt? Zou Hij de leugen spreken, Hij, Die Zelf waarheid is? Zou Hij, Die een licht is, en in Wien gansch geen duisternis is, behagen scheppen in het kwade? Dat zij verre! God is de Heilige. Hij is het eeuwige inbegrip van alle oneindige volmaaktheden, van waarheid en gerechtigheid, van heiligheid en onbevleete en onbevlekkelijke reinheid, van liefde en genade, van schoonheid en liefelijkheid, van trouw en rechtmatigheid. En als de oneindig Goede bemint Hij Zichzelven, zoekt Hij in de allerhoogste openbaring van Zichzelven, ook in Zijn scepel, Zijn eigen eer. Hoe zou Hij dan ooit verzocht kunnen worden met het kwade?

O zeker, God is en blijft souverein, ook over de zonde!

Hij zet den goddelooze op gladde plaatsen, en stort hen in eeuwige verwoestingen. Hij doet de zonde tot openbaring komen als zonde. Van stuiting der ongerechtigheid is er bij Hem geen sprake. Hij geeft den zondaar, die Hem niet wil verheerlijken of danken, en die de waarheid van Zijne Zelfopenbaring in ongerechtigheid ten onder houdt, over in steeds dieper en vuiler slijk van ongerechtigheid. Hij werkt ook in op de booze lusten van den verwaten verachter van Zijn Verbond, zoodat die booze lusten in bepaalde richting werken, bepaalde vruchten voortbrengen, en de zondaar steeds meer verbaasd wordt, verliefdlijkt, en steeds met sneller schreden naar zijn eigen verderf voortholt. Zeker, ook de lust des vleesches werkt naar den wil van den oppersten Potentaat der potentaten!

Maar dan is de Souverein toch altijd de volkomen Heilige in al zijn doen!

Dan werkt Hij toch altijd in Zijn vreeselijken toorn over alle ongerechtigheid!

Ook zelfs, als ge in laatster instantie zegt, dat de zonde naar het souverain welbehagen van den opperhoogen God in de wereld is ingekomen, dan is ze daar alleen om te openbaren, dat Hij de zonde haat!

God is de Heilige!

Hij kan niet verzocht worden met het kwade. Hij Zelf verzoekt niemand!

Zeker, nog eens zij het gezegd, Hij is en blijft de Souvereine, ook als Hij Zijn eigen kind in de verzoeking leidt. Het is immers tot Hem, en tot Hem alleen, dat ge bidt: "Leidt ons niet in verzoeking!" Het was immers in laatster instantie Hij, Die David aanporde om het volk te tellen. Hij was het ook, Die Petrus deed neer storten van de hoogte zijns zelfvertrouwens, waarop hij wist te roemen: "Al zouden allen aan U geërgerd worden, ik nooit!" tot in de diepte van zonde en schande, waarin hij zichzelf liever vervloekte dan gerekend te worden tot de discipelen des Heilands.

En zoo kan Hij ook ons, als we niet waken en bidden, als we wat al te dicht bij het vuur der zonde spelen, in de verzoeking storten.

Maar ook dan blijft Hij de Heilige, Die nimmer behagen schept in, maar altijd vreeselijk toornst tegen de zonde.

En bovendien is het dan Zijne bedoeling, om ons met innerlijke afschuw tegen de zonde te vervullen, om ons te leeren waken en bidden, om ons weer, in het klare bewustzijn van eigen zwakheid, en van onze behoefte aan Zijne genade, het gebed op de lippen te leggen: "Leidt ons niet in de verzoeking, maar verlos ons van den booze!" En om ons alzo, met vreeze en beving, onze eigene zaligheid te doen uitwerken.

Ga dus gerust van God uit!

Ja, als ge meent, uit Gods souvereiniteit redeneerend, te mogen zeggen: Ik word van God verzocht," controleer dan uwe redeneering door op God terug te gaan!

Daar lag uw fout!

Want God is de Souvereine, ja, maar de souverain Heilige!

Hij kan niet verzocht worden met het kwade!

En Hij verzoekt niemand!

Begeerlijkheid. . . . zonde. . . . dood!

In die drie woorden ligt het geheim van de werking der verzoeking.

Vreeselijke werking, onvermijdelijk in haar proces, tenzij almachtige genade deze werking breekt!

Hier is van geen stuiting sprake. 't Gaat naar vaste wet: begeerlijkheid. . . . zonde. . . . dood! Alleen verbreking, opheffing dezer wet, door de genade Gods, die in Christus Jezus is, kan hier baten.

Maar zoo moet ge 't dan ook leeren zeggen. Zeg niet: "Ik word van God verzocht." Daarin ligt geen ontkoming aan de macht dier vreeselijke wet. Door

zoo te spreken geraakt ge slechts al meer verstrikt in de verlokkingen en verleidingen der zonde en des doods. Neen; ge moet uw schuld belijden, de schuld van uw begeerlijkheid, de schuld van uw verzocht worden tot het kwade, de schuld ook van uw dood. Ge moet uwe onmacht voor God uitschreeuwen: Ik ellendig mensch!

Begeerlijkheid. . . . zonde. . . . dood! De wet der zonde!

Begeerlijkheid: dat ziet op den geestelijk-zedelijken stand uws harten. 't Wil niet maar zeggen, dat ge begeert, wat uw eigendom niet is, doch het duidt aan de booze werking van uw natuurlijk bestaan, van uw hart, van uwe ziel, van uwen wil, van uw verstand, van alle uwe hartstochten en innerlijke neigingen, waardoor ge giert naar hetgeen tegen God ingaat, liefhebt, wat Hij haat, uitgaat naar alle boosheid en ongerechtigheid en vuilheid, naar de wereld-zonder-God, de begeerlijkheid des vleesch, de begeerlijkheid der oogen, en de grootheid des levens. En door die innerlijke begeerlijkheid, uwe *eigene* begeerlijkheid, wordt ge afgetrokken, en verlost om den weg des levens te verlaten, en den weg der ongehoorzaamheid aantrekkelijk te vinden en te bewandelen.

In die begeerlijkheid ligt de vruchtbare bodem, de moederschoot der zonde.

Daarin valt, daarin wordt ontvangen het zaad der verzoeking, de verleiding van het schijnschoon der wereld, de ingevingen des duivels. . . .

En zij baart de zonde.

De begeerlijkheid ontvangen hebbende baart zonde! En let er wel op, dit is eene vaste wet. Deze ontvangenis en baring falen nimmer. Als het zaad der verzoeking, uit eene wereld, die in het booze ligt, in den vruchtbaren bodem der begeerlijkheid van de zondige natuur valt, dan ontvangt deze gewis, dan ontkiemt het zaad zonder faal, dan is de daad der zonde de zekere, onvermijdelijke vrucht. O zeker, die begeerlijkheid is ook zonde, uwe zonde! En dat die begeerlijkheid door de verleiding bevrucht wordt, dat is ook zonde, uwe zonde! En dat het nu tot de daad der zonde komt, tot de daad van de zondige gedachte, van de zondige hartstocht, van het daadwerkelijke zondige begeeren; straks ook tot de daad van het zondige woord, het zondige handelen, — dat is ook *uwe zonde*. . . .

En de zonde, voleindigd zijnde, baart den dood!

Ach, de dood zat er reeds in van den beginne, ook reeds in de begeerlijkheid. De zondaar gaat zwanger van den dood. Doch de laatste wordt, als eeuwige dood, niet gebaard, totdat de vrucht voldragen is!

Begeerlijkheid. . . . zonde. . . . dood!

Vreeselijke, onvermijdelijke wet der zonde en des doods!

Gebroken door het kruis van den Zoon Gods!

O God, wees mij zondaar genadig!

H. H.

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## EDITORIALS

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### The Rouge Of Grace

In *The Key* of Jan. 1, 1946, p. 52, we found the following sentiments expressed by the Rev. H. J. Evenhouse:

"In the brief story of the house which was worse in the end than prior to its cleansing, Jesus tells us that refinement without regeneration and conversion simply increases the devil's potentialities. A cultured and learned unbeliever is a better tool for Satan than an unlearned man. We may well ask ourselves how this applies to modern education. We strive to give everyone education and underneath is the supposition that advanced understanding will offer improvement. But we should also see that with our modern godless education the devil's facilities are being greatly enhanced. A godless educated America will be seven-fold worse than the ignorant pagan nations ever were. We believe in Common Grace but let us never forget that it is not much more than some rouge over the face of modern civilization."

Thus far the Rev. Evenhouse.

Needless to say that we quite well agree with the general sentiments expressed in the above quotation.

We think that the Rev. Evenhouse sees considerable light. He is not far from the truth.

Had it not been for the last sentence, I would simply have offered him a word of thanks in our paper, and inquired of him whether it were not time for him to apply for membership in the Protestant Reformed Churches.

That last sentence, however, cannot pass without comment.

Had the writer simply put the words common grace in quotation marks, indicating that he would not be held responsible for them, and then written: "Let us never forget that 'common grace' is not much more than some rouge over the face of modern civilization," we might still let it pass, although even then we could not agree with it. What is called "common grace" is much worse, and much more serious than a little rouge.

But now he writes in one breath that *he believes in common grace*, and that *it is not much more than a little rouge*. And the serious implication of this statement is not so much that the writer believes in rouge, but that he believes that grace is rouge, and that rouge is ever grace. That is, indeed, a serious statement. For we dare not forget that this rouge is applied by

the Holy Spirit, according to the decisions of the churches (Church, according to the editor of *The Banner*) of one of which the Rev. Evenhouse is pastor.

I take it, that when he writes "we believe in Common Grace," he refers to the faith of the Christian Reformed Churches, adopted in 1924. And the particular tenet of faith to which he must have reference is expressed in the second and third points of doctrine adopted by the Synod of those churches in Kalamazoo.

Now, these two points taken together plainly teach:

1. That there is an operation of the Holy Spirit apart from regeneration, not renewing the heart, by which sin is restrained in the individual and in the community.
2. That, as a result of this gracious operation of the Holy Spirit, the natural man is able to do civil good, which means that he is able to live a relatively good world life.

To this the Rev. Evenhouse refers when he declares that "we believe in Common Grace."

He believes, therefore, that "common grace" is the fruit of a gracious operation of the Holy Spirit.

And he would call this little more than rouge?

Does the Holy Spirit cover iniquity with a little rouge, in order to make it a lie, and render it deceitfully pretty, beautiful, attractive? Is the appearance of a whore to be ascribed to an operation of the Holy Spirit?

To ask these questions is to answer them.

And to answer them positively would be little less than blasphemous.

I think the author ought to revise that statement. In what way he should amend it, whether by denying the "common grace" part, or retracting the statement that it is little more than rouge, must be left to him. As it stands it should not remain.

The Holy Spirit does not work with rouge.

H. H.

## The Liberated Churches In The Netherlands

(continued from p. 199)

The children of the promise are counted for the seed.

But who are these children of the promise?

We may note that, in Rom. 9, they are designated by four different terms: Israel, the seed, children of the promise, and children of God.

They are called Israel: "For they are not all Israel which are of Israel." The meaning is, evidently: all the descendants of Israel (Jacob) are not true Israel. The first *Israel*, therefore, does not denote the Jews

but the true Israel of God. And, in view of the fact that in these words a reason is offered for the statement in the first part of this verse, we may paraphrase the whole verse as follows: "The word of God concerning the promise has not become of none effect, for the promise concerns only the true Israel, and was never meant for all the natural seed of Jacob." The view, therefore, of the leaders of the Liberated Churches, as if God, by promise, bequeaths the blessings of salvation upon all the children of believers, is plainly contradicted in Rom. 9:6.

Secondly, this true Israel is called *the seed*. In vs. 7 the apostle quotes the word of God to Abraham: "in Isaac shall thy seed be called." And this he explains in vs. 8 as meaning: "They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." Again, it is plain that there is only one seed of Abraham, *the seed*. And to this seed, in distinction from the children of the flesh, the promises pertain. This *seed* is, centrally, Christ. For thus the apostle writes in Gal. 3:16: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made, He saith not, And to seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." In the broader sense this seed comprehends all that are in Christ, but none other. *The seed*, for whom the promises are meant, cannot be said to include all the natural children of Abraham, or all the children of believers in the new dispensation. They are Christ and His brethren.

Thirdly, they are called *children of the promise*. Again, let us notice at once that the children of the promise are definitely not all the children of Abraham, not all the descendants of Jacob, for "they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." They are counted as "the seed" *in the promise*, in the word of God to Abraham. This is especially to be noted. The Word of God is not become of none effect. When God says to Abraham: "I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and *thy seed after thee*. . . . to be a God unto thee and *to thy seed after thee*," the question arises: who is this seed of Abraham? Who are meant in the promise? The apostle answers: not the children of the flesh, not all the natural descendants of Abraham, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. And what may be meant by that expression? Does it mean: the children that accept the promise? Evidently not, for they are meant by the promise before they were born. All the children of the flesh were never meant. Does it, then, simply mean: the children for whom the promise is meant, the seed, true Israel? It does; yet, it means more than that. It also expresses the idea that they are spiritual children that are born in virtue of the power of the promise. Abraham could not



bring forth children of the flesh. But God realized the power of promise in them, and made them spiritual children of God. They are those in whom the promise of salvation is realized. A comparison of this passage in Rom. 9 with Gal. 4:23, 28, will prove this view. There the apostle writes: "But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh: but he of the freewoman was born of the promise." The phrase "by promise" means, according to the original, through the promise. Isaac was born through the promise, by the power of the promise. And so are the spiritual children of the covenant in the new dispensation: "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of the promise." vs. 28. And that this does, indeed, refer to spiritual birth is evident from vs. 29: "But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now." The phrase "children of the promise," therefore, considers the true Israel, the seed, not from the viewpoint of their faith and acceptance of the promise, but: 1. From the viewpoint of the fact that it is they and they only that are meant in the promise; and 2. From the viewpoint of their being born, not of the flesh, but of the Spirit, through the power of the promise of God.

And so, finally, the children of the promise are children of God. They are those whom God adopted to be His children, whose adoption is realized in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and in whom the adoption is spiritually fulfilled through the grace of God.

But the apostle advances his argument, to prove that the word of God has not become of none effect, one step further. If there could be any doubt left that it is not the faith of the promise of believers that renders them worthy of the name "children of the promise, but God's own free and sovereign determination, this doubt is removed by what the apostle writes in verses ten to thirteen of the ninth chapter of Romans. The example of Isaac already showed clearly that not all the children of the flesh are counted for the seed. But now the apostle refers to another example, that of Jacob and Esau: "And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the promise of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth); It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."

This should settle the question.

Was Esau also a child of the promise? Certainly not according to the meaning the ninth chapter of the Romans attaches to that term.

Was, he, then, a child of the promise in the sense that, on God's part, the promise was also for him? To use the language which the leaders of the Liberated

Churches are wont to employ, could Rebecca say to Esau: "My son, the promise of God is sure, and it is for you. God gives you the birthright, has established His covenant with you, and bequeaths upon you all the blessings of salvation"? And did he fail to become a child of the promise in reality only because he refused to accept the promise?

No true exegesis of Romans 9:10-13 can yield that result. Jacob alone was the child of the promise, and that, too, by God's sovereign election. And when not Esau, but Jacob receives the promise, the word of God is not become of none effect.

The promise of God is for the elect only.

And the realization of the promise is never contingent upon the will of man.

It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God which sheweth mercy!

That must suffice for us.

And if we depart from this, attempt to go beyond this, and try to say something positive as to the salvation of all the children of believers, we depart from Scripture, present the word of God as becoming of none effect in them that are lost, and leave the Reformed track.

H. H.

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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 XIX

Q. 50. Why is it added, "and sitteth at the right hand of God?"

A. Because Christ is ascended into heaven for this end, that he might there appear as head of his church, by whom the Father governs all things.

Q. 51. What profit is the glory of Christ, our head, unto us?

A. First, that by his Holy Spirit he pours out heavenly graces upon us his members; and then that by his power he defends and preserves us against all enemies.

Q. 52. What comfort is it to thee that Christ "shall come again to judge the quick and the dead?"

A. That in all my sorrows and persecutions with uplifted head I look for the very same person, who

before offered himself for my sake, to the tribunal of God, and has removed all curse from me, to come as judge from heaven: who shall cast all his and my enemies into everlasting condemnation, but shall translate me with all his chosen ones to himself, into heavenly joys and glory.

## 1.

## Our Exalted Lord

In this Lord's Day, the Catechism explains the second part of the sixth article of the *Apostolicum*: "and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty"; and the whole of article seven: "From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead."

Thus the Catechism separates the ascension into heaven from the sitting at the right hand of God, which are combined into one article of faith in the Apostolic Confession.

The purpose of this is not to separate the two truths, or the two stages in the exaltation of our Lord, mentioned in this article, but rather to bring out that, although they are closely related, they are, nevertheless to be distinguished from each other. The ascension of Christ into heaven is the way unto His exaltation at the right hand of God; the latter is the end, the goal, of the former. The ascension was, no doubt, necessary unto the sitting at the right hand. In fact, we may safely say that, in the exaltation at the right hand of God, the entire glorification of the Saviour beginning in the resurrection, finds its goal. And yet, the ascension and the sitting at the right hand, though so closely related, must be distinguished, and deserve a separate discussion. It is evident that the ascension is not the same as the exaltation at the right hand of God. It is possible to ascend to heaven, as in the case of believers, without being exalted to that highest position of power and glory that is indicated by the figure of sitting at the Right Hand.

Of this highest exaltation of the Christ, Scripture speaks very frequently, and with great emphasis.

It was clearly predicted in the old dispensation. Especially the psalms look forward to this universal king. In the Second Psalm we read of the eternal decree concerning this exaltation: "the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son: this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." vss. 7-9. If we read the Eighth Psalm in the light of Hebrews 2:6-10, it becomes plain that it speaks of this same dominion and power of our Lord: "For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands;

thou hast put all things under his feet." vss. 5, 6. In Ps. 24, the people of God sing of the King of glory, Who is Himself the Lord of hosts, but Who ascends into the holy hill of Zion, and before Whom the everlasting doors must be lifted up that He may come in. And in this general way, many more of the psalms, such as the forty-fifth, the seventy second, the eighty ninth, and others, speak of the glorification of the Servant of Jehovah, the theocratic king, the Christ of God. Moreover, the sitting at the right hand of God is literally mentioned in Ps. 110: "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." vs. 1.

The Old Testament prophets, too, direct the hopeful eye of God's people to this future exaltation and glory of the Messiah. For Jehovah's servant "shall deal prudently; he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. As many as were astonished at thee, his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men, So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider." Isa. 52:13-15. Daniel "saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Dan. 7:13, 14. It is true that this passage looks even unto the second coming of our Lord, but so that His exaltation at the right hand of God is included in the scope of the vision. Zechariah is enjoined to take silver and gold of them which were of the captivity, and to "make crowns, and set them upon the head of Joshua, the son of Josedeck, the high priest; And speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is the BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord: Even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." Zech. 6:12, 13. That God's priest, the Servant of Jehovah, shall be crowned with glory and honor, and be exalted to the kingdom, is clearly predicted in this passage.

It is hardly necessary to demonstrate that this truth is strongly emphasized in the New Testament. The Lord Himself, in the hour of His deepest humiliation, mentions his coming exaltation before the high priest: "Hereafter ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." Matt. 26:64. The disciples saw His power

and coming, and were eyewitnesses of His majesty, when they were with Him in the holy mount. II Pet. 1:16-18. And of that glory and majesty they speak very emphatically in their preaching of the gospel. In that wonderful sermon preached on the day of Pentecost, the apostle proclaimed: "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made this same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." Acts 2:33-36. And again, before the high priest and the counsel, he declares: "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Acts 5:30, 31.

In the epistles, too, the truth of Christ's exaltation at the right hand of God is repeatedly emphasized. For "it is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Rom. 8:34. "For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him." I Cor. 15:25-27. In that marvellous first chapter of the epistle to the Ephesians, the exaltation of Christ is presented as the revelation of God's great power: "And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward 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 heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." Eph. 1:19-21. And in Phil. 2:9-11, His great exaltation is described in the following words: "Wherefore God hath also highly exalted him, and hath given him a name which is above every name: That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth: And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Virtually, the whole epistle to the Hebrews is devoted to the exposition of the theme that God "hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the world; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the

Majesty on high; Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they." Heb. 1:2-4.

We quoted all these passages, not so much to demonstrate that the confession concerning the sitting of Christ at the right hand of God is Scriptural, as to bring out that the Bible lays great stress on this truth.

The sitting at the right hand is everywhere presented as a goal that has been reached.

It signifies that the first begotten of the dead has assumed his position as the firstborn of every creature.

Let us try, in the light of all that Scripture teaches us concerning it, to understand a little of the glorious mystery.

What is meant by the figurative expression: "sitting at the right hand of God?"

That it is, indeed, a figurative expression, we all understand at once, God has no right hand in the material sense of the word, even though, in another sense, it may be said that His alone is *the* right hand, and that our right hand is but an infinitesimally small picture of His. The expression, therefore, is not to be understood in a local sense: there is no particular spot in heaven that is indicated by the phrase: at the right hand of God; and Christ does not literally sit down in that place.

All the passages that speak of this highly exalted position of Christ show plainly that by the figure of sitting at the right hand of God is meant a position of power and might, of authority and dominion, of majesty and glory; and that, too, of universal and of the very highest power and authority and might and dominion. It denotes that Christ is Lord over all, that He is exalted over all created things, in heaven, on earth, and under the earth. It signifies that He is raised to the very pinnacle of all created things. As the Catechism expresses it briefly but succinctly: "that he might there appear as the head of his church, by whom the Father governs all things."

He received a name that is above every name.

This can only mean that there is, in all the wide creation, no creature over which the exalted Christ does not sway His sceptre, which He does not hold in His power, and which He does not render subservient to His will and purpose. Brute creation as well as the rational creature, sun and moon and stars, rain and sunshine, fruitful and barren years, forest and field, hills and valleys, rivers and floods, the beasts of the forest and the cattle on a thousand hills, sickness and health, life and death, war and peace; but also men and angels, the wicked and the good, the powers of darkness as well as the glorious spirits in heaven, — all things have been subjected under His feet. He has received from God the Father *authority* to exercise this dominion over all the works of the Almighty, the *right*, the *prerogative* to rule, to subject all creatures to His



will, to use them for His purpose, to judge and to execute judgment over all; and also the *power*, the wisdom and might, the knowledge and ability, to realize this dominion. And no one and nothing escapes this power, or can escape the sway of His sceptre. All the powers and principalities in heaven are subject unto Him, and they willingly and gladly obey His command, and wait upon His word; but also all the powers of darkness, in spite of themselves, are subject unto Him, and can but execute His will. Even Satan and all the demons of his domain tremble at His word, and all their intended and attempted opposition against him is vain. Christ is Lord, the only Lord of heaven and earth!

As He Himself declared to His apostles: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Matt. 28:18.

However, even so, no matter how great and glorious and universal we may, in the light of Scripture, conceive this authority and might of the Lord Christ to be, it is necessary carefully to distinguish it from the divine power and rule of the triune God, and therefore, also from the power which Christ, as the Son of God, in and according to His divine nature, possesses and exercises in Himself, and from all eternity.

For, clearly, the authority and power denoted by the sitting at the right hand of God is not original but derivative, it is not eternal but was bestowed on Christ after His resurrection; and, therefore, however glorious and great it may be, it is not divine but belongs in the creaturely sphere.

It signifies an official position to which Christ is appointed and exalted.

The truth of this is evident from the expression itself: *sitteth at the right hand of God*. For, surely, by the figurative denotation of Christ's glory cannot be meant that the Son, in His divine nature, *sitteth at the right hand of the Father*, the first Person of the Holy Trinity; it can only mean that Christ sits at the right hand of *the triune God*. As Son, in His divine nature, He does not sit at the right hand of God, but He is very God Himself. If we conceive of Him as the Son in relation to the Father, through Whom all things were made, and by Whom they are still sustained and governed, we may even say that *He is the right hand of the Father*. But it can never be said of Him that He sits at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven in His divine nature.

Besides, the sitting at the right hand of God denotes a power that is *given* to Christ. "All power is *given* unto me in heaven and in earth," He declares. God hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name. But from this it follows, first, that this power cannot refer to any attribute of His divine nature, for in that nature the Son of God is almighty, and in Himself possesses all power and authority for ever; and, secondly, that the expression

"*sitteth at the right hand of God*" cannot denote divine power, for upon the human nature no divine power and glory can possibly be bestowed. As Son of God He could not *receive* power; and as the Son of man He could not become the participant of *divine* power.

In speaking, therefore, of this stage in the exaltation of Christ, it is necessary that we carefully distinguish, first, between Christ according to His divine and according to His human nature; and, secondly, between the power which He possesses in Himself as the eternal Son of God, and the power that was bestowed upon Him when He was exalted at the right hand of God.

And yet, we dare not so draw these lines of distinction that we separate the human from the divine nature, or even the power which He exercises as the exalted Christ from His divine omnipotence and Lordship. For it must be maintained that only the Son of God in human nature could be exalted to that glorious position that is figuratively expressed in the words "*sitteth at the right hand of God*."

The Apostolic Confession began its declarations concerning Christ with the words: "And in Jesus Christ, *the only begotten Son of God*." These words constitute the basis for all the rest of what the orthodox Church confesses concerning Jesus Christ. Remove that basis, deny it, and you have nothing left of the faith of the Church. Then you cannot continue your confession, and say: "our Lord." Then all His suffering has no more significance than any human passion. Then His death on the cross does not have the power of atonement, and His resurrection is a myth. And then it will also be impossible to culminate it all with the confession that He now sits at the right hand of God.

Hence, in regard to the exaltation of our Lord to the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, we must carefully exclude every possibility of misunderstanding and error, by saying that it is the only begotten Son of God in human nature that was so exalted. Christ is very God and real man in unity of divine Person. The human nature can never be separated from the Person of the Son, neither can the two natures be separated from each other. They have their union in the Person. Hence, it is the Person of the Son of God in human nature that tabernacled among us, that spoke to us face to face, that suffered and died on the cross, that was buried and raised from the dead. And it is the same Person of the Son of God Who, in the human nature, ascended into heaven, and Who, again in the human nature, was exalted to His glorious position at the right hand of God.

Not the divine nature, but the human nature was glorified and endowed with power.

Yet, in that human nature, it was the Person of the Son of God that was so highly exalted.

H. H.

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## THROUGH THE AGES

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### Canossa

As was observed, throughout the Roman Catholic Church, the king and the temporal princes or lay rulers dominated the clergy by their appointing the bishops and the abbots and investing them with their office. This practice, it was noticed — a practice known as “Lay Investiture” — was attended by a great evil. In the appointment of bishops, the king would be led by political or social considerations. Or, as was observed, to replenish his depleted purse, he would sell the office to the highest bidder. It meant that “lay investiture” went hand in hand with the sin of simony, which, as we saw, is the abuse of buying or selling the sacred office with a price. It was also explained that Hildebrand (Gregory VII) both as a maker of popes and in his own name, tried hard to remove this evil by forbidding the king and all lay rulers to have anything to do with the appointment of bishops. As was explained, the pope’s prohibition did not strike at the root of the abuse, which was that, through the centuries the Roman hierarchy, by means that were foul, had become amazingly rich, and that, in consequence thereof, the office of bishop was being coveted by unprincipled men. In Germany as was observed, there arose a powerful opposition to the Hildebrandian polity, which finally led to the conflict between Henry IV and Hildebrand. It is that conflict to which we now have regard.

As was said, Hildebrand forbade all lay rulers to have anything to do with the appointment of bishops and with investing them with their office in token that they received their temporal power and their lands as grants from them. The decree further declared that the extensive lands, which, up to this time, the Roman hierarchy had held as fiefs of the emperor, through the monarch’s right of election, are the absolute and exclusive properties of the church and therefore should be free from the overlordship of the lay rulers. Hence, it declared, did this decree, that the clergy alone were invested with the power of electing the bishops, who were confirmed by the pope, the temporal sovereign being without a voice in the matter. It is clear from this decree that what Hildebrand strove after is not merely the removal of the abuse of simony but the complete independence of the hierarchy’s vast temporal domains as well. Were the bishops, in their capacity of temporal rulers, the vassals of the king or of the pope? Did they belong also under the jurisdiction of the emperor? This and not the abuse of simony formed one of the fundamental issues in the war over investiture.

Seeing now that it was the age of feudalism and that also the church, as to its domains, was feudalized, in a word, seeing that the bishops were also temporal rulers, and in this capacity, sought and enjoyed the protection of the crown, the domains of the church did not belong under the jurisdiction of the crown, and the monarch was entitled to a voice in the election of bishops. Closely connected with this issue was still another; namely, whether the jurisdiction of the church extended over the civil magistrates, *in their capacity of lay rulers*, whether, in a word, the pope might lay claim to the right of deposing them. These were the issues. But they were obscured by the abuse of simony. They were obscured, further, by the worthlessness of Henry IV, as man and as king. And as a result of his tyrannies as king most every noble in Germany had turned against him. As to Hildebrand, it appeared to him a thing absolutely settled, that the pope had jurisdiction over the king, in the latter’s capacity of temporal ruler. He asked whether Christ, when He committed to Peter the feeding of His flock, the power to bind and to loose, made any exception in favor of princes. His error was that he identified church and state, excommunication out of the Christian Church and deposition from civil office; the person of the king in his capacity of member of the Church, and the person of the king in his capacity of lay ruler. Hildebrand’s errors were explained to him by those of better insight. They told him that the power of princes is one founded in a divine order, and subsists independently by itself. They pointed out to him, further, that the apostles had shown obedience even to pagan magistrates and that the ancient bishops and popes had never entertained a thought of deposing even idolatrous and heretical princes.

But Hildebrand would not allow himself to be instructed. Yet, on the other hand, as we shall see, when convenience dictated he knew very well how to distinguish between excommunication and deposition from civil office. It is most difficult to make out Hildebrand. Doubtless it is not true that he was a consummate hypocrite, posing as a lover of righteousness and as a champion of true reform, though he knew, as well as it can be known, that all the while he was proceeding on wrong principles of thought. But considering his ridiculous claims, mindful of his purposes and the unsavory methods which he employed for the attainment of his purposes, it seems just as unlikely that, at the heart of his dispositions, there could dwell the firm conviction that the principles of thought from which he acted, were according to truth and that subjectively he was not driven by a lust of power but truly sought God’s glory. Fact is, that Hildebrand all the while distinguished between excommunication and deposition from civil office. Having twice excommunicated Henry, he twice freed all the king’s subjects from their oath

of allegiance to him. The latter was deposition from civil office. According to Hildebrand, the two must go hand in hand, and the pope, and he only, is vested with power to do both. That was his error. The office of pope is not a divine institution, but it is the sinful creation of man.

At first Henry, to return to him, submitted to Hildebrand in the matter of appointment of bishops; for the position of the young king was insecure on account of his misrule. The Saxon nobles, whom especially had provoked, were in rebellion. But with the rebellion subdued, he allowed himself to be influenced by the advice of the anti-Hildebrandian party to defy the pope and free himself from his yoke. Thus he paid his soldiers from the proceeds of the extensive lands of the hierarchy, which were supposed to be tax-free and went to filling vacant bishoprics in Italy and Germany. Hildebrand, hearing of it, wrote to Henry an admonitory letter in which he exhorted the king to obedience as it became a Christian prince. Henry was violently indignant. He now took a bold step. He would rid himself of the pope by having him deposed. Accordingly, with his anti-Hildebrandian bishops and abbots he held a synod at Worms for that purpose. But it was not a small matter to depose a pope like Hildebrand. Account had to be taken of religious sentiment of the multitudes. These dignitaries assembled in Worms knew that, in the eyes of the great majority of men, the pope, due to his position — he was held to be the vicar of Christ in church and state — had acted within his rights and that his dealings with Henry, the simoniac king, were just. So the synod deposed Hildebrand, without a hearing, on the ground of the fabricated charges of treason, witchcraft, covenant with the devil and sexual impurity — charges preferred by the turncoat Hugo Blancus (Hugh the White). And as if this was not enough, it was asserted that he ruled the church by a synod of women. The feeling toward Hildebrand on the part of a large section of the German clergy and the king was that bitter. The latter hated him on account of his war against lay investiture, and the former on account of his relentless war against a priestly marriage.

Hildebrand now took action. He excommunicated Henry, deposed him as king, and freed all his subjects from allegiance to him. The ban, which he published in a letter to all Christians is as follows:

“Blessed Peter, prince of all the apostles, incline thine ear unto me, and hear me, thy servant, whom from childhood thou didst nurse and protect against the wicked of this day. Thou and my lady, the mother of God, and thy brother St. Paul, are my witnesses that the holy Roman church, has drawn me to the helm against my will, and that I have not risen up like a robber to my seat.

Rather would I have been a pilgrim my whole life long than have snatched to myself thy chair on account of temporal glory and in a worldly spirit. . . . By thy intercession God has intrusted me with the power to bind and to loose on earth and in heaven.

“Therefore, relying on this trust, for the honor and security of the Church, in the name of the Almighty Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, I do prohibit Henry, king, son of Henry the emperor, from ruling the kingdom of the Teutons and of Italy, because with unheard of pride he has lifted himself up against the church; and I release all Christians from the oath of allegiance to him which they have taken, or shall take, and I forbid that any shall serve him as king. For it is fitting that he who will touch the dignity of the church should lose his own. And inasmuch as he has despised obedience by associating with the excommunicated, by many deeds of iniquity, and by spurning the warnings which I have given him for his good, I bind him to the bands of anathema; that all nations of the earth may know that thou art Peter, and that upon thy rock the Son of the living God hath built His Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

Henry replied by a letter bespeaking a fierce rage:

“Henry, king not by usurpation, but by God’s holy ordanance, to Hildebrand, not pope but false monk. How darest thou, who won by thy power through craft, flattery and bribery, and force, stretch forth thy hand against the Lord’s anointed, despising the precepts of the true pope, St. Peter: ‘Fear God, honor the king?’ Thou, who dost not fear God, dishonorest me whom he has appointed. Condemned by the voice of our bishops, quit the apostolic chair, and let another take it, who will preach the sound doctrine of Peter, and not do violence under the clock of religion. I, Henry, by the grace of God, king, with all my bishops say unto thee, Come down, come down.”

According to another variation of Henry’s letter, he exhorted Hildebrand to come down and be damned throughout all eternity.

The wrath of Henry can be explained. Hildebrand’s claim to jurisdiction over the temporal rulers of the earth, to the right to enthrone or dethrone them as convenience dictated, and to bestow their kingdoms on whom soever he chose, — this claim had nothing better to support it than Hildebrand’s own theories. Yet, he not only excommunicated Henry out of the Christian church, but he very actually deposed him in his office of king. He did so by freeing all the king’s subjects from their oath of allegiance to him. The

fiery letter of Henry, however censurable in the point of view of Christian ethics, was a protest against the theory of Hildebrand, according to which God had placed in the hands of the pope the two swords — the spiritual to be born directly by the hierarchy and the temporal to be wielded by the hierarchy, definitely the pope, through the agency of the state. And why did Hildebrand depose Henry? The king had gone to appointing the bishops in his realm. As was said, the wrong or right of this doing formed one of the issues in the war over investiture, the other issue being whether the pope might depose lay rulers. But the profligate Henry had no moral right to start a war with the pope on these issues. Through his misdeeds he had lost that right. He should first repent of his own sins, also of the sin of appointing unworthy bishops, a doing by which he had given offence.

Henry, the excommunicated and deposed king and the deposer of the great Hildebrand was unafraid, for he felt certain that the religious sentiment of the age would sustain him and not the pope. But he soon found that he was mistaken. The party favoring Hildebrand instantly drew away from the king, as could be expected. But the number of those who went over to that party was constantly increasing, and Henry became afraid. It shows that the pope's ban had produced a profound effect in Germany. Men in that age were filled with dread for the thunderings of the pope, though they might otherwise hate him. Especially did they stand in awe of the wrath of a pope like Hildebrand — a man zealous for the Lord, it was believed, and a man at whose heart the true interests of the church lay very close. Besides, as was said, the young Henry — he was still young at the time — was a bad king. He was deeply depraved. He treated the Saxons with utmost scorn, and oppressed the country with enforced labor and taxes. Though married to a young, beautiful, virtuous, and amiable woman, Bertha, the daughter of the margrave Odo of Turim, he filled his palace with mistresses, and sought to divorce his wife. It is to the great credit of Hildebrand that he refused to give his consent, and the king, frustrated in his wicked intention, bestowed his love upon his worthy wife. Finally, Germany was divided into tribal states, ruled by dukes or nobles, many of whom were hostile to Henry partly on account of his ill-treatment of them and partly because, being jealous of their own rights, they wanted no king to rule over them, and therefore they thought to use Henry's predicament permanently to rid themselves of him. Henry was deserted by his subjects almost to a man. They avoided him as one effected by a plague. All his enemies found an excuse for their treason in the pope's ban. So, on October 16, 1076, the Swabian and Saxon princes assembled in Tibur and agreed that a diet should be held at Augsburg, Feb. 2, 1077, under the presidency of the pope;

there all accusations against the king should be presented, and then, after the pope had heard what both parties had to say, the decision should be left to him as to whether Henry should be permanently deposed. And, of course, they were not doubtful as to the outcome of the trial. Henry would lose his crown, they would see to that. It was also agreed, that if he obtained not the pope's absolution within a year, he would thereby forfeit his throne. And they felt certain that the king would not succeed in this. In order to make it impossible for Henry to free himself from the excommunication, he was commanded to take up his residence in Spire to be deprived there of any mode of communion with the pope. Henry agreed to all these conditions proposed to him. The king was in a desperate situation. If he were not freed from the ban by the pope by the time of the meeting of the next diet, he would not be allowed to leave his prison to appear on that assembly in defence of himself, or, if allowed to appear there, it would be as one excommunicated, thus on an unequal footing with his accusers. In his desperation, the king finally decided to escape to Italy and, by tears, self-abasement, and confession, wring from the pope an absolution. But there was no time to lose, as the diet was but a few weeks away. Shortly before Christmas, in the dead of the winter, Henry secretly set out on a journey across the Alps to implore the pope at any price to raise the interdict. His only companions were his ever faithful wife and her infant son, and a solitary knight. The journey across the Alps, which was made by mother and child in rough sledges of oxhide drawn by horses, was perilous on account of the icy slopes, but no human lives were lost. The Anti-Hildebrandian party in Lombardy welcomed the king with joy. But he hastened on to meet Hildebrand, who alone could absolve him. The pope, already on his journey to Augsburg, was stopping in the strong castle of Canossa, belonging to his faithful supporter, the Countess Matilda of Tuscany. At the foot of the castle-steep Henry talked with Matilda and Hugo, abbot of Cluny, his godfather, and expressed his willingness to yield to the pope in the matter of lay investiture, if only he was released from excommunication. But Hildebrand consented to lift the sentence only on condition that Henry give him his crown and renounce his throne never again to lay claim to it. The king replied by an act of severest self-abasement to which the pope must respond by absolving him. The cold was severe and snow covered the ground. Yet on three successive days Henry stood in the court, with head and feet bare, clad in a coarse woollen shirt, and knocked for entrance. The pope refused to open to him, despite the earnest pleading of Matilda and Hugo. He was well aware that Henry merely went through the motions of penance for the sake of the crown; and the pope wanted that crown for himself. And he felt certain

that on the approaching diet the German nobles would provide him with enough evidence of Henry's incapacity for rule to allow him to make his deposition permanent without offending the multitude. But with Henry absolved the case against him would have to be dismissed and then there would be no real need of that diet. But what would men say should the spiritual prince of the church, the successor of Peter, the vicar of Christ, refuse to absolve a penitent suppliant, such as Henry appeared to be. So there was nothing that the pope could do but to absolve him. But before he admitted Henry, he was careful to exact from the king, as a condition of absolution, a promise to submit to his decision on the meeting of the coming diet, to grant him a safe journey to the north, and in the meantime to refrain from exercising the duties of his office. The promise was put into writing and signed by Henry. And two bishops and several nobles vouchsafed by an oath that the promise would be kept. Thus the pope would lift the sentence of excommunication but would not restore to Henry his crown. Whether eventually he would restore to Henry his crown, waited to be seen. He would make known his decision on the coming diet.

After these preparatory actions, Henry was led into the presence of Hildebrand. Prostrating himself at the pope's feet, he wept aloud and besought the pope's pardon in these words, "Spare me, holy father, spare me!" The company was deeply moved. Having heard Henry's confession, the pope, too, went through certain motions. He absolved and blessed Henry and thereupon celebrated the sacrifice of the mass in confirmation of the reconciliation. The usual remark of historians to the effect that this "event marks the deepest humiliation of the mediaeval empire before the power of the political papal church of Rome" is true. But it is not actually true. Henry did not humble himself before the pope. He merely went through the motions of self-abasement. But the men of that age did not seem to realize that what they had witnessed there in Canossa was a superb dramatic performance. The multitude, so it appears from contemporary writers, looked upon Henry's act as an unheard of and wonderful humility, and upon the conduct of the pope as "tyrannical cruelty rather than apostolic severity". The pope had overshot his mark. The sympathy of the multitude now was with Henry and not with the pope. By his act of self-abasement, the king had triumphed over all his foes, including the hostile German nobles and the pope. For Henry had been absolved. His slate was clean. In the eyes of the multitude, his case ought to be dismissed and his crown restored to him. There now was no need of a diet.

A final remark. It must not be supposed that Henry, in going through the motions of humbling himself before the pope, and that the pope, in going through the motions of absolving Henry, were not sincere.

They were deadly sincere, those two. The one was trying to out-manuever the other for a crown of gold such as the kings of the earth wear. As the after-history of those transactions at Canossa plainly indicate, neither the pope had truly forgiven Henry, nor had Henry actually submitted to the pope.

G. M. O.

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## THE DAY OF SHADOWS

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### Samuel's Descent

The book of Samuel cannot well be understood without a knowledge of its connection with the book of the Judges. The book of Samuel continues the narrative of the book of Judges. This can be made plain. Judges 13:2 is a notice to the effect that "the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord; and the Lord delivered them into the hand of the Philistines forty years." This notice is followed by the narrative of the birth and exploits of Samson of whom we read at chap. 15:1 that he judged Israel forty years in the days of the Philistines as Israel's thirteenth judge. Doubtless, he entered upon his career as Israel's deliverer at the commencement of the forty years' oppression of the Philistines. In the book of Samuel, Eli appears in the double capacity of Highpriest and judge and he continued in this office forty years, dying at the age of ninety-eight. Israel's fifteenth judge was Samuel of whom it is stated that he judged Israel all the days of his life. He received his first revelation when still a lad and was fully prepared to succeed Eli, when the latter died. It is fair to suppose that he was thirty years of age at the time. Eli died from the shock caused by the evil tidings of the capture of the Ark by the Philistines. Approximately 20 years thereafter, and in answer to Samuel's prayer, the Philistines were discomfited by a great thunder of the Lord and permanently subdued. "They came no more in the coast of Israel: and the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel," I Sam. 7:15. Doubtless, the forty years' Philistine oppression, first mentioned at Judges 13:2 was terminated by this overwhelming victory, which, it may be assumed, was gained twenty years after the capture of the Ark, and in the fiftieth year of Samuel's lifetime. From these computations it would follow that the entire judgeship of Samson was contemporary with the last twenty years of Eli's administration and that Samuel was ten years old when Samson began his exploits, and finally that the first twenty years of Eli's judgeship extended



backward into the period of Jephthah. And the government of Samuel from the victory over the Philistines at Eben-ezer was included in the forty years reign of Saul.

The setting of the narrative of the book of Samuel is the tribe-territories of Ephraim, Judah, Dan, and Simeon. This region had not been affected by the wars in which the northern tribes and those east of the Jordan were engaged with the heathen, under Barak, Gideon, and Jephthah. In these southern tribes the chaos that characterized the age of the judges was, in all likelihood, less pronounced. Here the high priest at Shiloh was respected, which must indicate that in this region there was more regard for law and less idolatry. The office of high-priest was held by Eli, a descendant of Ithamar, Aaron's younger son. Himself a God-fearing man, he was guilty of not restraining with appropriate vigor his two sons in their vices. The narrator calls them "sons of Belial, who knew not God." First is portrayed the selfish conduct of the priests in respect to the sacrificial meal after the offering was presented. The law specified (Lev. 7:31-35) the portion of the sacrifice which the sons of Aaron should receive; namely, the breast and the right shoulder. But while the meat was in the pan, Eli's sons took whatever flesh their hook could spear. The law required also that the fat and other choice portions should be burned on the altar as a sweet savor unto the Lord, Lev. 3:3-5. But these sons appropriated, by force if necessary, the flesh which they wanted in its raw state, as still attached to its fat, in order to roast it. Their offense was great because they made the people abhor the divinely instituted worship, the symbols and types of the realities of Christ's kingdom, thus abhor the very word of God. Besides, these sons had illicit intercourse with women at the sanctuary, who, it may be, came to the door of the tent to cleanse the vessels used in the sacrifice. And all that Eli had to oppose to their wickedness is a feeble rebuke, "Why do ye such things? For I hear of your evil dealings with all this people. Nay, my sons, for it is not a good report that I hear: ye make the Lord's people to transgress. If a man sin against another, the judge shall judge him; but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him?" The point to Eli's rebuke is, that the sons sin directly against the Lord, and that therefore there can be no intercessor, as there is when a man sins against his fellow man. These words are weak and mild considering the atrociousness of the sins that were being committed. But the mildness of the rebuke must be attributed not alone to the choice of the words but also to the manner according to which they were uttered. Eli's anger should have kindled. His wrath should have burned. The sins of his sons were capital crimes in Israel. Yet, he constrained them not but continued them in office because they were his sons; and thus he

is charged by the Lord with honoring "thy sons above me, to make yourself fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel my people" (chap 2:29).

When Eli was highpriest, it pleased God to raise up two deliverers for Israel, Samson and Samuel. Both were Nazarites from the womb. But it is to Samuel that we now must have regard. At I Sam. 1:1, his father is called an Ephrathite and the place where he dwelt was Ramathaim-zophim. The text reads, "Now there was a certain man of Ramathaim-zophim, of mount Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephrathite. A comparison of the genealogy here with those in Chronicles would seem to denote that the descent of Elkanah and Samuel was Levitical. "The sons of Kohath—Levi's son—Arminadab his son, Korah his son, Assir his son, Elkanah his son, Abiasaph his son, and Assir his son, Tahath his on, Shaul his son, and the sons of Elkanah; Amasai and Ahimoth. As for Elkanah; Zophai his son, and Nathath his son. Eliab his son, Jeroham his son, Elkanah his son. And the sons of Samuel; the first born Vashni and Abiah." (I Chron. 6:22-28). The text is difficult here. A full discussion of these difficulties would perhaps prove wearisome. But this stands out as certain; namely, that the genealogical list descends from the second son of Levi, Kohath, to Samuel and his sons. It would be hard to explain the appearance of these names in this list, if it were otherwise. But there is this question whether the Samuel, whose name appears in the above list, is the Samuel of the book of Samuel. There can be no doubt that they are one and the same person. He is the son of Elkanah in the book of Samuel and in the Chronicles. Also his sons are called by the same names, Joel and Abiah.

That Samuel was a descendant of Levi, does not militate against the notice (I Sam. 1:1) that his ancestor Zuph was an Ephrathite. An Ephrathite was a man from Ephrate, and Ephrate was the name either of Bethlehem itself or of a district in which Bethlehem was situated. A man of this place was called an Ephrathite. But according to some, it is doubtful whether the reading "Zuph an Ephrathite" is correct, as it cannot be proved that Ramah, according to I Sam. 1:1, the birthplace of Samuel, was near Bethlehem; it may have been in the mountains of Ephraim, and therefore in the tribe-territory of Ephraim. If so, the expression "Zuph an Ephrathite" should be made to read, "Zuph an Ephraimite". But though this were the right reading, the name "Ephraimite" here cannot be adduced against the Levitical descent of Samuel, as is done by some interpreters. For there are cases where a Levite is described as belonging to another tribe. The Levites generally were counted as citizens of the tribes in which their residence was; it would not be strange therefore that Elkanah is here designated as

an Ephraimite according to his descent, while he lived in Benjamin, whither his forefathers had immigrated. It is also to be observed that the mountains of Ephraim stretch into the tribe of Benjamin and unite with the mountains of Judah. Samuel must have been a Levite. The Genealogical lists in the book of Samuel and in the book of the Chronicles are too plain to allow any other view. How could Samuel have functioned as priest were he not a Levite? How could his mother have devoted him to the service of the tabernacle were he not a Levite? How could such a resolve have formed in her soul?

Elkanah, Samuel's father, was a polygamist. He had two wives, Hannah and Peninnah. Polygamy, being contrary to divine ordinance, is unnatural, sinful, and therefore its wages are not marital and family bliss but nameless misery. For a man, as father, has room in his heart for all his children, but he is so constituted that as husband he can love but one wife. The preferred wife of Elkanah was Hannah. And he was foolish enough to make an open show of his preference. When at Shiloh they ate their free-will offerings according to law, Elkanah gave to Peninnah and her sons and daughters portions, such as were due to them but to Hannah he gave a double portion; for he loved Hannah, chap. 1:4, 5. The notice implies, certainly, that he felt little or no marital affection for Peninnah. Of the two, she was the unloved wife. But the Lord compensated her for the want of Elkanah's affections; he opened her womb so that she bore her husband several children—their number is not indicated—sons and daughters. Hannah, on the other hand was unfruitful, for (but) "the Lord had shut up her womb." And she was sad beyond words. For, it being the dispensation of shadows, the unfruitfulness of the womb was one of the marks of divine displeasure and hence a reproach. Everything depended upon a wife's bearing her husband sons, the perpetuation of his very name and place in Israel, God's house. A childless wife therefore was indeed a calamity of the first magnitude. A barren wife might with reason conclude that the hand of the Lord was against her. But Hannah was a God-fearing woman. She truly loved Jehovah, as is so evident from her pouring out her troubled heart before Him and from her song of salvation. Yet, though a truly virtuous woman, she was thus afflicted. But the Lord was not against her but for her. She was to bear Samuel, in answer to whose prayers the Lord would deliver His people from that terrible oppression of the Philistines. Samuel's power with God was his intercessions in behalf of Israel, intercessions that availed much, being, as they were the intercessions of a righteous man. Hannah must earnestly pray for this son, who was to be also her deliverer; she must cry to the Lord out of the depth for him, whose birth would spell the removal also of her reproach. She must cry in a

word, for her own salvation and the salvation of her people, to be worked through her firth-born son. To teach her to pray, the Lord made her wretched by closing her womb.

G. M. O.

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## SION'S ZANGEN

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### De Verbonds Psalm

(Psalm 89; Derde Deel)

We zijn toegekomen aan het derde deel van den verbondspsalms. In dit deel beluisteren we een beschrijving van de zaligheid van Gods volk, en centraal van Jezus Christus, het Kind Gods bij uitnemendheid.

Welgelukzalig is het volk hetwelk het geklank kent: O Heere! zij zullen in het licht Uws aanschijns wandelen.

Wat hooge opzet en inzet!

Dit heerlijke vers doet ons direkt denken aan een eeuwige inzet in Israel. Het geklank is het geluid der zilveren trompetten die geblazen moesten worden op gezette tijden. Het moest weerklinken bij de samenroeping der vergadering voor het aangezicht Gods en bij het optrekken der legers. In het laatste geval was er een gebroken geluid der trompetten, want dan moest dat geluid vertolken het gebroken hart des volks vanwege benauwdheid door de onderdrukking des vijands. Doch "in het verzamelen van de gemeente zult gij blazen, doch geen gebroken geklank maken." Zoo luidt Gods gebod. Als de eene volle klank weerklonk, dan was er vrede en aangename rust. Dan was er vroolijkheid in God. Want "desgelijks ten dage uwer vroolijkheid, en uwe gezette hoogtijden, en in het begin uwer maanden, zult gij ook met de trompetten blazen. . . ."

En als ge nu het diepste in dat geklank wilt weten, luistert dan naar Gods eigen beschrijving: ". . . en zij zullen u ter gedachtenis zijn voor het aangezicht uws Gods: Ik ben de HEERE uw God!"

Het geklank kennen! Wat is het anders dan te bedenken, dat God de HEERE uw God is! In het geklank van de zilveren trompetten hoort ge het, dat Hij u bemint tot in eeuwigheid. Want de Heere zegt in het zelfde verband, dat de dienst der trompetten een eeuwige inzet is in Israel.

Muziek Gods! Muziek des hemels! Wegslepende, liefelijke muziek! O, de muziek is Goddelijk. Arm mensch die muziek haat. De hemel zal ruischen tot in alle eeuwigheid van de liefde Gods. Indien hier op aarde ons hart popelt bij het hooren van de lieflijke klanken van de muziek, het aangezicht van de HEERE, dan

anderer instrumenten, hoe zal het zijn, wanneer het orkest van onzen Vader zal zingen, jubelen, muziek maken om toch de ongekennde vroolijkheid des hemels te uiten. God mijns levens, ach, wanneer, zal ik naderen voor U oogen, om met de citers Gods te spelen, te spelen?

Welgelukzalig is het volk hetwelk het geklank kent.

Ja, dat is meer dan net maar de klank van de zilveren trompetten hooren met het aardsch gehoor. En we hebben die zilveren trompetten niet eens meer. Het beteekent, dat gij vat hebt aan datgene de klank vertolkt, namelijk, de vroolijkheid in God. Het beteekent, dat ge vat hebt aan de vroolijkheid produceerende wetenschap dat God de HEERE Uw God is!

Want: ze zullen in het licht Uws aanschijs wandelen.

Wat zit er toch machtig veel in Gods Woord. Hoe zullen we ooit klaar komen met dit gedeelte van dit vers? Het licht van Gods aanschijs?

Als ik hier aan 't spreken was over menschen, dan zou ik zeggen: dat is een glimlach, een goedwillige lach op 't gezicht als een mensch naar zijn vriend blik.

Past dit nu eens toe op God en U. Gods aanschijs is de plaats en de stonde waar ge Hem ziet. Het is Zijn openbaring voor U. Het is hoe Hij Zich aan U laat zien. En dat is Jezus. Jezus is het aanschijs, het aangezicht van God. Gods Wezen kunt ge niet zien. Doch dat van eeuwige liefde zingende Wezen heeft een aangezicht, openbaart Zich aan ons, en dat is Zijn Zoon Jezus Christus. En die Zoon is de plaats en de stonde waar God gezien wordt bij uitnemendheid. Het is het glimlachen van God. De glimlach van eeuwige goedwilligheid, genade, erbarming, ontferming — dat alles is Jezus. Ik zeide, bij uitnemendheid, en terecht. God laat Zich ook zien in de hel. Doch dan is het zien van God verterend vuur. Dan gillen de boozen tot in eeuwigheid. Hij laat Zich ook zien in de schepping en dan kwinkelen de vogels en klappen de boomen de handen van genot. Maar als God Zich laat zien in Jezus, dan wandelt ge in het licht. Dan zingt ge, dan maakt ge muziek, dan orgelt het in Uwe ziel en hart. O God! wat zijt Gij goed!

Ziet ge nu niet, dat het geklank kennen eigenlijk hetzelfde is als te wandelen in het licht van Gods aanschijs? Als God op U neerziet in Zijn onbegrijpelijke ontferming in Jezus, dan hoort ge, dan kent ge het zilver geklank der trompetten. Daar vergadert God Zijn volk om het hun aan te zeggen, dat Hij hun God is tot in eeuwigheid.

Ik denk, dat dit de reden is, dat wij die psalm zoo vaak zingen in de kerk.

Hoe zalig is het volk, dat naar Uw klanken hoort!

Ik zou U willen vragen: gaat ge gaarne naar Gods Huis? Is er wel één plaats op deze gevloekte aarde die vergeleken kan worden met dat uur in Zijn woning? Zeg, ge moest zonder de kerk leven—hoe zou het dan met u zijn?

Hoe zalig is het volk. . . .

Zij wandelen Heer in 't licht van 't Goddelijk aanschijs voort!

Luisterende naar de zilvere klanken, wandelen ze en de gedachte, dat God op hen nederziet in Zijn ongekennde liefde, doet hun harte orgelen, Hoe onbeschrijfelijk arm zijn de goddeloozen!

Zij zullen zich den ganschen dag verheugen in Uw naam, en door Uwe gerechtigheid verhoogd worden!

Ziet ge nu wel, dat het hier en overal over Jezus gaat? Hoe langer ik het Woord bestudeer, hoe meer ik zie, dat de Godsopenbaring Jezus is. God wilde het lieflijkste laten zien van Zijn Wezen—en dat is Jezus. Den ganschen dag verheugt zich Gods volk in den Naam. Ik denk hier aan Micha, want hij leert ons, dat de Naam ziet het Wezen. Wilt ge God dan kennen, bestudeer den Naam. Ja, die Naam! Die Naam is wonderlijk. Mozes vond het uit. Vraagt ge Mij naar Mijn Naam? Welnu, die Naam is Wonderlijk. Het wonderlijkste van dien Naam is dit wel, dat Hij nooit veranderde in Zijn liefde, genade en onuitsprekelijke goedheid. Dat maakt Hem de Getrouwe. Degene die altijd is die Hij zijn zal: Jehova. Beeft dan toch van innige eerbied en ontzag als ge dien Naam uitspreekt. Doch ge moogt U ook verheugen. De eeuwig Getrouwe. Ziet ge die trouw ergens schooner dan op Golgotha? In het snikken en klagen van Jezus beluistert ge den Naam. Ik denk hier aan wat ik soms het diepste vers in den Bijbel noem. Ik schrijf het over: “die in de dagen Zijns vleesch, gebeden en smeekingen tot Dengene die Hem uit den dood verlossen kon, met sterke roeping en tranen geofferd hebbende, en verhoord zijnde uit de vreeze hoewel Hij de Zoon was, nochtans gehoorzaamheid geleerd heeft uit hetgeen Hij heeft geleden.”

Een weinigje geleden heb ik gezegd, dat de Heere het lieflijkste van Zijn hart wilde openbaren, zoodat er een volk mocht wandelen in het licht van Zijn glimlach. Een glimlach van liefde.

Die glimlach van God straalt U tegen op Golgotha, in den hof Gethsemane, in den donker der eeuwige smarten van Messias. Het was Paulus die U aanziede, dat “Die Zijn Eigen Zoon niet spaarde, maar heeft Hem voor ons allen overgebleven. . . .”

Jezus toont U den Naam, die Naam zoo lieflijk, groot en goed. Goedertieren Vader! Milde Zegenader! Stel Uw vriendelijk Hart eeuwig voor ons open!

Daar gaat het hier over.

Wie kan dien Naam zien en niet verheugd worden? We zullen het den ganschen dag doen.

Den ganschen dag? Kan dat? Doch mijn lieveling werd van mijn zijde gerukt en mijn peluw hoorde het snikken van een rouwend hart. Hoe zal ik mij dan den ganschen dag in God verheugen. Rouwt Gods volk dan niet als het vleesch bezwijkt en de offers groot wierden? Offers die zij brengen in gebroken harten, wanneer de liefhebbers onzer zielen weggaan, achterwaarts

wijken, zachtken verdwijnen of plotseling in eenige dagen of weken weggerukt worden, zoodat onze oogen hen niet meer zien? Wie zal zich dan in God verheugen? Kan dat?

O ja, dat kan. Het is een feit van zes duizend jaren bewijs. Gods volk heeft zich dagelijks in God verheugd al is het dat zij snikten en traanden tot God. Wanneer hun vleesch bezweek, dan bleef God de Rotssteen van ons hart en ons deel tot in eeuwigheid. Ik mocht het ervaren, veel, veel malen. Er is hier geen paradox. Let slechts op het feit, dat Gods volk hier beschreven wordt vanuit het oogpunt hunner wedergeboren ziel en hart en leven. Satan maakte hier een groote fout. Hij dacht, dat als de Heere Job geheel ontblootte hij Hem zou vloeken in Zijn aangezicht. Hoe dwaas! Neen, maar dan zegt Gods volk met Job: De Heere heeft gegeven, de Heere heeft genomen, den naam des Heeren zij geloofd! Ze zullen dat zeggen, terwijl hun vleesch snikt, klaagt, vaneen gereten wordt.

Ze worden door Gods gerechtigheid verhoogd.

De ongerechtigheid verlaagt tot in de hel toe. Daar vond men Judas en Satan en alle verdoemden. De ongerechtigheid tast God aan in Zijn wet. En de wet is vertolking van Gods Eigen hart. Gerechtigheid is schoon, hemelsch schoon. Het is de deugd waardoor wij het goede doen in alles. Het is de deugd waardoor alle denken, spreken en handelen, aangelegd naast de standaard, de maatstaf van 't hoogste goed, uitkomt, overeenkomt, beantwoordt aan dat Hoogste Goed, en dat is God.

Zoo zijn we niet van nature.

Van nature zijn we kwaad, boos, ongerechtig.

Doch de Heere verhoogt Zijn volk vanuit de diepte der ongerechtigheid tot de hoogte der gerechtigheid.

Hij dacht ze uit van eeuwigheid, Christus leide het fundament van die gerechtigheid en door het geloof wordt ze U geschonken. Gerechtigheid verhoogt een natie, en ook een iegelijk van Gods kinderen. Hij zal U doen wandelen op de hoogte des hemels, der gemeenschap des verbonds met God.

Want Gij zijt de heerlijkheid hunner sterkte, en door Uw welbehagen zal onze hoorn verhoogd worden.

Gods volk is sterk. Adam was ook sterk, doch Gods volk is sterker. Gods volk is sterker dan Adam, want de capaciteit van Gods volk is grooter in het doen, denken, spreken, jubelen, in één woord, in het kennen van God. Want tot het kennen van God zijn wij sterk gemaakt. En die grootere capaciteit van handelen is het resultaat van het wedergeboren zijn door den Geest van Christus. Daardoor zijt ge Zijn broeder en zuster; en de energie van onzen oudsten Broeder zal ons bezielen tot in eeuwigheid. Zoo kunt ge ook zien, dat onze kracht die van Adam verre te boven gaat.

Paulus zou in dit verband zeggen: En alle deze dingen zijn uit God. Die tekst van II Cor. 5 moeten wij er bij aanhalen, om duidelijk te maken, dat des Heeren

heerlijkheid hunne sterkte is. Ziet ge, gij zijt sterk, omdat Jezus in U een gestalte heeft ontvangn. Welnu, die Jezus met al Zijn wondere kracht om God te kennen en te lieven is uit God. God gaf Hem, als de plaatsbeksleedende Messias, alle kracht en macht in hemel en op aarde. Zingen we dan: Zoo daalt Zijn kracht op ons in zwakheid neer! En er wordt gesproken van heerlijkheid der kracht. Dat wil zeggen, dat de kracht van Gods volk haar stralen uitzendt van Goddelijke herkomst. Nog duidelijker: als ge het krachtige kind Gods zijn sterkte ziet ontplooien, herkent ge den Gever dier kracht.

Het is verrukkelijk om in Gods Huis te zingen: Gij toch, Gij zijt hun roem, de kracht van hunne kracht!

En door Gods welbehagen zal onze hoorn verhoogd worden.

Onze hoorn is een ander woord voor onze kracht, ons strijden, ons worstelen.

En Gods welbehagen is Zijn gunst, Zijn groote liefde jegens ons.

Het geheel beteekent dan, dat als de Heere Zichzelf laat zien aan Zijn volk als de God die hen bemint met een groote liefde, dat zulk Goddelijk doen Zijn volk staalt in den strijd.

Want ons schild is de Heere en onze Koning is van den Heilige Israels.

En een schild hebt ge van noode. Vele zijn Uwe vijanden die het op U verzien hebben. Er zijn er, er zijn duizenden die U haten, die U gaarne willen vernietigen. Dit is een schrikkelijke waarheid.

Het is verschrikkelijk hoe de duivel en alle duivelskinderen God haten. Waar men ook maar God ziet, hoort, ik zou haast zeggen, ruikt, daar bemerkt ge het woeden der hel.

Jezus heeft dat uitgevonden. En zij grepen Hem aan en kruisigden hem.

Zoo ook gij. Als ge U aan het goddelooze rot laat zien, dan haat men U om Gods wil. Doch geen nood. Hij is Uw schild. En Hij geeft U een Koning die voor U optrekt.

En het einde van U en Uw Koning is de hemel, daarboven bij God.

Wanneer zullen wij ingaan?

G. V.

#### CLASSIS EAST

will meet in regular session Wednesday, April 3, at 9 o'clock A. M. All matters for Synod must be brought to this meeting of Classis.

D. Jonker, S. C.

# IN HIS FEAR

## How To Indoctrinate

In a previous article we stated that it is the specific task of the Church to indoctrinate its covenant seed. And when we speak of indoctrination by the Church, we mean indoctrination in the Protestant Reformed truth. And we concluded by stating that the Church must and does indoctrinate 'the man of God' through the office of the ministry of the Word. And this, we said, leads us to the subject of the preaching of the Word and the catechizing of the covenant youth.

The last sentence implies that the undersigned believes that the church indoctrinates 'the man of God' by a two-fold means: preaching and teaching or catechizing.

Let us begin with the official preaching of the Word as understood in its usual meaning. Preaching of the Word takes place in our divine worship as Church of God, particularly as we are gathered on the Sabbath day. We believe, on the basis of Scripture, that it pleases the King of the Church to bless, instruct, exhort, comfort His people by means of the preaching of the Word in a manner as is not possible, under ordinary circumstances, in any other way. This is a very important point to remember. As people of God we do not come together on the Lord's day to be entertained, or to hear a nice speech, but we come together to worship Him in the fellowship of the saints and hear the official proclamation and declaration of the Word of God. Scripture itself clearly teaches us that God has instituted the preaching of the Word and calls the preachers to proclaim that Word, and that through this preaching of the God ordained preacher we hear not only of Christ, but *Christ Himself*. This is very plain from Romans 10:14, 15, where we read: "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him whom (not of whom, J. D.) they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written: How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!"

Now this preaching of the Word to the Church as gathered in the fellowship of the saints is not merely for adults but also for the covenant seed of the Church, for children, for the youth. And it is also a powerful means to indoctrinate the 'man of God'. For the preaching of necessity implies indoctrination. If preaching has deteriorated into 'story telling' or 'discussion of various subjects' as seems to be the case in many a 'church' of our day and in our land, you can hardly call

it preaching anymore. But even so such 'preaching' is still indoctrination, although it is the wrong kind of indoctrination. However, sound Reformed preaching is always indoctrination in the true and proper sense of the word because it is the expounding of the truth of the Word of God. Hence, would you have your children indoctrinated, by all means take them to Church. Not only because thus they acquire the good habit of church going, not only because they belong there, not only because thus you are certain that they'll be on time for Sunday School, but because they are also through the preaching of the Word indoctrinated.

Does the foregoing imply that our children, especially the younger ones, understand and grasp everything that is preached? Not at all, and we could not expect such a thing. But gradually they understand more and more of the preaching, till in due time they practically understand everything. (Provided of course they are of average intelligence, well versed in Scripture, taught the doctrine of the Church, and themselves interested in the Word of God).

However, knowing that especially the young element in the Church does not and cannot understand all of the preaching, and the small children very little, would it not be better to have what has been called 'youth or children's services?' Not at all. That would make a sort of a church in a church, tear the church apart, and such a method of doing things could not possibly serve and good purpose. But I do believe that the preacher must reckon with the intellectual and mental capacity of his audience. That does not mean at all that he must always be on the lowest level, he certainly would 'kill' the church that way and general superficiality would be the result. Neither does it mean that in every sermon he must have something 'special' for the little ones and the less advanced in the church. But it does not imply either, in case the preacher happens to be a brilliant scholar and a great exegete, that he must preach exclusively for the brightest minds in the church. That also is wrong and thus the children, the youth and the less brilliant minds in the church are estranged from the preacher and may easily lose interest in the preaching and say: 'I can never get anything out of it anyhow.' The little ones and the less brilliant minds should not sit under the preaching of the Word every Sunday as has been apply described by a Holland poet (somewhat freely changed by the undersigned):

"Gij prediker daar hoog in de lucht,  
Hebt gij dan geen enkel woordje voor mij?  
Wijl *gij* preekt en verklaart, *mijn* harte zucht,  
Want, helaas, uw woord rolt ledig mijn ziele  
voorbij."

No, but the servant of God must preach to the whole Church. He must feed the flock of Christ, and in that



flock of Christ are also lambs. Indeed, the congregation must endeavor to come up to the preacher's level and always strive to understand more fully and deeper the Word of God, but the preacher must also come down to the level of the congregation. He must preach, indoctrinate his hearers according to their needs and capacity. And there are not a *few* that have needs, but they *all* have needs, young and old, great and small. The preacher preaches to the Church, not to a few exceptionally bright people.

And through the preaching much indoctrination takes place. Every exposition of Scripture is based upon doctrine and many texts deal directly with doctrine. And particularly in our churches where we have regular preaching based upon our Catechism (even though our Catechism treats the doctrine from a subjective point of view) there is of necessity much what we can call 'doctrinal' preaching. And that doctrinal preaching is for the whole church, and by it also the seed of the church is not only admonished, comforted, but no less instructed and indoctrinated.

However, the indoctrination of 'the man of God' takes particularly place through the ministry of the Word in the catechizing of the covenant seed. And catechizing is official teaching by the Church through the office of the ministry. And in catechism the Church teaches her seed the doctrines of Scripture, the doctrines as formulated, believed and confessed by the Church. Our fathers always considered catechism a very important means for the indoctrination of the covenant seed, and history has proven them to be right. It is basic. It is all important. It is absolutely necessary. Why is it so necessary? For various reasons, a few of which we will enumerate.

Catechizing is necessary in order that the man of God may receive a fuller and more comprehensive knowledge of the contents of Scripture. And knowledge of Scripture is basic to understand more clearly and fully the doctrine of Scripture. Factual knowledge of Scripture is positively necessary, although this in itself is not sufficient. Personally I believe that our Christian Schools have a wonderful opportunity here in supplying our children with factual knowledge of the Bible. And of course the home also enters in here. In fact the home is always basic, and without its co-operation and active support both School and Church are very much handicapped. For supplying the child with factual knowledge of Scripture the Sunday School can also have its value, much depending upon the calibre of the teacher. — But all these means do not take away the fact that the Church through its catechizing must supply 'the man of God' with a fuller and more comprehensive knowledge of the contents of Scripture. We are sometimes afraid of a little overlapping. This is not bad at all, because constant repetition is necessary

for our children if they are to assimilate and remember the contents of Scripture.

However, I do believe that it is first of all the task of the Church to *indoctrinate* 'the man of God', and that this is her more *specific* task.

Let us mention a second reason why this indoctrination is so necessary. It is necessary in order that the covenant seed may be able to gradually more and better understand the preaching of the Word. It is a proven fact that excellent and well trained and taught catechumens can sooner understand the preaching than those who are lax and woefully weak in this respect.

A third reason for indoctrination is that 'the man of God' may grow to spiritual maturity in the Church. Understand his covenant obligation and be able to make public profession of faith in the midst of the Church. And how can one ever make confession of faith unless he knows what he confesses and what is the main and basic teaching of the Word?

Indoctrination is also necessary in order that the child of the Church may more and more become specific in his knowledge and appreciation of the particular truth, confession and doctrine of the Church of which he is a member. As our children grow older they must not only attend our church services, but they must also know what is Protestant Reformed, why they themselves are Protestant Reformed, and they must be able to defend themselves over against all those who oppose and gainsay the Reformed truth. It is indeed a pity if sons and daughters of the Church grow up in the Church but remain 'little children' as far as their knowledge of the truth is concerned. And, alas, this happens but too often. How can a strong Church ever grow out of weak material? How can a Church ever remain distinctive if its members cannot defend its truth but are led astray by every wind of doctrine? To ask these questions is to answer them.

Finally, it is not only necessary for our own spiritual benefit to be indoctrinated, but it is also compulsory as far as our God is concerned. The honor and glory of His Name demands it. The more and the better we know the doctrine of Scripture, the more and better we are equipped to fight the spiritual battle of faith. Soundness in life and walk is inseparably connected with soundness in doctrine. And the more we walk consistently as children of light in the midst of this world the more our God is praised and glorified by us in word and deed.

For all these reasons, and we might add others, it is so absolutely necessary that 'the man of God be indoctrinated'. And this we saw is done by the Church through the preaching of the Word and the catechizing of its covenant youth. And the last is not the least means to indoctrinate the seed of the church.

J. D. J.

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## FROM HOLY WRIT

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" . . . Having made known the Mystery of His will to us, namely, to sum up all things in Christ . . . even in Him".—Eph. 1:8-10.

Our former article ended in the midst of our discussion of the Scriptural idea of the concept "Mystery".

We might notice, that the concept "Mystery", in Scripture, does not refer to something that is *necessarily* hidden, and, that can therefore never be known by the mind of finite man, but that it most emphatically refers to that which is hidden by God and in Him until and when He pleases to reveal it to us. After God has made it known, revealed it to us, it is no longer a secret; from now on it is open and manifest to the sons of men.

This, of course, does not mean to imply, that we fully comprehend. There are, indeed, limits set by God to our understanding of the things which are infinite. That is true also in the truth of the "Mystery" of the Scriptures. Yet what God has made known of it is indeed apprehensible to the sanctified and enlightened understanding of the children of God.

We might also point out, that the central content of the "Mystery" is none else and nothing less than Christ Himself. It is in the Christ, the Son of God in the flesh that the Mystery of God is unfolded before our eye of faith. Christ is the Mystery. He it is who He is. We do not explain Him, but He explains Himself to us. He testifies of Himself that He is the Son of God. And always He points to Himself as the One in Whom the Father's good-pleasure is realized—realized even to the raising up of the dead in the last day!

Let us now further turn our attention to the text.

What strikes our attention first of all is, that this "Mystery" is further defined by the Apostle as being the Mystery of *His will*. The term "will" (Theleema) emphasizes the fact, that it is solely by a free act of God that He has planned this "Mystery" and has made it known to us. There was not force outside of God to move Him to make Himself known; neither was there any urge of necessity from within. What God reveals of Himself to us of His purpose and plan was an act of sovereign good-pleasure and nothing else. This is clear not only from the current usage of the term "will" in Scripture, particularly in the New Testament, but it is a truth which the Apostle emphasizes once more in the next clause in this verse.

In the next clause of this verse we read, that God works the Mystery of His will, namely, to sum up all things in Christ, "according to His *good pleasure*". This good pleasure of God (good pleasure—to think it well) is the ultimate standard of all God's dealings in history. The text presents this good pleasure as determining the

world's happenings from Alpha to Omega, from its genesis to its consummation in the day of Jesus Christ.

It is very important that we bear this emphasis of the Apostle in mind. It is a factor to be remembered not only in reference to the content of the Mystery. It is also the standard according to which God makes the Mystery known. It is true that the latter does not receive the emphasis here, but it is a Scriptural truth none-the-less. Not for one moment may we lose sight of the fact of God's good pleasure in this Mystery. It is Mystery of His will.

It seems that the Apostle cannot get finished with expressing the thought that we have attempted to explain in the former paragraph. He once more emphasizes this truth by adding: "Which (the good pleasure) He purposed in Him (Himself)". It should be noticed that although the apostle here repeats the matter emphasized in the former clause, he does not *merely* repeat. He adds a new idea, namely, that this good-pleasure is the Divine Purpose. There is a goal set up by God toward which all things are directed. And that goal is set before God as being realized in Christ Jesus, our Lord. This latter we would emphasize, even in the face of the possible reading which makes "in Him" in the clause "Which He purposed in Him" to be rendered reflexively, namely, "in Himself". We believe that the latter reading is to be rejected, and that the former one is correct. God did to purpose in *Himself* to unite all things in Christ, but God purposed it in the *historical* Christ. For this last observation we offer the following grounds.

In the first place, we would like to call attention to the fact that the verb "to purpose" literally means in the original greek: to set before. To this must be added, that the verb is written in the "middle voice". The idea of such a middle voice in greek is that the action in the verb, in this case in the "setting before one", to purpose, is that the action is somehow performed in relationship to the one performing it. God purposed, set before Him, somehow in relation to Himself in eternity. He set the destiny of the world and all things before Himself. The reflexive idea is already contained in the verb. It would be unnecessary repetition to add "Himself" as referring to God in the light of this consideration of the "middle voice" of the verb.

Next we would not fail to notice, that throughout this entire section of the first chapter of Ephesians, great emphasis is placed on the fact that God's purpose is realized solely and altogether in the Christ. And also that God's purpose stands in this Christ because thus it has been made in Him! Notice the following: "blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ even as we have been elected *in Him*" vs. 3, 4: "Which He has graced to us in the *Beloved*". vs. 6: "in *Whom* we have the redemption through His blood", vs. 7: "To sum up all things in Christ. . . even in

*Him.*" vs. 10: "in *Whom* we have also been made a heritage" vs. 11. Hence, it is quite according to the Apostle's mode of reasoning and His emphasis to interpret the pronoun to read "him" and let it refer to Christ, and not to read it "himself" and refer to God.

Finally, we wish to point out, that this interpretation is in accordance with the expressed statement of the Apostle in chapter 3:11. We quote: "According to the eternal purpose (God's setting it forth before Himself) which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord." Here it is explicitly stated that God's purpose was made in the Christ.

All this is not mere repetition on the part of the Apostle. It must become evident that all God's good pleasure is in the Christ, in the Beloved, who is the Eternal Son in our flesh! Well may we keep this in mind lest we fail to catch the vision of the Apostle, lest we fail to see the wondrous glory of the Christ of God. Only when we see this all, will we also join with the Apostle to sing of the power of God's grace to usward.

But the Apostle has more to tell us of the content of this purpose of God in Christ. The content of the Mystery of God in its broad scope is stated in the phrase "to sum up all things in Christ. . . . even in Him."

We should notice, that the Apostle does not enter into many details in this passage. The Apostle only traces for us the main line of the Architectural structure of the building of God's good pleasure. And, indeed, this is accomplished with masterful and bold strokes! Notice, that the building of God's good-pleasure encompasses "all things". All things?! Indeed! All things in heaven and on earth. Bold strokes! Notice the vertical lines. They run, they are traced from earth to heaven and from heaven to earth. Both heaven and earth are taken up! But, also, do not fail to notice the horizontal lines, which are traced by the Apostle. For this is not a mere, incidental detail. Nay, it is a fundamental feature. The line runs horizontally over the plain of the heavenly. The heaven of heavens and the fulness thereof. "All things" in heaven! What is true of the things in heaven is equally true of the things on earth. The lines of the building of the Divine good-pleasure also are traced horizontally along the plain of the earthly. The earth and the fulness thereof belong to the Lord, and are all taken up in the work of Christ. Thus it is traced here by the Apostle. Thus he would have us see it. Thus it is in God's eternal good pleasure in the Beloved! We hear the key-note of this already in the first words of the Scriptures, in the book of Beginnings. Do we not read: "In the beginning God made the heavens and the earth"?

In passing we may remark, that this Architectural structure, as here traced by the Apostle, as elsewhere explicitly taught in his letters, and as suggested in Gen. 1:1, should warn us against limiting the work of God to man, more particularly to what is then, even mis-

takenly, called the immortal soul of man! To be sure man is the chief creature of God, to him God has given preeminence among all the creatures. For man is more than many sparrows in the sight of God, yea, more than the spacious heavens. Compare Psalm 8. But in the plan of God, man is never a micro-cosmos, a little world, a consideration by himself. God would glorify Himself in all the works of His hands. And in these works man must have the preeminent place. But we repeat: Man is not the sole consideration of God in His purpose of salvation in Jesus Christ.

Of this we hope to write more in this and in subsequent articles. Let us keep this in mind.

In order to see somewhat more of the plan of God in Christ in relation to "all things", let us proceed in our discussion.

First of all, let us notice, that the verb "to sum up" is a composite verb in greek, composed of verb and preposition. It is: *ana-kephalaioo*. Literaly it means: to head up! In Classic Greek it is used to denote the summing up, the bringing to a unity all the arguments in a discourse. By thus doing an orator would bring his entire discourse to definite conclusions. In Rom. 13:9 Paul employs this composite verb in a sense that approached that of the just named orators. The Apostle is speaking in Romans 13:9 of the law of the Ten Commandments. He tells his readers, that this law is summed up (headed up) in One Word! It is concluded in the word: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself! In the Scripture passage under consideration in this article, the Apostle employs the verb to denote that wondrous act of God, whereby He brings the entire Creation, the whole Cosmos to a unity under the Headship of Christ, Who was given as Head to the Church over all things! Thus the entire work of God, the work of God's purpose in Christ over all things in heaven and on earth is stated in one word, to wit, in "summed up"!

In a former article we have emphasized that all God's purpose is in the Beloved. It was stated, that, except we see that God has blessed us in Him, we will never begin to see that we have redemption and forgiveness of sins "according to the riches of God's grace". That truth we considered a controlling motive in the work of God.

Although from a different viewpoint, we may nevertheless observe this controlling motive also here in this "summing up" of which the text speaks. For, notice, that God sums up, reunites all things in Christ, the Beloved. And this beloved is to be "Head" over all things. It is true, that the Apostle does not say so *with so many words*. Yet, this is, very evidently, the idea of the text. This appears to be the case not only from the addition "in Christ", but also from the latter portion of this first chapter of Ephesians, vss. 20-22. We quote: "Which (namely, His great power) He wrought in Christ, having raised Him out of the dead,

and seated Him at His own right hand in the heavens, far above all principalities and powers and dominions and lords (angel-hosts) and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come. And He has subjected all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the Church."

It is, therefore, quite clear, that Christ is the one in whom God would reunite all things in heaven and on earth. One may still have to give a further account of the specific nature of the Headship of Christ to the Church in distinction from His Headship to the angels, (compare Col. 2:10) that we will grant. But this much is perfectly clear, Christ is to be Head and Lord over all.

It, therefore, appears, that the Apostle chose a very beautiful and expressive word in the verb, "to head up", to designate the act of God whereby He brings all things under Christ, yea, under Him!

There are other important aspects of the matter which we are discussing, that still call for comment. We know that the wisdom of God, even, in this very summing up of all things, is unsearchable. We cannot trace out all to the very end. We do not live under the delusion, therefore, that we shall be able to understand all. The aspects, however, to which we still wish to call attention are those clearly revealed, and, which, are necessary to somewhat keep in mind, to understand enough of this marvelous work of God, to be able to consciously live unto the praise of His matchless love and fathomless grace!

G. L.

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## PERISCOPE

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### *Book Review:*

In *The Banner*, issue of Feb. 8, we came across the following: "THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM, an exposition by Rev. Herman Hoeksema, Vol. 1, "In the Midst of Death"; Vol. 2, "God's Way Out". Published by Wm. B. Eerdman's Publishing Co., 234 Pearl St., Grand Rapids, Michigan. Price of each volume, \$2.00."

"In these two volumes Rev. H. Hoeksema gives an exposition of the first ten Lord's Days of the Heidelberg Catechism. In many ways these books appeal to the serious Bible student:

1. The language is direct and clear. The writer knows how to convey his meaning to the mind of the reader. One looks in vain for that heavy and complicated style which so often characterizes works on doctrine (and other) topics and by means of which an author succeeds only in "darkening counsel by words without knowledge." (Here, in these two books, the sentences are generally brief, nevertheless complete,

and serve to carry forward the thought in a very gradual and progressive manner. Not many authors possess this gift. It makes the books interesting. One wishes to read on and on.

2. The treatment which the Heidelberg Catechism receives is thorough. Difficult issues are not evaded but discussed. Moreover, this discussion is generally stimulating and original. One does not find here the mere repetition of that which has already been said by others. Even then when the author intersperses his own discussions with quotations from others, he does so in a manner which is critical and discerning.

3. The author's deep-seated love for such thoroughly Reformed doctrines as the sovereign character of God's grace is everywhere apparent. His abhorrence of Pelagianism is evident throughout.

4. Here let us mention just a few of the very many items which the reviewer considers worthy of special mention:

In Vol. 1 the Introductory chapter appeals to us. It contains what is needed to give the reader the proper view of the historical setting and purpose of the Heidelberg Catechism.

Again, the chapter on the viewpoint of the Heidelberg Catechism deserves careful study, and serves to prevent the reader from falling into the errors of rationalism and of morbid Mysticism.

The paragraph on the "immortality" of the soul, pages 98, 99, is "interesting" to say the least. At any rate, the author is correct in insisting that we should be scriptural even in our choice of terms.

On pages 146-147 the author voices his objections to Dr. A. Kuyper's view of Adam's eating of the forbidden fruit. Well, he is not only the only one who has expressed his dissatisfaction with Kuyper's explanation. We too, have never been satisfied with it.

Volume 2. We enjoyed particularly many passages and paragraphs—very refreshing and eminently scriptural—in the explanation of Lord's Days 5 and 6.

While one will not always agree with the author, the fact remains that in his criticism of such questions as the Character of God's image in man, etc. there are elements which deserve careful attention and should not be left out of future discussions.

How I wish I could close the review at this point. More, however, must be said. In his attack upon the Christian Reformed Church the author is not at his best. Again and again he tells us that the doctrinal conclusions with respect to Common Grace, declarations which were adopted by our Synod of 1924, are *pelagian*, page 164, Vol. 1. On page 168, he quotes Points II and III. Now in point II our Synod declared: "God, by a general operation of His Spirit, without renewing the heart, restrains the unbridled manifestation of sin, through which life in human society remains possible." In Point III the Synod—basing its declar-

ations in both cases on Scripture and our Confessions—declared that the unregenerated are able to perform *civil good*.

But what does Rev. H. Hoeksema make of this? Says he, page 164: "The second and third points of 1924 arrive at the conclusion that the human nature is not really depraved". On page 169 he tells the reader that we teach that man's "nature is so changed by common grace that he can live a good life in the world. . . ." Read the writer's entire discussion, Vol. 1, pages 150-182.

Now where in any of the three points has our Synod ever declared that human nature is not really depraved, or that the unregenerate can live a good life on the earth? Would not the writer's books have gained in excellence if he had omitted these charges of "pelagianism", of "semi-pelagianism", and of "sophistry".

If attacks such as the one which we have just criticized can be omitted from the volumes of this series that are still to be published, then we hope that the able author—whom the Lord has blessed with so many fine talents—will be able to bring to completion his exposition of the Heidelberg Catechism." (End quotation)

William Hendriksen.

Thank you professor Hendriksen, for your willingness and your courage in giving this review of the above mentioned books. Especially do we thank you for your word of encouragement when you state: "One wishes to read on and on". There will be more books coming from the author on the Heidelberg, so that you may be able to "read on and on". But we do not quite understand your final statement: "If attacks such as the one which we have just criticized can be omitted from the volumes of this series that are still to be published, then we hope that the able author. . . will be able to bring to completion his Exposition of the Heidelberg Catechism". Does that mean that if the author CONTINUES TO ATTACK the pelagian 'Three Points' of your church, then you hope he will not be able to "bring to completion his Exposition of the Heidelberg Catechism"? Yet you say when reading just the first two volumes: "One wishes to read on and on."

Another remark I must make. Suppose the Rev. H. Hoeksema had omitted mention of the "Three Points" in his books and thus had not attacked them, then PERHAPS you personally would have given 100 percent approval to the line of truth presented in those books. BUT YOUR CHURCH WOULD NEVERTHELESS HAVE CONDEMNED THEM, for they present the line of truth which the Rev. H. Hoeksema has always presented, even before 1924. AND THIS LINE OF TRUTH WAS ATTACKED BY YOUR CHURCH LEADERS ALSO BEFORE 1924, and for this line of

truth Rev. H. Hoeksema was cast out of the fellowship of your churches. Your churches attacked the line of truth anent the total depravity of man and the impossibility of the sinner doing any good in the sight of God. Your churches, in attacking that line of truth, presented instead the erroneous view of "the good that sinners do" before God, and that the sinner (unregenerate) does not live a life of total depravity. Therefore Prof. Hendriksen you may personally love to read "on and on" in these books in which total depravity is stoutly maintained, but your churches do not love to read on and on about that truth. And it is the official stand of your churches which is attacked in the "Exposition of the Heidelberg Catechism" by the Rev. H. Hoeksema. *Remember 1924*.

Finally, Prof. Hendriksen, do you remember back in the early part of 1939 when you and others of your church met with a group of our ministers and also with Dr. K. Schilder, in the Pantlind Hotel at Grand Rapids? Do you remember that Rev. H. Hoeksema read to you and to the others this same truth in what you at that time termed "The excellent, systematic presentation of the theological views held by Rev. Hoeksema"? Do you remember that we all expected a fine and thorough discussion of those views, but that the leaders of your church present at that conference, refused to discuss those things? And do you remember that a desire was expressed then that we could later on perhaps hold more conferences in which your church leaders would be prepared to defend their Common Grace theories, and that the motion of Rev. Hoeksema to have another such conference was never carried out by your church leaders? These questions all came to my mind when reading your otherwise fine Book Review. So I close with the question: Will you, for the sake of Truth, use your talents to disprove the theological views of Rev. H. Hoeksema especially pertaining to the common grace theory, so that we may see the wrong of our way? Others have tried to do this but failed. As far as I know you have not tried this. Thank you again, Professor.

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#### *Thankfully We Notice:*

That in "The Reader Asks" rubric of *The Banner*, the Rev. N. J. Monsma answers the question: "Are not election and reprobation two different acts of God, so that in election God is motivated by his good pleasure, while in reprobation God simply leaves the sinner in the misery he brought upon himself?" A very good answer is given we believe. Note the most important parts of his answer: ". . . the doctrine of predestination includes: (1) Election, and (2) Reprobation. It is true that some have said that the difference between



these two acts of God is that God is active in the first and passive in the second. However, this is incorrect. Indeed, God is active when he elects sinners to eternal life, but He is also active, and not merely passive, when He condemns sinners to eternal condemnation and death". (He then quotes from the Canons of Dord, I, Art. 15,) "The reader will also note that in both acts, in that of election and in that of reprobation, God is motivated by His good pleasure. God's good pleasure is His sovereign will. It is good, not because it favors man, but because God is good. It is good even though man is by this pleasure of God condemned and punished eternally. THE FINAL CLAUSE OF BOTH ELECTION AND REPROBATION IS THEREFORE, GODS GOOD PLEASURE (I capitalize, L. V.)" That is the end of Rev. Monsma's answer. It did us good to read that. Though the approach of the Canons of Dort is *infra*, the answer was very much in harmony with the confessions. The reason we were thankful at reading this in *The Banner* is because so often it is claimed that these things are hidden for us and that these things concerning election and reprobation belong to the secret counsel of God. Evidently Rev. Monsma does not believe that. But one question came up when reading this. Maybe someone will send it up to the Rev. Monsma for an answer. It is: How does God's well-meant offer of salvation or grace to all men, and therefore also to the reprobate, harmonize with the truth you stated that, namely, "the final cause of both election and reprobation is therefore God's good pleasure?" The answer to that question of course may not be sought in any responsible freedom of the will, for Rev. Monsma also declares: "Though still a responsible being, yet he (man) can no longer will to do the good. Man can will to do the evil only. This the Arminians deny, but this is typically Reformed doctrine". Yes, I add, and preached consistently in the Protestant Reformed Churches. And for this preaching we are often condemned or attacked.

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#### *Shame On Calvin College:*

In the "Grand Rapids Press" a rather large type heading struck our attention. It read: "CALVIN SENIORS TO OFFER SHOW". Under that heading: "Seniors of Calvin College will hold the last party of their fall series Thursday evening with an amateur show in the auditorium". Then follows the names of those having charge of making this show a success. Isn't it shameful, that such worldliness emanates from Calvin College? And all the world may read it in the public press: Calvin College students now in the show business. O yes, it is amateur. Of course. Professionals can however put on a "better" show than amateurs.

But then one must be an amateur first before he or she can graduate into the professional class. Shame on you, Calvin. When you were giving that show in the auditorium could it be said of you: "We are unto God a sweet savour of Christ"? or: "Be ye not conformed but transformed"?

L. V.

#### CLASSIS WEST

will meet in regular session, D. V., Wednesday, March 6, 1946, at 9 o'clock A. M., at the Protestant Reformed Church of Hull, Iowa.

C. Hanko, Stated Clerk.

#### IN MEMORIAM

After an illness of about five months, it has pleased our heavenly Father to take unto Himself my loving wife; our mother and grandmother

JEANETTE VAN PUTTEN (Graveling)

at the age of 55 years. May the Lord comfort us by His grace in our bereavement.

His grace which in abundance  
He on her did bestow  
Did comfort her in illness  
So she no want did know.

His grace, it was sufficient  
To take away the sting  
Of grave and hell and anguish  
And cause her soul to sing.

So now she's gone to glory  
To be there with her Lord  
His everlasting mercy  
By her shall be adored.

Although we mourn in sorrow  
We look to Him by grace  
Who is our only comfort  
May we behold His face.

So ~~that~~ His grace and favor  
Of His most gracious love  
Be our consoling comfort  
Shine on us from above.

Mr. H. A. Van Putten  
Mr. and Mrs. Walter Winstrom  
Mr. and Mrs. James Heys  
and 4 grandchildren.

Holland, Michigan.