

THE STANDARD

Bearer

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

VOLUME XXII

April 15, 1946 — Grand Rapids, Michigan

NUMBER 14

MEDITATION

God's Great Love

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

John 3:16.

God so loved. . . .

And that explains the "must" of the preceding verse!

As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so *must* the Son of man be lifted up. Another way than the way of the cross there was not for the Son of man to enter into His glory. He must be exalted, to be sure, but only through deepest humiliation and shame.

For God *so loved* the world.

And all the emphasis falls on the comparison: *so* He loved. . . . *that* He gave His only begotten Son.

If you would form some idea of the character, the power, the depth and the height, the sovereignty, the unquenchableness, the greatness of the love of God for the world, then you must not look at that world itself, but at the cross of Jesus.

There the Son of man is being lifted up!

And that Son of man is the only begotten Son of God!

Lifted up is He like Moses' serpent, apparently by men, but in deepest reality by the living God Himself!

For God gave His only begotten Son.

The revelation of His great love!

God so loved the world!

Hardly necessary it would seem, for one who does

not intentionally read his own pet theories in the Word of God, to explain that this word "world" cannot possibly be replaced here by "all men".

Is not the "world" of this marvellous passage the object of God's great love? And could ever such love fail to seek and find and save its object? If God, then, so greatly loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son for her salvation, can it be that it, or any part of it, is lost into perdition? Yet, not all men are saved. Many of the world of men as we know it are never touched by this mighty love. How, then, could "all men" be the proper explanation of "world" in the text?

Or, again, does not this Word of God emphasize that God gave His only begotten Son. And does not this giving on the part of God imply that He gave Him over unto death, yea, unto the death of the cross, that He might offer Himself a perfect sacrifice unto God for sin? And was not this gift bestowed on, and this sacrifice offered in behalf of "the world"? But could it be that this gift had been wholly or partly in vain, and that even one drop of blood of that precious sacrifice had been shed for one that is lost in everlasting desolation of darkness?

God forbid!

Or were it conceivable that so marvellous a love expressing itself in so amazing a way should prove itself impotent to save its object and to attain its end? Could it be that God would so humiliate His Son, while the realization of the purpose of that humiliation was not in His power, but depended on the evil will of the very men that nailed Him to the accursed tree?

To ask the question is to answer it.

That God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, what else does it mean than that this world, this object of God's amazing love, was surely saved by that gift, and will be saved to the uttermost?

Besides, why should such an arbitrary meaning be given to the term *world*?

It never means "all men" in the Holy Scriptures.

That it does not always convey the same connotation a comparison with other passages in which the

word occurs will readily prove. Did not our Lord, in that rich sacerdotal prayer preserved for us in this same gospel narrative declare that He prays not for the world? But surely He prays for the world (His Father loved? Are we not earnestly warned in the first epistle by the same apostle that wrote this gospel-revelation of Jesus Christ that we must not love the world, neither the things that are in the world, seeing that the love of the Father is directly in conflict with the love of the world? Is it not plain, then, that the world which God loved is a radically different world from the world which we may not love?

To interpret that "world" means all men is individualistic, nominalistic, pelagian.

But "world" is an organic conception. It denotes beauty, harmony, a living whole, not a number of individual parts.

If you "love" a mechanism, and would "save" it, you must, indeed, be very careful to "save" every individual part, for the whole depends on, consists of the sum total of those parts. When you lose a wheel of your car the auto is marred and cannot function. When you break a spring of your watch it is become useless. But with an organism it is different. When a farmer looks at his golden wheatfield, and is said to "love" his wheat, does this imply that he "loves" and means to "save" every single part of that wheat as it stands waving in the breeze? Does he not, presently, cut it, thresh it, pile up the straw and burn the chaff, while only the wheat proper is put into the barn? Or when the husbandman, in early spring, trims the vine, so that the largest part is represented by the branches that are cut off, and only a few bare stalks are left standing, did he destroy the vine?

God loved the world!

But, indeed, this does not mean that all individual men are so the object of His love that all are saved. The world as we see it is the wheat as it still stands waving on the field, with straw and chaff: it must still be cut, and the wheat must be separated from the chaff; it is the vine that must still be trimmed. Yet, not those that are lost, but those that are saved constitute the world, God's world, the world of His eternal love. And when all the lost are separated from it, it is still the world that is saved.

The world is the organism of God's elect together with the whole creation as once it shall appear in perfect harmony, heavenly beauty, united in the Son of God!

The world of the eternal, divine conception!
God's own world!

That world God loved.

He so loved it that He gave His only begotten Son!

O, profound wonder of wonders! Mystery of mysteries, whose impenetrable depth ever recedes from our searching gaze, and whose marvel becomes more amazing according as we more earnestly contemplate its divine wonder!

God *loved* the world!

And that means that, in His sovereign and eternal conception He beheld that world in its perfect beauty of perfection in Christ, the Firstborn of every creature; and that as such He has united it with Himself, with His own heart, in the bond of perfectness. It means that He is attracted to that world, that His heart goes out to her, even as, in time, it is lost in sin and misery, lies under the curse and in death; that He longs for her, and cannot "rest" until He has drawn her with cords of love unto Himself; that He seeks her till He finds her, and that for her He desires and realizes the highest possible good, eternal life and beauty in the glory of God!

God loved the world!

Make no mistake as if, in the text, *God* refers to the Father, the first Person only of the blessed trinity. One might easily be tempted so to read the text, in view of the fact that God gave His only begotten Son: did not the Father give the Son? Did not the first Person of the holy trinity give the Second? Yet, this would be a serious error. All the outgoing works of God are of the trinity, of all the three Persons of the Godhead, each in His position and relation to the others. *God*, the triune God loved the world. And this love is of the Father, through the Son, and in the Holy Spirit. *God* gave His Son, the triune God. And this gift is of the Father, through the Son, and in the Holy Spirit. The Father gave His Son in the Spirit; the Son gave Himself in the Spirit. The triune God loved the world!

God so loved the world. . . .

How? O, for the answer you must turn your wondering gaze to Calvary, to that accursed tree that is planted between the crosses of two malefactors! Everywhere else you meet with darkness, wrath, judgment, death and desolation. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven over all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men, that hold the truth in unrighteousness. And nowhere is there a streak of light, a way out, a glimmer of hope. Only from Calvary, from the cross of Jesus, the wondrous light of divine love shines into our night, all the more wonderful, because it penetrates and completely swallows up the darkness of judgment and death.

God *so* loved the world!

How?

He gave His only begotten son!

Do you desire to understand a little of the nature of that wondrous love, of its length and breadth and

height and depth? Would you measure it? Ah, but it is as great as the gift, and, therefore, immeasurable! It is as deep as the love of God for His Son, His only begotten, and, therefore, unfathomable!

How did God love the world?

Consider, then, in order to approximate an answer to this question, that God gave His Son, the darling of His bosom, Who eternally is in the bosom of the Father, in and upon Whom all the infinite love of the Father is concentrated. Consider, too, that it is His only Son, His all, Himself. Consider that He gave Him. And this means, in the light of all Scripture, that He gave Him up, that He gave Him as a sacrifice for sin, for all our sins and our transgressions, that He gave Him up into death, the death of the cross, that He forsook Him into lowest hell, pouring out over His head all the vials of His fierce and holy wrath. . . .

How did God love the world? . . .

O, but consider now once more that this giving up of the only begotten of the Father was an act of the triune God: the Father gave Him up, the Son gave Himself up, the Spirit was active in this giving up of the Son unto the death of the cross.

Yes, indeed, we know it well, it was the Person of the Son alone that came into the flesh, that took all our sins upon Himself, that suffered and died on Calvary. We understand it very well, that the divine nature is above every form of suffering, and that all the agonies of death and hell of which Calvary is the scene and spectacle, were suffered only in the human nature of the incarnated Son.

But what then?

Does not the fact remain that, in that human nature of the Incarnated, it was the only begotten Son that suffered? Is it, nevertheless, not true that in this giving of Himself into death, you behold, and are invited to behold by our text, the suffering of the Son of God, and that, by this suffering, you may measure the height and the depth of the wondrous love of that Son?

Still more.

Even though it is the Person of the Son of God that suffered and died on Golgotha, does not our text stress the fact that even on Calvary you dare not separate the three Persons of the Holy Trinity, and that somehow it was *God* that suffered in the flesh of the Christ? Would you not destroy the very essence of the text, if you should assume that, while His only begotten Son writhed in the agonies of death, the Father was unmoved, and the Holy Ghost coldly looked on?

How did God love the world?

O, all human language is incapable of adequately expressing this mystery. But surely, we do justice to the text, when, in our human and imperfect way,

we paraphrase it thus: God so loved the world, that when He faced the alternative of giving His only begotten Son or letting the world perish, He sent His Son into the death of the cross!

So God loved the world.

Because of this unfathomable love the Son of man must be lifted up, even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness.

That the world, God's world, might be saved.

Glorious revelation of love!

Eternal life!

Such is the end this love has in view, and shall surely attain.

That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life!

This world is perishing. For it lies in the midst of death because of sin, pines away under the wrath of God, proceeds from sin to sin, from death to death, with no other possible end than eternal desolation in outer darkness. And there is no way out as far as the world is concerned.

But God's world must be saved.

It is saved through the death and resurrection of that only begotten Son of God. He is the life and the resurrection. In Him is life. All the power of salvation, of wisdom and knowledge, of righteousness and sanctification, of redemption and deliverance, of light and life, — it is all in Him, and in no one apart from Him. Hence, the world that is saved must be united with Him, must become one plant with Him, must partake of His death and resurrection. And the bond that so unites that world with Him is faith. Hence, it is those that believe in Him, and then "who-soever", that constitute the world that is saved.

And they are saved unto eternal life.

The love of God seeks and realizes for its object the highest possible blessedness and glory.

As great as is the love of God, revealed in the gift of His only begotten Son, so glorious is the end attained, the blessing bestowed. For everlasting life is not merely life as we know it without end; nor is a return to the earthly life of Adam in the state of rectitude. It is the highest realization of the covenant of friendship in His heavenly tabernacle, where He shall take us to His bosom for ever, and we shall see Him face to face.

In that glorious liberty of the children of God all creation shall participate.

In God's only begotten Son, creation shall be united in glory.

Glorious love of God!

H. H.

The Standard Bearer

Semi-Monthly, except Monthly in July and August

Published by

The Reformed Free Publishing Association
1463 Ardmore St., S. E.

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(Subscription price \$2.50 per year)

Entered as Second Class mail at Grand Rapids, Michigan.

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EDITORIALS

The Liberated Churches In The Netherlands

THE CHURCH POLITICAL ASPECT:

More important, and certainly more clearly defined than the doctrinal issues that divide the Liberated Church from the Synodicals in the Netherlands, is the church-political side of the controversy, the question of justice and right in the churches, of church-government and its proper execution.

While, with a view to the question of the truth and doctrine involved, it is somewhat difficult to discover what it is all about, the difference between the groups with regard to church polity is so great and definite, that it is not difficult at all to choose sides. On this issue, the two groups are definitely opposed to each other.

And while, with respect to the doctrinal question, we could not agree with either side, on the church political issue we do not hesitate at all to take sides with the Liberated Churches in opposition to the synodicals.

Church politically, the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, as now represented by the Synodicals, have become corrupt. And it is nothing less than amazing that in so few years as have elapsed since the days of Kuyper and Rutgers, they could so completely depart from the sound system of church government for which those two men stood, which they defended, inculcated in the churches, and against departure from which they never grew tired of warning the Reformed people.

Who could have imagined so fast a degradation?

Who would have believed it, comparatively few years ago, that even H. H. Kuyper would disavow and deny the correct and Reformed view of church polity, and defend the hierarchical system, according to which a few delegates become lords over the churches, and the churches are subjected once more to the yoke of bondage imposed by mere men, instead of standing in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free?

But let me, first, explain to the reader the two theories of church government of which I am writing, the Reformed and the hierarchical.

For examples, I shall take the Protestant Reformed Churches and the Christian Reformed Church. I now use the official names of both denominations because it is exactly in this difference that the two conceptions of church government are rather concisely expressed.

The Protestant Reformed denomination is a group

of churches, united on the basis of a common confession, the Reformed, and of the Church Order. The Christian Reformed denomination is one Church under one government, ultimately the synod.

The reader knows, of course, that in the Reformed system of church government various gatherings are recognized that stand in a certain relation to one another. In the Netherlands there are four such gatherings, the consistory, the classis, the particular synod, and the general synod. In our churches as well as in the Christian Reformed Church, particular synods are not held, so that only the consistory, the classis, and the synod remain.

Now, in our churches, these three gatherings are by no means of the same character as far as their governing power is concerned. We do not conceive of them as three governing bodies with power to rule in themselves, related as lower, higher, and highest courts of law. On the contrary, there is an essential difference between the power of the consistory on the one hand, and that of the classis and the synod on the other. Strictly speaking, only the consistory has ruling power, power which represents the kingship of Christ over His Church. For Christ has instituted the offices of ministers of the Word and elders to govern His Church in His name and according to His ordinances. They are the consistory. They are, therefore, servants of Christ, responsible to Him, called and ordained to rule over the Church as Christ's disciples. But the classes and the synod have no such power over the churches. They have no power directly from Christ at all. They have only *delegated* power, that is, such power as is delegated to them by the churches they represent, and mandated to them for the time of their gathering.

The reader can readily understand this, if he remembers that there is always a consistory, whether it is in session or not. But when the classis or the synod adjourns, these gatherings have ceased to exist. They exist only for so long as it is required for them to finish the business that is legally before them as mandated to them by the churches they represent.

The members of a consistory are such and meet as such, and labor in the congregation as such, in virtue of their calling and office as elder: they are lawfully called by the church, and therefore, by God unto their office. But the constituency of a classis or synod is not at all determined by their office. Its members function, not as officebearers, not as elders, but merely as delegates. And their power is limited by and to their mandate from the churches.

It stands to reason, therefore, that these major gatherings can never have the power to rule over the congregations, nor to set aside the power that delegated them. The servant cannot have power over his lord, the ambassador has no power over his king

or government, the delegate cannot possibly have power over the body that delegated him.

From which it follows that no classis or synod has power to depose a consistory or any member thereof.

Nor can any classis or synod demand submission, even for a time, to its decisions or declarations, when a consistory or several consistories consider them contrary to the Word of God and the Confession.

About the relation of the larger to the smaller gatherings, Dr. A. Kuyper wrote in "De Heraut" of June 10, 1883: "The higher (never highest) power over the synodical gathering rests with the provincial synod; over the provincial synod with the classis; and over the classis with the consistory, which consistories are the only gatherings that have their origin in the office. He that reverses this order, overthrows the very foundation of the church, denies the office, and accepts, in principle, the Romish, instead of the Reformed, form of church government."

The Christian Reformed Church, as its very name indicates, stands opposed to this Reformed conception of church government, and has adopted the hierarchical system. For it is the official standpoint of this Church that the major gatherings have *jurisdiction* over the consistory, and that they have the power and right to depose them. This was officially adopted by the Synod of Englewood, 1926, in answer to protests against the action of Classis Grand Rapids West whereby the latter deposed Consistory of the First Christian Reformed Church of Kalamazoo and that of Hope. The Committee that was appointed to advise synod *in re* this matter brought out an elaborate, and rather thoroughly hierarchical report. And the Synod decided as follows:

"a. Synod thanks the Pre-advisory Committee on *Deposition of Consistories* for its excellent (sic! H.H.) work, and decides that the report be taken up in the Acts.

"b. In connection with this report, and in answer to protests received, Synod uphold Classis Grand Rapids West in its action of deposing the consistories of Kalamazoo and Hope. *Grounds:*

1). Article 36 of the Church Order gives the Classis jurisdiction over the consistory;

2). Articles 78 and 80 of the Church Order, and the Formula of Subscription state plainly that censure of officebearers shall be suspension or deposition from office."

It is evident that, if the Classis has jurisdiction over the consistory, the Synod must have the same jurisdiction over the classis. And this means that, in principle, the Christian Reformed Church inverted the proper order of Reformed Church-polity, as outlined by Dr. Kuyper above, and destroyed the very foundation of Reformed Church-government.

It has become hierarchical. The Christian Reformed churches have been deprived of their liberty by their delegates, their servants; they have bent their neck under a yoke of bondage, imposed on them by a few priests that assumed this power unto themselves; they have been deprived of their right to reformation of the Church, for at the penalty of deposition no Church can initiate such reformatory action.

The above was offered merely to illustrate two different conceptions of Church-government.

These two widely and principally different conceptions now also exist in the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands.

The Synodical Churches practised and also officially adopted and approved the hierarchical conception. The Liberated Churches refused to bend their neck under this yoke, and maintained the Reformed system of Church government as taught and strongly maintained by men like Kuyper and Rutgers.

And strange to say, generally speaking, the B-men, the men that, dogmatically, follow Kuyper, particularly in regard to the theory of presupposed regeneration, repudiate him completely as the exponent of Reformed Church-polity, while the A-men, who stand opposed to Kuyper's doctrine of the covenant and of the sacraments, emphatically maintain his principles of Church-government.

There can be no doubt about the fact that, principally, as far as their Church-political action is concerned, the synod of 1939-43 also deposed Dr. A. Kuyper!

The action of that synod was so thoroughly hierarchical that it is a complete repudiation of Kuyper.

The question arises: how could such a tremendous change come about in the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands, in so short a time?

Especially two elements must be considered in this connection, that are worthy of note because they represent dangers that always threaten the freedom of the Church, so that, by considering them, we may also take warning.

The first is lust for power.

It is not in vain that the Scriptures warn the office-bearers that they shall be clothed with humility, and refrain from lording it over the flock. After all, office-bearers, ministers, elders, and deacons, are sinful men. And it is the tendency of their old nature to abuse their office, and, instead of constantly manifesting a willingness to be nothing but disciples of Christ, to assume lordship over God's heritage. Under the influence of their sinful nature, the power of office becomes a weapon that is used against the Church which it is supposed to serve. And this dangerous tendency is accentuated in the larger gatherings, that are greater

in number than the consistories, that represent more Churches, and that are more remote from the local congregation. How easy it is for the constituency of a classis, and especially of a synod, to assume a power they do not have!

H. H.

THE TRIPLE KNOWLEDGE

An Exposition Of The Heidelberg Catechism

Part Two.

Of Man's Redemption

LORD'S DAY XIX

3.

The Coming Of The Lord (cont.)

And throughout the New Testament, the hope of the Church in the world is fixed upon the return of her Lord in glory.

At the occasion of the ascension of Christ from Mount Olivet, the angels that stand by the amazed apostles as they gaze up into the heavens address them as follows: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." And these words, while in their comparison of the ascension of the risen Lord with His return, they leave absolutely no room for a carnal and earthly conception of the parousia, nevertheless emphasize that we must expect a personal, definite, visible return of Christ, and that, too, at a definite moment.

The apostle Paul refers to this "moment" of the coming of Christ in the well-known fifteenth chapter of his epistle to the Corinthians, even though in that connection the return itself is not mentioned, in the words: "Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." I Cor. 15:51, 52. The resurrection of the dead belongs to the things that shall take place at the coming of Christ. And here, too, the reference is to a definite event, that shall take place at a definite "moment". According to Phil. 3:20 "our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ." In I Thess. 4:13-17, the apostle comforts the believers in Thes-

salonica concerning those that fall asleep in Jesus before His return. Evidently they were worried about their dead, as if they would have no part in the glory of Christ's return. And the apostle corrects this error, and teaches them that the believers that have died shall be raised even before those believers that live at the time of Christ's return shall be changed. "But I would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that we sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (go before, H.H.) them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first (i.e. before the living believers shall be changed, H.H.): Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with him in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Also in this passage, the return of the Lord is presented as a very definite event that will occur at a given time. In II Thess. 2 the apostle instructs believers concerning the coming of the man of sin, who can only come in his own, God appointed time, and "whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." II Thess. 2:8. Hebrews 1:6, according to the correct interpretation of that text, speaks of this coming of Christ as a bringing again into the world of the firstbegotten, at which occasion all the angels of God shall worship him. The epistle of James comforts believers in oppression and tribulation, and exhorts them to be patient, with a view to the coming of the Lord, which draweth nigh. Jas. 5:7, 8. At that coming, believers shall receive the "salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." I Pet. 1:5. And "the end of all things is near." I Pet. 4:7. When the apostles make known to the Church the power and coming of the Lord, they do not follow cunningly devised fables, as the mockers allege, for they were witnesses of His glory on the mount of Transfiguration, II Pet. 1:16-18. Nor is the Lord slack concerning His promise, as others complain, even though He is longsuffering over His own, not willing that any of them should perish, but that all should come to repentance. "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." II Pet. 3:9, 10. Hence, "what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the

elements shall melt with fervent heat?" II Pet. 3:11, 12.

Needless to say, the entire book of Revelation is an exposition of the theme of the coming of the Lord. "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all the kindred of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen." Rev. 1:7. "Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book." Rev. 22:7. "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22:12. "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Rev. 22:20.

With respect to the idea of this coming, we must needs make a few remarks, even though a complete exposition of the parousia is quite impossible in an explanation of the Catechism such as this.

First of all, it should be observed that Scripture knows of only one coming of the Lord, and that this coming marks the end of this world, and that, too, by way of a universal catastrophe, as well as the inauguration of the world to come.

This observation precludes the view of the premillennarians, who speak of two comings of Christ. The one is called the Rapture, the other the Revelation. The former will take place some time before the great tribulation, the latter after the tribulation. At the former will take place the resurrection of the just, and the change of those believers that are faithful and look for His coming; the latter will witness the resurrection of the tribulation of saints, and the inauguration of the millennium. In the Rapture, the Lord will come *for* His saints, to take them with Him in the air; in the Revelation, He will come *with* His saints, destroy Antichrist, and with His people reign over the nations. But even in both these comings the end of the world is not realized. They will mark the end of "this age" but they inaugurate another age, that of the millennium. Only after the millennium is the last enemy, death, destroyed, and eternity, or the "ages of ages" ushered in. When, therefore, the premillennarians speak of the coming of the Lord, they have in mind, especially, the rapture and the "first resurrection." This may be expected momentarily. The blessedness of that rapture is that those who are deemed worthy of it shall escape the great tribulation under Antichrist, and have a part in the "marriage supper" of the Lamb.

To refute this view would require far more space than we can properly afford to give to this detail in this connection. Suffice it to make the following remarks.

First of all, it is an essential element in a view that is based upon an erroneous interpretation of the

Old Testament, which leads to the separation of Israel and the Church, as if they were two peoples, the former the kingdom-people, the latter the body of Christ. A correct interpretation of the Old Testament in the light of the New plainly leads to the conclusion that Israel and the Church are one.

Secondly, the view of two comings, the Rapture and the Revelation, is based on a wrong interpretation of several passages of Scripture. An outstanding illustration of this is I Thess. 4:16, 17. It is claimed that this verse plainly teaches the "first resurrection," the resurrection of the just, in distinction from the resurrection of the wicked which is supposed to take place after the millennium. It is claimed, too, that the word used in vs. 17 for "to meet" means, according to the original: "a going forth, in order to return with." The meaning, accordingly, is that we shall be caught up with Christ in the air, in order to return with Him later. But all this is quite arbitrary. As to this "first resurrection", anyone who reads the text without millennially colored glasses can readily see that it makes no distinction between the dead *in Christ*, that shall be raised first, and the dead *outside of Christ*, that shall be raised later; but between *the dead* in Christ, i.e., those that have died before His coming, and the *living* in Christ, i.e., those believers that shall be alive at the parousia. The resurrection of the former shall occur before the change of the latter. And so they shall meet the Lord together in the air. And the interpretation given of the word "meet" or "to meet" as if it should imply the idea of returning with Christ, is a pure invention. The Greek term (*eis apanteesin*) does not even remotely suggest this notion. Nor does the rest of the passage harmonize with the premillennial conception of the rapture. The text quite clearly refers to a public and universally announced coming of the Lord: the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God. If this means anything at all, it certainly means that there will be nothing private or secret about this coming. It will be loudly proclaimed to all the world. But according to the millennial view, this will be a coming only for the Church. The world will not even notice this private coming of the Lord, except that certain persons will suddenly be strangely missed. And while the millennial view emphasizes that there will be a return from this rapture, and that it will last only during the years of the great tribulation in the world, the text emphasizes that it will be forever: "and so (*houtoos*, thus) shall we ever be with the Lord."

Thirdly, the idea that believers must look forward to their final redemption through the coming of the Lord *before the great tribulation*, is contrary to all the current teaching of Holy Writ, which not only warns us to expect tribulation, but also, rather than

exhorting us to rejoice in the idea of escaping it, emphasizes that we shall consider it a great honor and privilege to suffer with Christ. To suffer in behalf of Him, is given us of grace. Phil. 2:29. The millennial hope of escaping the tribulation is not spiritual, but carnal. And it is as dangerous as it is false, because it fills its followers with a false hope, that will leave them unprepared in the evil day.

In the fourth place, the Bible throughout clearly connects, with the one and only coming of the Lord, the end of this world, the final salvation of the whole Church, and the last judgment. Consider Matt. 24:29-31: "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." And thus in Matt. 25:31ff. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats," etc. And once more, consider the Lord's own interpretation of the parable of the tares: "the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of the world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Matt. 13:39-43.

Finally, this view is based on an interpretation of the twentieth chapter of the book of Revelation that is neither in accord with the highly apocalyptic contents of the whole book, nor with the evidently symbolic presentation of the chapter itself. It is quite impossible to read this twentieth chapter of Revelation as if it recorded a simple historical event that will take place sometime in the future, an event that will follow in time upon what was revealed in chapter nineteen of the same book.

Over against this view, we maintain that the Word of God teaches only one final coming of our Lord, and that, too, in the end of the world.

But this observation is no less directed against a kind of evolutionistic, postmillennial conception of the coming of Christ.

According to this conception, Christ and His kingdom may be expected in the way of gradual development and improvement. The world will gradually become Christianized. Through the preaching of the gospel, men will accept Christ, and apply the principles of the gospel to all life, till the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the earth, as the waters cover the bottom of the sea. Swords will be beaten into plowshares, and spears into pruning-hooks, and there will be universal peace and blessedness over all the earth. If Christ will come at all, in any real sense of that word, it will only be to take into possession a kingdom that is all prepared for Him. His coming will be post-millennial.

In opposition to this view, we believe that Scripture presents the end of this world, in connection with the coming of the Lord, as catastrophal.

Things will be cut off:

As we read in Rom. 9:28: "For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth."

We must maintain this, also in opposition to Barth and his peculiar view of history, of the nearness of the parousia, and of the "last things."

In his "The Resurrection of the Dead," Dr. Barth freely grants the possibility that there may be an "end" or even "ends" of this world. Says he: "There might be something in it. Why not?" Entirely different things may well be in store for the culture and civilization of the world. We may even conceive of the possibility of another "ice-age" though, perhaps, such an "end" would be for a time only. "As images of 'last things,' such final possibilities, lying so far and yet so near us, might well be instructive and stimulating, especially if we should unhappily be indifferent to the obvious symbols of 'last things,' ice ages, and the fate of expiring worlds in the past and the present, by which we are, without resort to metempsychosis, surrounded." pp. 192, 103.

However, such conceivable and possible ends of this world have, according to Dr. Barth, nothing to do with biblical eschatology. The "last things" of Scripture "are not such final possibilities, however real they may seem to our eyes." We cannot, for fear of plunging wholly out of sight from our readers, explain Barth's view into detail. Suffice it to say, that for him "the end of all things" is something wholly different from the accepted Biblical meaning of this term. The parousia, for him, is not a definite, future event, definitely marking the end-of-time of our present world. It is rather synonymous with "prehistory, the limits of all and every time and thus necessarily the *origin* of time." p. 104.

Scripture very definitely presents the coming of Christ as marking the end of this present world.

And the end will be catastrophal. By the second advent of our Lord, history will be cut off.

This does not imply, however, that the final "moment" is to be conceived as chosen quite arbitrarily, as if it could come at any time, today as well as tomorrow, a thousand years from now as well as after millions of years still to come.

On the contrary, although the parousia will, indeed, cut short the history of this world, certain "ends" must be attained before this final catastrophe, in which the very fashion of this world will pass away, and the elements shall burn with fervent heat, may occur.

For, in every respect there must be a *pleroma*, a fulness.

A fulness there must be of the measure of iniquity. Sin must have become manifest in all its horrible implications of enmity against God. The one root-sin of Adam must have born all its fruit. So full the measure of iniquity shall have become, that it would be quite impossible to continue even for another day. For God must be justified when He judges.

There must also be a fulness of the suffering of Christ. The measure of this suffering, that was filled, principally, by Christ Himself in the days of His flesh, but is also being filled through the ages by the suffering of the saints in the world, must still be fulfilled, "unto praise, and honor, and glory, in the revelation of Jesus Christ."

And, of course, all the elect must be born and gathered into the Church, the body of Christ. For God will not that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

H. H.

THE DAY OF SHADOWS

Eli's Punishment

The sons of Eli were wicked men. The narrator calls them "sons of Belial, who knew not God." First he portrays their wickedness with respect to the sacrificial meal of the offering. The law specified (Leviticus 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. (3:3-5). But these sons appropriated, by force if necessary, the flesh in its raw state, as still attached to the fat. Thus they rebelled against the sacrifices as instituted by God in order that they might have their filthy lucre. As the sacrifices

were symbols of the realities of the kingdom, definitely of Christ's atonement, it was the very gospel of God that these sons of Eli corrupted and on this account caused the people to abhor. Besides, they had illicit intercourse with women at the sanctuary. Thus their sins were great. They were rebuked by Eli, their father. He said to them, "Why do ye such things? For I hear of your evil dealing 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." He meant to say that these sons sinned directly against the Lord and that therefore there could be no intercessor to try their case, investigate the Lord's charge, and according to his findings, pronounce them guilty or innocent. For the Lord is infallible God. There is no arguing with Him. All attempts to prove his accusations false must needs end in failure. And He in no wise clears the guilty. And He is mighty to execute His sentences. Thus there was no possibility of these sons escaping the penalty of their sins. For it was God with whom they had to do. But Eli's words had no effect on them. They would not be instructed, because the Lord would slay them, chap. 2:25. Sons of Belial, that's what they were.

But we should not fail to observe that in slaying these sons for their wickedness, the Lord was punishing Eli and even providing him with a sign that more and much worse punishment was to follow. The curse of God would continue to pursue him in his generation for ever. But was not Eli himself a Godfearing man? Doubtless he was. True, he had spoken harshly to Hannah, praying in the sanctuary. But he thought that she had been drunken. "How long wilt thou be drunken? Put away thy wine from thee." His blunder can be explained. A drunken woman in the sacred precincts of the sanctuary was not a rarity in those days. The moment he perceived that he had made a terrible mistake, he made amends by blessing Hannah, "Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him." And when Hannah appeared at the sanctuary with her child, Eli took him under his custody and thereby cooperated with her in the performance of her vow. And he blessed Elkanah and Hannah, and said, "The Lord give thee seed of this woman for the loan which is lent to the Lord." And they were blessed. For we read, "And the Lord visited Hannah, so that she conceived, and bare three sons and two daughters." Also he rebuked his sons for their sins. What then was Eli's great sin? In the language of the "man of God" he honoured his sons above the Lord, 2:29. And the Lord himself sets forth his sins in these words, "For I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity *which he knoweth*; because his sons made themselves vile — ac-

cursed, in the Hebrew — and he restrained them not." Here the Hebrew text reads, "And he chided; that is, rebuked, reprov'd, admonished them not." But how is this to be harmonized with the notice that he did rebuke them. The sacred narrator even incorporated in his story the words of censure that he spake to them — words that were just interpreted. There is no discrepancy here. It must be that Eli's rebukes were far too mild to have any effect and that finally they ceased altogether. This being true, the Lord ignores his effort to restrain these sons in their wickedness. The effort was too feeble. This is indicated by the very form of the words of the one rebuke recorded. "Nay, my sons, for it is not a good report I hear.

This should have been rendered, "Nay, my sons, for it is not a good report that I am continually hearing. (In the Hebrew text the *qal* active participle is used). Observe the expression "not a good report". This is mild language, considering the atrocious doings of these sons. Those reports were abominable. And what to think of his addressing these spiritual bastards, incarnations of wickedness, as "my sons". The old priest could be stern when it concerned not his own flesh and blood. "How long wilt thou be drunken? Put away thy wine from thee." Such were his words to Hannah, whom he mistook for one of those lewd women who came to the sanctuary. There was fire in his eyes and steel in his voice when he said that. But when it came to rebuking his own sons, he was very meek and soft spoken. And it is also a warranted conjecture to say that he would refrain from chiding his sons in the hearing of the people. He did not want to expose them, as they were his sons. And for the same reason he continued them in office instead of driving them from the sanctuary. So did he honor his sons more than God, says the sacred writer. He means that Eli honored his sons and God not at all. Those sons were wicked. Their guilt was great but not as great as that of their father. He was most to blame. It may be imagined that in the beginning of their public career they had behaved well enough, and that their deflection was gradual and by degrees. There was the first offence. One vigorous protest on the part of Eli would have prevented its repetition. But all they got from him is some mild scolding, which was now and then repeated when some Israelite would report to him their atrocities. By his failure to be firm with his sons at the outset of their careers, Eli encouraged them in the pursuance of their mad course. Truly he had greater blame. The responsibility was his, and the Lord held him accountable for all the abominations of his sons. This comes plainly out in the doleful message of the "man of God" to him. It is also proved by the fact that the message was delivered to *him* and not to his sons.

"And there came a man of God unto Eli, and said

unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Did I plainly appear unto the house of thy father, when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh's house? And did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priests, to offer upon mine altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me? and did I give unto the house of thy father all the offerings made by fire of the children of Israel? Wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice and mine offering, which I have commanded in mine habitation; and honorest thy sons above me, to make yourself fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel my people?"

Let us observe the expression "Why kick *ye* at my sacrifices and make *yourselves* fat with the chiefest of all the offerings. . . ." The pronouns *ye* and *yourselves* are in the plural and in the first person and thus include also Eli. He, too, was here charged by the "man of God" with committing these sins. The sins became his through his unwillingness to oppose, in his capacity of highpriest and custodian of God's house, his sons in order that God's house might be cleansed of the wicked, be purged from the corruptions of its worship.

The "man of God" who appeared to Eli was a true prophet of the Lord. This is plain. His words rang true. His message was stern and Eli was the highest official in the land. And the "man's" predictions came to pass. By Eli's father's house is to be understood the family of Aaron from whom Eli descended through Ithamar. The other sons of Aaron were Nadab, Abihu, and Eleazar. After the death of Aaron the high priestly office was filled by the last-named. Why the high priesthood was transferred from his family to that of Ithamar, in the person of Eli, the Scriptures do not reveal. The reason was not that the male line in Eleazar's house had failed; for in David's time Zadok of the family of Eleazar was priest, along with Abiathar, of the family of Ithamar and Eli. The Lord first appeared to Aaron and his house when they were in Egypt. It was then that Aaron was called along with Moses to be God's instrument for the deliverance of His people. Thereupon the Lord chose him and his house to be his priest out of all the tribes of Israel. Thus the priesthood—all the priests collectively—had its origin in God's sovereign election and was the product of his wonder-working grace. It belonged therefore not to itself but exclusively to the Lord to offer upon God's altar His offerings. "Wherefore then," said the man of God to Eli, "kick ye at my sacrifices and at my offerings, which I have commanded in my habitations; and honourest my sons above me, to make yourself fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel my people?" These were the sins that were being committed. The gospel was being trampled under foot. Christ was being put to open shame. And cursed men were making themselves fat with Christ's gospel. It means that they behaved as though all things—God's people and the office of priest, God's

house, His altar and offerings—belonged not to God but to themselves for them to exploit as they chose. And why did they thus? The question was put to Eli by this man of God, "Why kick ye at my sacrifices? . . . And the only answer that would come to him is that the fault lay altogether with his sons. They were "sons of Belial". Yet he did not restrain them. And therefore the sins of these sons were Eli's sins because, being highpriest and set over the house of God, he refused to purge God's house of the accursed, they being his own offspring according to the flesh. He could not bring himself to crucify, for God's sake, his corrupt paternal love of the wicked. Let the rulers—the pastors and shepherds—in God's church be instructed. If they refuse to purge the church—God's house—by properly admonishing the disorderly, and excommunicating out of the Christian church the wicked, they are held accountable. All the sins of the wicked in the church are accounted their sins, so that, in the sight of God, they are as guilty as they would be had they themselves committed those very sins. For in refusing to restrain the wicked, they go over to their side and are thus against Christ. It may be conceded that it was difficult for Eli to take action against Hophni and Phinehas, they being his own children. But he should have considered that, in the words of Christ, if a man hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his very own life also, he cannot be Christ's disciple.

These then were Eli's sins; namely, his unwillingness as God's highpriest to rebuke his sons that the house of God might be purged of the wicked; and his honouring his sons more than God. The sins that were his through his neglect of duty were his kicking at the Lord's sacrifices and his making himself fat with the chief of all the offerings. The Lord punished his sons by killing them both in one day. We must now attend to Eli's punishment.

The Lord had said that Eli's house and the house of his father, by which is meant the entire priesthood from Aaron down, should walk before Him forever. But this promise could go into fulfillment only with respect to those priests who honoured God. The others—the reprobated—would be abased. "For them that honour me, I will honour, and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed." Eli's two sons had despised God through desecrating the symbols of Christ in His suffering, death, and resurrection, thus through corrupting God's gospel. Eli ought to have debased his sons as a zealous champion of the Lord's honour. But he did not do this. He looked on, stood idly by while his sons abased God; and thus he became, as was explained, a partaker of their sins. Therefore the Lord will punish him in his generations. The Lord will cut off his arm, and the arm of his father's house. Through the ages to come its strength will be broken,

for none of its members shall reach an old age. They all will die in their prime. But the text does not say that Eli's house will fail, altogether cease to exist. To the contrary, the text brings out that the existence of this house will be prolonged far into the future. This house may not fail, for through the untimely death of the multitude of its members, thus as a bearer of the divine curse, it must serve as a sign in Israel that they who despise God's sacrifices will be abased. That the state of Eli's house through the ages of the future will be one of continuous and unabated affliction is indicated by the sequel of this prophecy, "And thou shalt see an enemy in my habitation, in all the wealth that God shall give Israel: and there shall not be an old man in thy house forever". The text here offers some difficulty. The rendering in our English Bible can be improved. The original text reads here (literally), "And thou shalt behold affliction of dwelling in all that in which it will be well to Israel." The context makes it plain that the thought conveyed is that, in his generations, Eli shall see distress of dwelling in all that brings prosperity to Israel; that is, while the nation prospers materially, Eli's house continually will be afflicted and as a result will be excluded from the national rejoicing. The whole course of thought suggests affliction for Eli's house rather than for the tabernacle of God, also the last clause of this verse, which reads, "there shall not be an old man in thy house." But this is not all. The man of God continues, "And the man of thine, whom I shall not cut off from mine altar, shall be to consume thine eyes, and to grieve thine heart." We could also translate, "Yet I will not cut off every one to thee from my altar to consume thine eyes, and to grieve thine heart." This agrees better with the last part of this verse, "But the multitude of thine house shall die men; that is, in the flower of their age. Eli's witnessing this would grieve him, and after his death it would grieve the survivors of his house who would be in the land of the living to behold that terrible phenomenon. But though the multitude of Eli's house would die an untimely death, the Lord would not cut off every man. For a long time, for many ages to come, He would keep alive a small remnant for the bearing of the curse. Eli's house was not immediately deposed from the priestly office, nor was it at all excluded from the priesthood, according to the text. Up to Solomon's time, descendants of Eli were high priests, and according to tradition his family continued to exist, but always as afflicted of God. And this shall be a sign unto Eli, "that shall come upon thy two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas; in one day they shall die both of them." That would be a sign unto Eli for only a brief moment. For he died in the very moment that the tidings of the death of his two sons reached him. It was a sign unto all Israel and definitely unto the remnant of Eli's house in

ages to come; its purpose was to focus the mind of men upon the house of Eli, which it also was bound to do; for the calamity that befell Eli's sons was foretold. It therefore formed the clear evidence that the Lord had done it, and that it was He who was afflicting through the ages Eli's house. So would the Lord "do a thing in Israel at which both ears of every one that heareth it will tingle," 3:11. And hearing every one would know that God is not mocked.

But there is more to this prophecy of the "man of God" to Eli, "And I will raise me up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in mine heart and in my mind: and he shall walk before my anointed forever." The priestly office, being a divine institution, abided, though those who filled it perished. The faithful priest must be understood in contrast to Eli and his sons together with their spiritual kin. Some maintain that the above description of the "Faithful priest" can be made to apply only to Samuel, that in him alone did this prophecy find fulfillment. It is maintained and correctly so that an essential element of the calling of the priest was instruction in the law. Deut. 33:10 expressly declares the duties of the priests as follows, "the priests' lips shall keep knowledge, and they shall seek the law from his mouth, for he is a messenger from heaven"; and so that prophecy of the "faithful priest" is fulfilled in Samuel, because the priesthood of his time had proved itself unworthy and unable to fulfill this calling. The further sacred priestly acts which Samuel performed and his mediating position between God and Israel as advocate characterize him as the faithful, approved priest announced in verses 35, 36. Yet it is doubtful whether the prophecy can be applied to Samuel, and this for the following reasons. 1) The Lord will establish this "faithful priest" a house, which is priestly; and Samuel founded no such house. 2) As was said, Eli's house was not ejected from the high priesthood until Solomon's day. 3) Samuel is nowhere called a priest. It is doubtful whether he sacrificed at all. If he did, his performance of the priestly service must be regarded as extraordinary like that of Gideon and Solomon. Yet it is true that Samuel was the embodiment of the spirit of the pure and faithful priest in contrast with the wickedness of Eli's sons. But the first fulfillment of this prophecy was the deposition of Abiathar and the installation of Zadok, as sole high priest, I Kings 11:27, 35. This was the fulfillment of the judgment on Eli's house, "So Solomon thrust out Abiathar from being priest unto the Lord; that he might fulfill the word of the Lord, which he spake concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh." The Zadokite family continued in an unbroken line to Christ. So did the Lord build him a house indeed. And in the main, Zadok and his descendants were men of personal godliness. But the final fulfillment of the prophecy under consideration was Christ.

He did absolutely according to that which was in God's heart and mind. Him God built a sure house—the church—which He purchased by His own blood. And He purges His church from all corruption and the wicked. He sanctifies and cleanses her “with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.”

The final prediction of the “man of God” to Eli, “And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left in thine house shall come and crouch to him for a piece of silver and a morsel of bread, and shall say, Put me I pray thee into one of the priest's offices, that I may eat a piece of bread.” Eli's house will be impoverished through its deposition from the priestly office. It shall beg its bread and be wholly dependent on the Zadokite family for the means of supporting life. So was Eli in his generations punished in two ways. He was cut off as to the increase of his house and impoverished. He was brought low indeed, because he restrained not his sons. G. M. O.

THROUGH THE AGES

St. Thomas of Canterbury

The previous article was but another chapter in the centuries-old contest between the papacy and the secular power for supremacy in the European Christian commonwealth of the middle ages. As has been repeatedly explained in previous articles and what we must always keep before our mind, if the history of the church of the Middle Ages is to be understood, is that, in those ages church and state were fused together, so to speak, into a Christian commonwealth, that, according to the papal party, the pope, but that according to the imperial party, the emperor, formed, should form, under God the supreme judicial power in this commonwealth, and that therefore each—emperor and pope—strove to subject the other to himself, or to free himself from the yoke of the other, when the other would momentarily prevail, or to resist the encroachments of the other upon what he considered to be his domain. In the previous article we witnessed this struggle as it became flesh and blood in pope Alexander III and emperor Frederick Barbarossa of Germany. The theme of this article is this same struggle or contest as it was carried on not on the continent of Europe but in England between King Henry II of England and Thomas Becket or St. Thomas

archbishop of Canterbury. By virtue of his exalted position, the latter, as the pope's underling, headed the church of England. The papal chair at the time was occupied by this same Alexander III.

Thomas Becket, who easily was the most prominent historical figure in the twelfth century, was born in London, Dec. 21, 1118, while Henry was king. His father was Gilbert Becket, a merchant in Cheapside. His mother Matilda was a Saracen princess. Having studied at the universities of Paris, Bologna, and Auxerre, Thomas was versed in civil and canon law without being especially learned in these fields. He was not a scholar. He rose to power in the world and in the church by the magnetism of his personality. He was tall and handsome and of a regal appearance. He had a brilliant mind and a fluent tongue. He could discourse well and was an able debater. His disposition was cheerful and his manner affable. Besides, he could easily hold his own in all the hazardous sports of that age. When Thomas was twenty-four year old, the archbishop of Canterbury took him into his service, bestowed upon him, through the years, several profitable benefices and used him in many important missions, with the papal court, besides making him archdeacon. At the age of thirty-seven, he was appointed by King Henry II to the highest civil dignitary in the realm, the chancellorship of England. He was now the custodian of all the kingly grants and favors and his income was enormous.

Henry II (1154-1189) was the first king of the Plantagenets (this name, a compound of *planta*, sprig, and *genesta* plant, was originally a nickname of Geoffrey, the father of Henry II and the founder of this royal house). Henry was an able and energetic king, whose reign was characterized by law and justice. Besides, he was the most powerful ruler in Western Europe, his dominions extending farther than those of the king of France. But he had a violent temper and like most kings was immoral. He was married to Queen Eleanor, the unfaithful and divorced wife of the king of France, but besides her he had several mistresses.

Becket was a good chancellor, devoted to official duty and thoroughly loyal to the king. He never failed to place the interests of the crown above those of the clergy and thus he served his master well. He vested his high office with an unprecedented splendour and prominence. His dress was after the best fashion and a brilliant train of a hundred and forty knights attended him wherever he went. His household lived most sumptuously. The food was delicate and wines of the choicest vintage were served in cups of gold. He spent large sums on public festivities and his hospitality was prodigal. The heir of the crown was then a boy of seven years, and the daughter of the king of France a girl of three. The chancellor in

person appeared at the court of France to propose marriage between the two, his purpose being to avert war between England and France. On that journey, he surrounded himself with two hundred knights, priests, standard-bearers, all adorned in new attire. He took with him eight wagons, each drawn by five horses, and bearing chests that contained his money and the presents, which were freely distributed in Paris. But his effort to maintain peace ended in failure.

War broke out between England and France; and the chancellor, at the head of seven hundred knights went forth to do battle for his lord the king. He was a brave warrior. One of his contemporary admirers reports, "Who can recount the carnage, the desolation, which he made at the head of a strong body of soldiers? He attacked castles, razed towns and cities to the ground, burned down houses and farms without touch of pity, and never showed the slightest mercy to any one who rose in insurrection against the master's authority."

In 1161 Theobald, the archbishop of Canterbury, died. The king, supposing that he should most certainly promote his own interests if he should make Becket to succeed Theobald, appointed him to the exalted dignitary left vacant by the deceased archbishop, while at the same time allowing him to continue in the same relation to himself, as chancellor. Becket did not want the post, but the king's word had to be obeyed and he therefore reluctantly and resentfully accepted. Besides being chancellor, he now was primate of the church of England and thus were combined in his person two offices, the highest in the realm except those of pope and king. There were now two masters to be served, the Roman hierarchy as headed by the pope and the state as localized in England and as headed there by king Henry II. But no one can serve two masters, whose interests clash, as they did here, seeing that each—king and pope—wanted for himself the earth. Becket had to choose, which he did. To the great vexation and disappointment of the king, he chose the hierarchy and thenceforth passionately addressed himself to the task of promoting not its spiritual but only its material interests against those of the king and the state. If formerly he was the king's most devoted servant and friend, he was now his most dangerous rival and enemy. What is more, he changed his whole mode of life. Laying aside his princely robes, he put on a haircloth, and took up his abode in a cloister, where he lived on roots, drank nauseous water, washed the feet of dirty beggars, wept for his past sins, scourged his naked back, prayed much and read the Scriptures, and was wonderfully generous to the poor. The magnificent chancellor became a monk, austere and squalid. Had Thomas suddenly and radically been transformed into a saint?

Doubtless not. He was striving hard to realize the ideal of a medieval bishop. The king had wanted him to be a bishop, and a bishop he would be both in mode of life and in his passionate devotion to the hierarchy; for he was an enemy of all half-measures.

It did not take long before war broke out between Henry and Thomas. Their first clash concerned the matter of taxation. Henry determined to appropriate the customary payment of two shillings on every section of land belonging to the church. Becket opposed the king. Henry flew into a rage, "By the eyes of God, it shall be appropriated!" But Becket was adamant. "By the eyes of God, by which you swear, it shall never be levied as long as I live." There were other causes of dispute, of which the most noteworthy was the following. There were found among the ecclesiastics of England men who were guilty of the worst crimes. Being priests, the right of these persons was to be tried only in the court of the bishops, where they often received no severer punishment than deposition from their spiritual office. The king demanded that such offenders, after having been degraded, should be tried in the civil court, and be made to suffer the punishment appointed by the law. He maintained, and rightly so, that the loss of clerical dignity was to such persons no punishment at all, and that, by being suffered to go unpunished, such crimes spread with fearful rapidity. But Becket and the bishops insisted that the king's demand militated against canon law and the scriptures. But when the king diminished Becket's benefices, he yielded the point and promised to obey the custom of the realm. By a great council in Clarendon the king ratified the concession and besides enacted sixteen statutes as laws of England to which he gave the name of Clarendon Constitutions. These were meaningful statutes. The Roman church was everywhere an independent worldly-spiritual kingdom with its own courts and laws and with the pope as its sole spiritual and temporal lord.

The Clarendon Statutes determined that criminal ecclesiastics—priests and bishops—must be tried in civil courts, the courts of the king, and punished like laymen. Actually these statutes withdrew the Roman hierarchy in England—the clergy together with all their vast estates—from under the jurisdiction of the papacy and placed it under the rule of the king and the civil laws of the realm.

Becket binded himself by an oath to abide by these statutes, but once more in Canterbury he changed his mind and commanded his bishops to disobey the constitutions.

Knowing that he was to be arrested, Becket fled to the continent and was assigned by pope Alexander—himself in exile—to a monastery in Pontigny. Here he remained till 1166. In this year he placed under the sentence of excommunication all the authors and

defenders of the constitution of Clarendon, but as yet he spared Henry. The king, who was beside himself with rage, sought redress with Alexander. The pope was engaged in a war for power with emperor Frederick of Germany. Anxious to retain Henry's support in this war, he made several concessions to the king and thereby incurred the wrath of Becket. "Your gold and silver," he wrote to the pope's cardinals, "will not deliver you in the day of the Lord's wrath." To pacify Becket, the pope assured him that the concessions were only temporary. Such were the ways of the papacy with men in its carnal strivings with the secular rulers for this earth. The spirit that pervaded the papacy was from the abyss and likewise the conception of the papal institution. This must be plain to everyone with only a superficial acquaintance with the behaviour of this institution through the ages of the past. Many popes were no doubt respectable men; that is, they were no winebibbers, gluttons and whoremongers. But all were politicians in the worst sense and warmongers in their lust of power. Becket repeated his excommunication of the bishops of England, the reason being that his blood again was made to boil by a new provocation of Henry. The king had his son crowned by the archbishop of York and thereby infringed upon the rights of Becket. The excommunicated bishops began to waver. One after another forsook the king and went over to the side of Becket. Becoming alarmed, the king suddenly made peace with Becket. But the latter refused to pardon the prelates who had officiated at the crowning of Henry's son. They appealed their case to the king. He said, "If all are to be excommunicated who officiated at my son's coronation, by the eyes of God, I am equally guilty." One of the prelates replied, "As long as Thomas lives you will never be at peace." In a fit of anger Henry retorted, "A fellow that has eaten my bread has lifted up his heel against me; a fellow that I loaded with benefits, dares insult the king; a fellow that came to court on a lame horse, with a cloak for a saddle, sits without hindrance on the throne itself. By the eyes of God, is there none of my thankless and cowardly courtiers who will deliver me from the insults of this low-born and turbulent priest?" Four knights acted upon the king's suggestion. Going to Becket's palace, they demanded that he absolve the excommunicated bishops. Because he refused, they slew him and strew the brains over the pavement.

The murder of Becket horrified the Christian world. Remarkable cures were reported to be taking place at his tomb. "The blind see, the deaf hear, the dumb speak, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the devils are cast out, even the dead are raised to life," wrote one of his friends, John of Salisbury. The multitude said that Becket was a saint. Two years later he was so canonized by Alexander III. The people

accused King Henry II of being the author of the crime. The king went to amazing extremes to clear himself from alleged fault or guilt, to prevent his being excommunicated by the pope. He shut himself up in his palace for five weeks, crying, "Alas, alas that it ever happened." He maintained under oath that he had not commanded Becket's death nor even desired it. He declared the Constitutions of Clarendon null and void. He restored to the church of England all its rights and possessions. The bishop absolved him. But the king went even farther. His wife and two sons rebelled against him and he felt that he was being smitten of God for the murder of Becket. In the attempt to appease the divine anger, he made a pilgrimage to his tomb. Catching sight of the towers of Canterbury, he dismounted from his horse and walked with bare feet, through the streets, kissed the floor of the cloister where Becket had fallen, prostrated himself before the tomb and submitted to the scourgings of a bishop and abbot and eighty monks. This was the deepest humiliation of king before priest on record in history. For three hundred years Canterbury was the greatest sacred spot of Western Christendom. By 1420 it had been visited by a hundred thousand pilgrims from all parts of England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, and even from France. But at the time of the Reformation, the worship of St. Thomas was ended by King Henry VIII. On June 10, 1538, Thomas was condemned as a "rebel and a traitor" at Westminster, and his idolatry forbidden. His shrine was razed and removed and its place has known it no more to this day. Thus through a concurrence of circumstances with which the pope had little to do, the papacy at this time triumphed wonderfully over the secular power in England.

G. M. O.

SION'S ZANGEN

De Verbonds Psalm

(Psalm 89; Zesde Deel)

De vorige maal, dat we iets schreven over dezen schoonen psalm, hebben we aangetoond, dat juist vanwege de onbegrijpelijke trouw des Heeren, de betere David verlaten moest worden, verstooten en verworpen.

Die verstooting en verlating wordt in hartroerende woorden beschreven in de verdere verzen. En we zien weer, dat het lijden van den Christus Gods typisch

voortgeleden werd in de vele heiligen van het Oude Verbond.

Hoort Hem klagen: "Gij hebt alle Zijne muren doorgebroken, Gij hebt Zijne vestingen nedergeworpen."

Een muur en een vesting spreekt ons toe van midelen tot beveiliging. Dat was in grooter mate zoo in den tijd toen deze psalm gedicht werd. In dien tijd, en zeer lang daarna, waren de steden omringd door muren en in die muren waren ook vestingen, opdat men de stad kon verdedigen tegen den vijand. In figuurlijken zin wordt dit toegepast op den klager. De mensch heeft beveiliging van noode. Ook hij heeft zijn muren en vestingen. Elk mensch heeft een mate van weerstandsvermogen, hij heeft een zekere mate van kracht, handen en armen; en daarachter ligt het brein om dat weerstandsvermogen goed te gebruiken. En alle deze dingen zijn uit God die een ieder een zekere mate van macht en kracht schenkt.

Doch Jezus klaagt hier profetisch, dat de Heere Hem beroofd heeft van Zijn macht en kracht. En op een andere plaats hooren we hetzelfde. Daar zegt Hij: Gij (en dat is God) legt Mij in het stof des doods. (Ps. 22:16b). Nu zijn er twee zijden aan die verzwakking van de krachten van Messias. Ter eener zijde, berooft God Hem door middel van de menschen en duivelen; en, ter anderzijde, doet God dat rechtstreeks. Van dit laatste kunnen we niet veel zeggen. Het is alles zoo overweldigend. Wie kan een commentaar geven, b.v., op de vreeselijke woorden, die we zoo even aanhaalden: Gij legt Mij in het stof des doods!? Die dood is maar niet de lichamelijke dood alleen. Als er van *dood* sprake is bij Jezus, dan houdt dat in de vreeselijke eeuwige dood.

Maar hier gewaagt de klager van de berooving die Hem van menschen overkomt, onder het bestuur Gods natuurlijk. Let slechts op het volgende vers: "Allen die op den weg voorbijgingen, hebben Hem beroofd, Zijn naburen is Hij tot een smaad geweest."

Ja, we hebben al eerder gehoord van het volk, dat op den weg Hem voorbijgaat. Jeremiah zal daarvan klagen.

En, wonderlijk, we lezen er van in de Evangeliën. Die op den weg voorbijgingen lasterden Hem ook, het hoofd schuddende van spot en hoon.

Op den weg voorbijgaan, wat anders is het dan om aan te duiden het karakteristieke van den onverschilligen mensch. Zij zijn op den weg met Christus, doch ze gaan voorbij. En, zoo in 't voorbijgaan, doen ze twee dingen: ze berooven Hem en bespotten Hem.

Dit alles is vreeselijk vervuld. Ook moet ge het *allen* laten staan. Allen is hier allen, het sluit alle klassen van menschen in. Petrus vloekt en berooft Jezus van Zijn discipel; Judas verkoopt Hem: Hij moet weg van den aardbodem; de Oud-Testamentische kerk heeft liever Zijn bloed over zich en hare kinderen,

dan dat Messias hen zou zaligen; Pilatus wascht zich de handen en geeft Hem over, terwijl Herodus spot en hoont. En al het volk tiert in woesten nijd: Kruist Hem, kruist Hem!

Ja, allen die op den weg voorbijgingen hebben Hem met spot overladen en uitgekleed. We hebben gehoord, dat de soldaten het lot wierpen: Hij mocht nog niet eens een stuk kleeren behouden.

En alle deze dingen zijn uit God, want Hij vervolgt: "Gij hebt de rechterhand Zijner wederpartijders verhoogd, Gij hebt alle Zijne vijanden verblijd."

Vreemd! Hoe kan dat toch?

Dat komt Hem over om Uwentwil, mijn vriend!

Gij waart schuldig voor God vanwege Uwe zonde. En alle die zonden van U en al Gods volk heeft de Heere op Hem doen aanloopen. En als dezelve, d.w.z., die zonde, geëischt werd, toen werd Hij verdrukt. Het recht Gods eischte dat al die gruwelen vervuld zouden worden aan dat arme Lam, dat de zonde der wereld aan 't wegnemen is.

't Wordt al erger: "Gij hebt ook de scherpe Zijns zwaards omgekeerd, en hebt Hem niet staande gehouden in den strijd."

Het zwaard van Jezus is Zijn Woord. Welnu, dat Woord moest ophouden, verstommen. Op weg naar het Kruis heeft Hij nog even een korte preek gehouden tot de dochters van Jeruzalem; aan het kruis nog bevel gegeven van den eeuwigen staat eens moordenaars, doch dan komt de lange, zeer lange stilte: het zwaard is omgekeerd. Het scherpe zwaard van Messias, dat Hij zoo machtig hanteerde op aarde ligt ter aarde: Hij zwijgt en de druppelen zweet en bloed (ik kan ze niet uit elkaar houden; zij zijn ondereen vermengd) doorweeken de aarde onder den kruispaal. God hield Hem niet staande in den strijd. Hij moest het onder spit delven. En dat onderspit is de diepte waar Hij niet staan kon. Diep lijdende Messias!

"Gij hebt Zijne schoonheid doen ophouden, en Gij hebt Zijn troon ter aarde nedergestooten."

Als ge daar meer van weten wilt moet ge aandachtig luisteren naar Jesaja.

De menschen maken schoone portretten en schilderijen van Jezus. En er is iets in dat ik toejuich. Die menschen hebben de Bruid hooren zeggen: "Gij zijt veel schooner dan de menschenkinderen! Of ook: "Alles aan Hem is zeer begerlijk!" En ze maakten hun mooie plaatjes van Jezus.

Doch ik heb altijd gedacht, dat als we eens een echte photographie van Jezus hadden, we verschrikken zouden. Ik denk, dat Jezus de sporen van eeuwige smart op Zijn heilig gelaat had, alle de dagen Zijns vleesch op aarde. Ik stem toe, dat Jesaja niet bloot het uitwendige gelaat van Jezus beschreef in Jesaja 52:14, maar ik geloof stellig, dat Zijn uitwendige gestalte er in begrepen ligt. Leest dit gedeelte en beeft: "Gelijk als velen zich over U ontzet hebben,—alzo

verdorven was Zijn gelaat, meer dan van iemand, en Zijne gedaante, meer dan van andere menschenkinderen—alzo zal Hij vele heidenen besprengen. . . .”

Ook hebben we Jesaja's woorden in het volgende hoofdstuk: “Hij had geene gedaante noch heerlijkheid; als wij Hem aanzagen, zoo was er geene gestalte dat wij Hem zouden begeerd hebben. Hij was veracht en de onwaardigste onder de menschen, een Man van smarten, en verzocht in krankheid; en een iegelijk was als verbergende het aangezicht voor Hem; Hij was veracht en wij hebben Hem niet veracht!”

Leest dat, en zeg mij dan of ge gelooven kunt, dat Jezus zeer schoon van aangezicht was in den tijd Zijner smarten. O ja, *nu* is Hij schoon; nu is Hij de schoonste der menschenkinderen, daar boven bij God. Doch nu is Hij rijk en veilig, in den boezem Gods. Nu straalt Zijn aangezicht gelijk de zon in hare kracht en nu is des Heeren heerlijkheid uitgespreid over Zijn aangezicht. Alles aan Jezus is nu aan den allerkostelijksten steen jaspis gelijk: Jaspis, de kleur van God!

Doch niet toen Hij van den klagelijken zanger gezien werd profetisch. De Heere had Zijn schoonheid doen ophouden, zoo lezen we in dezen psalm. En Zijn troon werd omvergeworpen op aarde. Het eenigste overblijfsel van dien troon op aarde is, ten eerste, een spottend woord op het plankje, dat boven Zijn heilig hoofd op het kruis vastgespijkerd wierd; en, ten tweede, het bevende woord van den moordenaar aan Zijn rechterhand: Gedenk mijner, zoo wanneer Gij aangekomen zult zijn in Uw koninkrijk! Verder niets. Zijt Ge dan een Koning? vroeg Pilatus. De man was verwonderd. Het leek er dan ook niet op. Daar staat Hij: gebonden, bespot, met bloed dat van Zijn voorhoofd drupt. Een kroon? Ja, doch van doornen gevlochten! Een purperen kleed (vorstengewaad), doch bewijs van vreeselijken spot; een scepter? Ja, doch het is slechts een rietstok: straks zullen ze Hem die rietstok afnemen en wreedelijk op Zijn doornenkroon slaan. De doornen dringen dieper Zijn heilig voorhoofd in.

“Gij hebt de dagen Zijner jeugd verkort. Gij hebt Hem met schaamte overdekt.”

Jeugd is de tijd van kracht, van levenslust en blijdschap.

Doch dat mocht niet bij Jezus.

Hebt ge U wel eens afgevraagd: hoe gedroeg Jezus Zich onder de kleine kinderen, jongens en straks jongelingen, tijdens Zijn jeugdijaren? Kunt ge U voorstellen, kennende de Schriften, dat Jezus ooit uitbundig gelachen heeft, gespeeld als kinderen en knapen spelen? Kunt ge U voorstellen, dat Jezus als jongeling zijn vermaak zocht bij jongelijken van Zijn leeftijd?

Ge weet beter.

Als een knaap van 12 jaar zit Hij tusschen de docenten en leeraars van Israel en verbaast allen vanwege Zijn spreken, vragen en antwoorden. Als klein kind

wist Hij, dat Hij moest bezig zijn in de dingen Zijns Vaders. Vreeselijke dingen Zijns Vaders. Wat zijn ze anders, die dingen, dan genoegdoen aan Zijn recht, lijden, lijden. Als kind drukte Hem de last des toorns Gods. Ik denk, dat Jezus Zich vaak in slaap geschreid heeft. Leest het vreeselijke vers in Hebr. 6:7! Leest het en aanbidt!

God verkorte Hem Zijn jeugdijaren. En als man van slechts 33 jaren verzinkt Hij in de onmetelijke diepten van den eeuwigen dood.

En al die weg was een weg van schaamte, spot, hoon, verachting, verguizing en vertrapping.

En als Hij dan uiteindelijk tot God riep, dan zweeg de Almachtige.

Want Hij ondervond het al naar 't onkreukbare recht Gods.

Hij stond in Uwe plaats.

Zijn de verzen van dezen psalm moeilijk te verklaren tot hiertoe, wat zullen we zeggen van de verzen die nu volgen? We ruiken zwavelvuur en sulfurvlammen.

Hij gaat nu spreken van Gods grimmigheid, die als een vuur brandt. Hij klaagt van den dood en het geweld des graf.

We leven zoo oppervlakkig, doch we konden weten, dat het graf de grimmigheid des Heeren is.

Kom aan, laat ons eens zien.

Als ge ouder wordt en leelijk, als Uw haar en tanden los worden van de wortelen en U stap al zwakker wordt, dan is het grimmigheid God die over Uw lichaam komt. En dat is nog maar het beginsel der smarten. Als we Uw adem niet langer kunnen bemerken, dan zullen we Uw lichaam nog éénmaal wasschen, doch dan is het uit. De zwachtels omhullen U en ge gaat naar het graf, waar het ongedierte wacht. God heeft hen gezonden. En dat ongedierte zal, met de millioenen van dieren die ge in Uw lichaam meebrengt, een geweldig werk doen. God heeft hen opgedragen om U met geweld te omgorden. Het is alles de grimmigheid Gods. Het is alles *contra naturam*! Naar Gods schepingsordinantiën moest het zoo niet. Doch we hebben gezondigd. En zelfs al gaan we naar den hemel: vleesch en bloed kunnen het Koninkrijk niet beërven: Uw lichaam moet dood en verrotten in het graf. Gij ervaart het geweld des graf. Dat graf is zóó geweldig, dat wij het niet kunnen aanzien. We werpen er zes voet grond op.

En als ge geen Messias hebt in den hemel, dan geschiedt hetzelfde met Uw ziel, aanvankelijk in de hel. En straks, in klimmende mate, in de poel die brandt van vuur en sulfur.

En al dat geweld, vermenigvuldigd tot in der eeuwigheid, heeft Jezus geleden.

Het tegenovergestelde van dat geweld is het lieflijk aangezicht van God. Als dat U toelacht dan vernieuwt

ge Uw jeugd en vaart ge op met vleuglen gelijk de arenden.

Nu dan, Jezus moest dat lieflijk aangezicht missen, want Hij klaagt: "Hoe lang, O Heere, zult Gij U steeds verbergen?" En, negatief, klaagt Hij vanwege den dood en het geweld des grafs.

En het is alles vervuld. Want aan het kruis, waar Hij aan de verwoestende invloeden van Gods boodschapper, den dood, wordt prijsgegeven, hoorden we Hem roepen: Waarom Mij verlaten, O Mijn God?!

Hartroerend klagen van Jezus. Het vijftigste vers wil eigenlijk zeggen: Waar is Uw vorige glimlach toch, O Mijn Vader?!

En terwijl Hij tot God klaagt van wege Zijn grimigheid, Zijn dood, Zijn geweldig plagen van het graf, is er nog steeds de smaad der helwichten die de voetstappen "Uws Gezalfden smaden"!

Kunt ge er bij?

Kunt ge hier aanbidden?

Het is beter dat ge het doet, want dit vreeselijke schouwspel is een openbaring van liefde die de hemelen zullen doen ruischen tot in eeuwigheid.

Ge vraagt om bewijs?

Luistert dan naar den laatsten snik van dezen Lijder, Uw Heiland en Verlosser: "Geloofd zij de Heere in eeuwigheid!"

Messias wist, dat dit ontzettend lijden zou zijn tot bewondering van God, dat Hij door dit Lam, dit bloedende Lam, den hemel zou vullen met de schare die niemand tellen kan.

En straks zult ge een roepen, een zingen hooren, dat de dorpelen der deuren zich bewegen zullen en het Huis vervuld zal worden met rook. Het is de rook van de Heerlijkheid Gods.

Er zijn nog drie woorden over van dezen psalm.

Amen, ja, Amen!

G. V.

IN HIS FEAR

To The Utmost Of Your Power

II.

The fear of the Lord is a profound respect for and solemn wonder before God in love. He who fears the Lord loves Him and in holy reverence and awe recognizes Him as the sovereign creator and possessor of all things. Of this we wrote in our former essay, but as we also remarked then that there is more to that fear of the Lord. An important element in that fear of the Lord is trust in Him. He who fears the Lord

believes in Him and looks to Him for all his needs both spiritual and physical. In the Old Testament the expression "the fear of the Lord" is used in the sense of faith and trust in God. Let me give a few examples of this. In Proverbs 14:26 we read, "In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence". Psalm 34:9, 10 contains the same idea. We read, "O fear the Lord, ye His saints; for there is no want to them that fear Him. The young lions do lack and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing." Notice that according to the Hebrew paralellism the fear of the Lord is presented as being a seeking of the Lord. A similar thought is expressed by Samuel in I Sam. 12:24, "Only fear the Lord and serve Him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things He hath done for you." The idea is not that Israel must serve God because God did so much for Israel. Israel must serve God regardless of whether He gives much or little. Rather is the expression, "for consider how great things He hath done for you" the reason why Israel ought to fear Him, that is, trust in Him and look to Him for help and strength.

The child who is taught to fear the Lord in the sense that he recognizes Him as the sovereign creator and possessor of all things will also trust in Him and look not to the world but to God for all his needs. The child who is taught to stand in awe at the display of God's love, righteousness and wisdom at the cross will likewise trust in Him for salvation. That is why the expression, "the fear of the Lord" is used in the Old Testament for faith in God. This trust is not the result of the fear of the Lord. It is a part of it. We believe that Solomon uses the expression in that sense when he writes in Ecclesiastes 12:13, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments; for this is the whole duty of man." The wellknown hymn expresses this idea by saying, "Trust and obey, for there is no other way".

We may note another truth taught in this passage from I Sam. 12 and Eccl. 12. Notice that fearing the Lord and keeping His commandments are linked together. You may find many such passages in Scripture. This is due to the fact that only those who fear God in the sense of having a profound respect for Him in love will obey Him, "Common Grace" to the contrary. Understand that we are speaking of obedience and not simple outward compliance with the letter of the law. We are not speaking of deeds which look good to man but deeds which are pleasing to God. You might have been a silent witness as God gave command to the devil that he might take Job's possessions away but might not touch his life. You might then, as you observe the devil keeping the letter of this law, say, "Was that not a nice deed of the devil? Look! He obeyed God". Yet such is not the case. His deed was performed in that fear of the Lord of fright and

dread. There was no love of God in it. No different is it with man. If he does not fear God in the sense of reverence and awe rooted in love, he will not *obey* God.

Our children must to the utmost of our power be taught that fear of the Lord, of reverence and awe if we are to expect them to obey God. In this connection let me insert the remark that the schools of the world surely cannot teach our children to live a decent life. They cannot teach our children to obey. All they can do is to show the *advisability* of compliance to law and order. Only the Christian school can teach the child obedience, and it does so only when it holds before the mind of the child in all his instruction this Mighty, Sovereign creator of all things Whose all things are and to Whose praises all things exist and must be used.

One further remark which we had intended to make in our first essay follows from the above. The fruit of that fear of the Lord will be the praise of His name. He who fears the Lord will by his absolute trust in God and obedience to His will praise Him in all that he does. In Psalm 111 where we find those well known words, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" you find this idea expressed. The Psalmist who has this fear of the Lord begins his Psalm by singing, "Praise ye the Lord. I will praise the Lord with my whole heart." Then follows the enumeration of these many virtues of God displayed in His works and which we mentioned in our last essay. This leads him to the observation that he who sees all this, as he does, has true wisdom. He closes with the statement again, "His praise endureth for ever."

It is for this purpose that God forms us as His people according to Isaiah 43:21. All things must be to the praise and glory of His name, and indeed all things are to the praise and glory of His name. In His grace, however, He gives us the fear of His name so that we may consciously and willingly praise and glorify Him and enjoy His fellowship in that blessed activity. All the instruction our children receive, if it is not directed toward that end, misses its real purpose. We must be careful so that to the utmost of our power our children are kept from singing the praises of man and exalting man in their minds to the place that rightfully belongs only to God. Even in the great works men achieve in the fields of art, science, politics or industry we must to the utmost of our power see to it that our children see the praises of God therein and that they do not attribute these achievements to the men through whom God has wrought these things. Teach the child the fear of the Lord and he will praise God for His marvelous works. When an artist has painted a beautiful picture, you do not take your child to this artist's brushes and say to him, "Are these not wonderful brushes to have made such a beautiful picture?" These brushes were only the means whereby

the *artist* painted the picture. Much less must we in educating our children point them to men and their achievements in any other way than as *God's means* whereby He works all things. Do this and the child will fear the Lord, and he will sing God's praises. That we believe is our calling and that we must do to the utmost of our power whether it pertains to natural things we are teaching or spiritual things. "This people have I formed for myself. They shall show forth my praises" is what God declares in Isaiah 43:21. Your child belongs to that people.

Much more can be said on this subject, and we have only penned down a few thoughts as a basis for the remarks we wish to make a little later. We are anxious to take up the more practical aspects of this promise to bring up our children in the fear of the Lord to the utmost of our power. Our allotted space is very limited and we will therefore hasten on to the consideration of another aspect of this vow we have made.

What is meant by the utmost of my power?

The power to bring up one's children in the fear of the Lord varies in different individuals. That is to be expected. "To the utmost of your power" implies this very thing. We are not demanded to state how much we will teach our children. There is no prescribed amount of effort in this direction that is demanded. What is demanded is that we do so to the utmost of the power we have received from God. If it be great, we must use it all. If it be little, we must likewise use it all.

There are so many things that enter in when we discuss and consider what this power is. The one parent may have a far greater ability to teach in the sense that he has the talent of being able to explain clearly what he has in mind and of being able to apply the principles of God's Word to that which he teaches. Some mothers are just born teachers and of others you would almost say that they know not the first things about teaching. Some have little patience even with their own flesh and blood, while others manifest a patience that amazes. Then again you have parents who are very strong spiritually and others who are very weak spiritually. Some have a vast store of Scripture knowledge and knowledge of doctrine. Others are very ignorant in regard to these things and are spiritually careless. There are parents that are extremely pious and strict in all their own walk of life, while others are very lax and show little interest either in Divine worship upon the Sabbath or in the study of God's Word in Society. Let us not forget that our own walk of life and the example that we set has a tremendous bearing upon the training of our children! We are not bringing them up in the fear of the Lord to the *utmost* of our power by a careless, earthly-minded walk.

If space permits, we hope to write more in detail on this matter in a later issue of the Standard Bearer.

Sad to say there are also those cases where there are parents who have not the power to instruct their children in the doctrine contained in the Old and New Testaments *as it is taught here in this Christian church* because they joined that church for any reason but that they believed the doctrine of that church. I am not thinking of those who do not fully understand it and join that they may be further instructed. Such by God's grace soon increase in the power to bring up their children in the fear of the Lord. I have reference to those whose interest in doctrinal differences is so small or lacking that it is not considered when contemplating marriage.

This may all seem to be far fetched from our subject, yet it stands vitally connected with it. The power of the parents together and even of the single parent to bring up God's children in the doctrine as taught in the church where these children are baptized and this vow is made, is to a great degree determined just exactly by the spiritual and doctrinal stand of these parents. Did God not in the beginning say that He would make an help meet for Adam? He did not say an help-meet or as we often say help-mate. It ought to be read thus, that God would make a wife meet or fit for Adam. God made Eve physically and spiritually fit to be a help to him. Thus our Protestant Reformed young men and women ought to look for a life's companion. They ought to select one who will not be a detriment to them in their own spiritual life nor in this matter of bringing up their children in the doctrine contained in the Old and New Testament *as taught in the Protestant Reformed churches*. That holds true for every denomination as well. Let each one seek a companion in his own denomination for the spiritual welfare of his own soul and for his children's sake, unless he sees the error of his own church and knows of a church that preaches the truth. There ought to be a great deal more consideration of spiritual matters before the promise of matrimony is given or made.

This spiritual strength, of course, is by far the determining factor of one's power to bring up one's children in the fear of the Lord. Give me parents who have little teaching aptitude but a great knowledge of Scripture and the doctrine of his church and who are spiritually minded, and I will say that their power to bring up their children in the fear of the Lord is far greater than those who have an aptitude to teach or even teaching experience in schools but who are spiritually weak and doctrinally ignorant.

To instruct our children in the fear of the Lord we do not need to get a normal training in some college, but we do need to know the doctrine of the Old and New Testament. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the Israelites were very unschooled in the modern sense

of the word, but they knew the doctrine of God's word, and Abraham was also spiritual enough to tell his servant that Isaac must have an help *meet* for him as the promised seed of the Covenant. Isaac must have a wife who will not be a detriment but an asset to Isaac in teaching the fear of the Lord. There is one interesting point here somewhat outside the sphere of our subject but worth noting. The salvation of the child will not depend on our power and our ability. Esau had the same mother and father as Jacob. Yet the fact remains that God calls us to instruct our children to the utmost of our power in His fear. Who then would dare to say that before one becomes married he must not exercise the power he has to see to it that his power will not be lessened by the step he has taken for life?

In our next essay we hope to continue the discussion of this power we must exercise to the utmost.

J. A. H.

FROM HOLY WRIT

"In Him, in Whom we have been made a heritage, having been foreordained according to the purpose of the all things energizing One according to the counsel of His will, in order that we should be unto the praise of His glory, we who before hoped in Christ." — Ephesians 1:11, 12.

That God has caused all wisdom and prudence to richly abound to the New Testament Church, in the Beloved Son in the flesh, is the clear teaching of the apostle Paul in the preceding verses. According to His eternal good-pleasure God has purposed to sum up all things in heaven and on earth in Christ Jesus. The actual realization of this consummation of all things, of uniting all things under one Head, is brought about in the birth, suffering and death of Christ, His resurrection and ascension unto God's right hand in the heavens above.

In this Son of God in the flesh, we, the Church of Jesus Christ, have redemption and the forgiveness of sins. The meritorious cause of this redemption is the vicarious death of Christ on the accursed tree. We have been bought with a precious price. And God in Christ has made us His peculiar *heritage*.

It is to this element of our being the "heritage" of God, and of having been constituted such by God, that the apostle calls our attention in these verses. Hence, they are of great interest to us. Repeatedly we have called attention in these articles to the fact, that Christ is the Head not only of the Church, His Body, but that

He is also Head over all things, over all Principalities and Powers and Dominions in heavenly places. That He is, indeed, Head also of the angel-hosts is clear from Eph. 1:20-23; Col. 2:10 as well as from Heb. 1:6, 7 and 2:5-9. With this truth we were also confronted, and, in fact, we are still interested, when we tried to explain the Scriptural implication of God's "summing up" of all things in Christ.

The question of the proper relationship of the Church to Christ is interwoven with the other question of the unique place that the redeemed and purified Church occupies in "all things". It is to the latter question that an answer is given in the verses 11 and 12. And, thus, indirectly and by implication, we receive an answer to the question of the difference between the legal status of angels and redeemed men respectively.

First of all, we would call attention to the very evident fact, that the writer again places the greatest emphasis on the fact, on the immutable good-pleasure of God, that all that the saints become, their peculiar degree of glory and honor amongst "all things", is "in Him". The same Lord Jesus Christ, the Beloved Son in the flesh, in the one in whom we have been made a "heritage". And He is the one, and there is no other, in whom God sums up all things. Let us look at Him, see Him crowned with glory and honor, standing at the very pinnacle of God's creation! Whom do you see? None other than *our* Lord! Him we see, Who is our Lord, as He is the Lord of none else! He filleth us with His Almighty grace and Spirit. For all the spiritual blessings in heavenly places have become ours in Him. God, as the God and Father of our Lord, Jesus Christ, has thus blessed us in Him. Well, look at this great work of God, this infinite Mystery of God's will, and remember that it is all "in Him".

And what have we been made in *Him*? The apostle says: we have been made a "heritage". This term portrays to us a certain aspect of the church's relationship to God. It does not exhaust the entire riches of all the blessings in heavenly places, to be sure. It rather pictures to us our sonship, kingdom privileges and possessions from a certain aspect.

The idea of the term "heritage" we often meet in the Old Testament Scriptures. It conveys to mind the idea of precious and peculiar possession. Every thing that God has made, His entire creative handiwork is His possession. Are not the cattle upon a thousand hills His? Is He not the Lord, Who sitteth above the circle of the earth? And does He not deal with all according to His sovereign Decree? True as this all is, it nevertheless is true, that God does not call all things, that He has made, His heritage. This is a title of honor reserved for His people Israel, whom He has made a holy nation, a royal priesthood, called into the fellowship of His covenant life.

In Deut. 4:20 we read: "But Jehovah hath taken

you, and brought you forth out of the iron furnace, out of Egypt, to be unto Him a people of *inheritance*, as at this day". And, again, we read in Deut. 9:29, where, Moses rehearsing in the ears of Israel, how he interceded on their behalf at the foot of Mount Sinai at the occasion of making the golden calf, had said to the Lord: "Yet they are Thy people and Thine *inheritance*, which Thou broughtest out by Thy great power and by Thine outstretched arm". And to mention one more passage, we quote Psalm 33:12, where we read "Blessed is the nation whose God is Jehovah, the people whom He hath chosen for His own inheritance".

In reading these passages, it should be borne in mind, that they all speak of Israel as God's heritage, His peculiar possession. They are so because God has redeemed them, has delivered them from Egypt, from the house of bondage. That He redeemed them thus was solely because He chose them to be His heritage. According to elective grace God gave His Promise to the Patriarchs. To this promise He added His word of oath. This Promise cannot fail. God cannot forsake His people, His heritage, the heirs of the Promise. To this good-pleasure of God Moses can appeal, when he pleads Israel's cause at the foot of the mount, when God threatens to break forth upon them in His fury to destroy them. But the word of oath is the end of all contradiction. Also in the mouth of the pleading Moses as he stands before the fury of God's anger.

Another element that must not be lost sight of is, that Israel was God's peculiar heritage typically as a nation. The blessing was, indeed, not for us. The elect obtained it and the rest were hardened. But until the appearance of Jesus Christ, until His death and resurrection Israel as a nation was called by the title of the elect remnant. With His appearance in the fullness of time, in His mighty labors He liberates the Israel of God, disengages it from the national, typical and legal forms. And what always was God's heritage, according to the Promise and the Word of oath, is still God's heritage. Only the heritage is now not limited by carnal commandments, by a middle wall of partition to Israel as a nation, but it is out of all nations. That is the national, typical character of the Old Testament heritage of God, now done away "in Him", that must not be lost sight of, as often as we read these quoted passages, which speak of Israel as a heritage.

What we have learned from these Old Testament passages can be summarized under the following points:

1. Israel is God's heritage, because He has redeemed her from the Egypt of sin. Thus He has an interest in her as He has in none other. Israel reveals the glory of Jehovah as Redeemer, His power, love, grace, mercy in a unique way, antithetically in the world.

2. So abiding is the Lord's interest and love toward Israel, His heritage, that He will never leave her nor forsake her. His own abiding love, His elective good-

pleasure is the ground upon which Moses can plead Israel's cause.

3. The deepest reason for this all is, that the counsel of Jehovah standeth fast forever, the thoughts of His heart to all generations. And, therefore, Israel is always called blessed. Her God is Jehovah. He hath chosen her to be His heritage.

It is exactly in this thought-world, that we find ourselves in the verses 11, 12, which we are studying. The church is here called God's heritage because of her unique relationship to God, and that, especially, as she is contrasted with all other creatures, yea, with the very angels in heaven. Almost literally all the elements, that we found in the Old Testament references are here mentioned by the apostle. That is very striking, indeed.

The apostle brings out the following elements here in connection without being God's heritage, or rather, our having been made such a heritage, a peculiar possession.

1. In this work of redemption, we are presented not as making ourselves a heritage, but we are made such; the action, the energy, that brings it about is not ours, but God's.

2. The cause of, the reason for, God's thus redeeming us and elevating us to this highest possible creaturely honor and glory, is solely God's foreordination. The apostle says: "Having been foreordained." God took the reasons out of His own will and not at all out of us.

3. This foreordination again has a measuring-rod by which it is gauged. This is none other, than council of God's will. That determines the "purpose" of God. And according to this purpose, this counsel of God's will God *energizes* all things. He is called "the all things energizing One".

4. The approximate end, that God has in mind with us, is to make us His heritage, and thus render us infinitely blissful. Yet, that is not the ultimate end God has in mind with us. As heritage, we are a holy nation, a royal priesthood, a living temple in the Spirit. And the purpose of this living temple is, that they who find a place therein shall worship Him day and night; that exactly the fact, that they are this heritage, and the manner of their having become such may be unto the praise of His glory. That we, as a heritage, may sing: "Unto Him, that loved us, and loosed us from our sins by His blood, and He made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen". Rev. 1:5, 6.

From the foregoing it is quite evident, that both the Old and New Testament speak the same language on this score, and that, too, in every element, that our Scripture passage contains.

It should, therefore, be clear that the addition "we who have before hoped in Christ" does not refer to the believers of the Old Testament dispensation, not to

the believers out of the Jews in the New Testament dispensation in distinction from the believers out of the Gentiles. There are expositors, who thus understand the sense of this passage. They allege to find this contrast in the "in who *also ye*" of the verses 13, 14 when compared with "we who *before* hoped in Christ". And so they would render the sense of the passage as follows: "We are a heritage in Him—we of the Jews who have first hoped in Christ—in whom also we having heard the gospel—and having believed have been sealed—to the future redemption, that gives possession". However, we believe that this construction does not do justice to the sense of the words, not to the line of thought of the apostle.

Apart from what we have seen of the unity of the "heritage" of God both in the Old and New Testaments earlier in this article, we would still call attention to the following reasons for rejecting the just named construction of the text.

In the first place, the original Greek does not at all contain the contrast of "we" and "also you". The phrase "we who have before hoped in Christ" literally reads "The ones having just up till now hoped before in Christ." The matter as to who they are, that have hoped is not at all stated. It is left very indefinite. The emphasis is not on the "we" overagainst "you also" at all. The phrase merely stands in apposition to the "in whom we have been made a heritage". And as we have already pointed out, this heritage are the people of God in their very peculiar relationship to God in Christ. And the "heritage" is clearly the church of all ages, as she has come into the possession of the New Testament riches of the kingdom. The very middle-wall is broken down. Let us not rebuild it here.

Secondly, the entire context that preceded this passage, speaks of the consummation, the final perfection of this work of God, in which the church shall be perfected, as God has seen her before Him ideally in His counsel from everlasting. The eyes of all the saints were directed unto that end. A hasty reading of the description of the heroes of faith, in Hebrews 11, should convince the most sceptical, on this score. The viewpoint of the apostle is here this viewpoint of Hebrews 11 and of Romans 8:23, 24.

Thirdly, and that in close connection with the foregoing, we may remark, that the apostle exactly pictures the "ye also" of verses 13, 14, the very "ye also", that are by some put outside of the class the "before hoped in Christ",—I say, these Paul exactly pictures to us in their state of expectation to the final and glorious manifestation of their being the heritage of God, the saints in the light. And to this we might add, that thus it is according to the Scriptures everywhere.

The great comfort of the fact, that we are all the "before hoping in Christ", that we all are in this class is, that thus we can firmly assure in our ardent desire,

that we "also" belong to that peculiar people, and may therefore in hope now be saved, and enjoy such an exalted and unique place in God's handiwork in Christ Jesus. For this "before hoping" is an ear-mark, an infallible proof of elective grace in our life. And thus the apostle would have it be understood.

We hope on Christ, hope for the final redemption and adoption to sons. With longing expectation, with eyes scanning the heavens—the heavens, that are illumined with the revelation of the Son of God in the flesh, by virtue of His death and resurrection and glorious exaltation,—we await His appearance in hope. We look for Him, as *our* Saviour. And looking, waiting, trusting—we are saved, saved in hope. Evermore we give heed to the prophetic Word, which shines in our night of sin and death, until again the light of hope glows brightly in our benighted life, and we again see the dayspar, the harbinger, the Promise of the new day. In this hope the assurance, that we are God's peculiar heritage is ours!

G. L.

PERISCOPE

Regeneration When?

It is of interest to notice that among all the subjects which are undergoing debate in the Netherlands, there is also the question: "Does the Spirit work regeneration in anyone before hearing the Gospel?" Reduced to its simplest form: Can infants and little children be said to be regenerated?

Dr. C. Vonk, in his "Wedergeboorte der Kinderen" proceeds to tell us that neither Scripture nor the Confessions teaches regeneration as existing in infants. Which does not mean, as we might erroneously conclude, that therefore infants cannot be saved. Strange enough, quite the opposite. In a recent letter from the Netherlands, an instructor in the School with the Bible, writes us that, concerning infants which die, we are not to SUPPOSE that they are regenerated, THEY ARE regenerated, without a doubt. But if they live, and as they mature, we must say: We do not know. Dr. Vonk, however, to return to him, maintains that our Three Forms of Unity always treat regeneration as something which exists only in connection with the hearing of the Gospel. Regeneration is possible only through the preaching of the Gospel, hence we cannot well speak of little children as being regenerated.

We have to grant, I believe, that the Heidelberg Catechism does not treat this subject, it does not even distinguish between regeneration and conversion very

carefully. There is no Lord's Day on Regeneration. What we do read is that the Holy Spirit works faith in our hearts, through the Preaching of the Word. The Belg. Confessions have no article on it whatever, they follow the line of faith-justification and sanctification. The Canons do speak of regeneration, but they discuss it under the head of the Preaching of the Gospel, with the inference that regeneration is affected by the hearing of the Gospel. In Art. 17, Head IV we are told for instance, that the Gospel is the "Seed of Regeneration".

It is the age-old conflict of "Middelijke of Onmiddelijke Wedergeboorte".

As Prot. Ref. Churches we follow the path which many theologians before us have followed, of distinguish between regeneration in a two-fold sense. First, as the gracious act of God in the deepest of our being, before we are conscious thereof, whereby God quickens us with the new life of Christ and makes it possible for us to understand spiritual things. (Joh. 3:3; I Pet. 1:3, etc). Then regeneration in its developed, broader sense, that is, to such already regenerated hearts comes the preaching of the Gospel and regeneration flowers out in repentance, conversion, good works, etc. The important thing, however, when we bring all this into connection with baptism, is that we ever maintain that "salvation is of God alone". Salvation, not dependent upon suppositions or general promises, but upon the sovereign grace of God. That is what our Confessions and our Baptism Form wants. If we agree on that the rest will give us no trouble. If men do not agree on that it makes little difference which side they take, both sides end in man and a salvation dependent upon man—which is hopeless.

* * * *

Out of this sphere of serious thought and truth we are plunged suddenly into quite another, it is:

Fun in Religion.

"Publicity will help turn people back to the church, five hundred ministers and church board members were told last night at the dinner, sponsored by the Church Federation for Greater Chicago. Sixty-seven churches were represented".

Five hundred ministers and consistory members. The problem: how to turn people back to church. The solution: Fun in Religion.

The audience was told: "Let the public know a man can be a good christian and still have lots of fun out of life. The churches should be comfortable, where people will feel as relaxed and at ease as they do in a movie-house or first-class theatre."

It took the manager of the public relations for the American Railway express company to speak such profound things (sic).

Hosea one time spoke of Israel as a silly dove. You have seen these silly doves on the roof, being flattered now by one dove then by another. Silly dove. Even the Railway Express makes love to her a little while and courts her with some flattering advice. And then five hundred went home, resolved, I suppose, to please the Express Company too.

Fun in religion. Fun—and no religion. That is what the Esau's want. Esau wants FUN. He sold his birthright, he does not care about the things of heaven. He is so concerned about the carnal that when he comes home from the field, and hasn't eaten for a few hours, he complains that he is about to die. The churches are making room for Esau, they want Esau to feel at home in the church, they want Esau to have fun. And now the Railway Express Company tells them how to make it still nicer in the church for Esau. Esau is used to going to theatres—make the church like a theatre. Esau is always thinking about fun, about going bowling, about amusement so the thing to do is to have all these things in the church. On Thursday nights the young people would rather go here and there and their heads are so full of fun and amusement that catechism becomes a failure (as I heard in one of the churches of this country lately) so they change catechism to some other time. All for Esau.

And Jacob, the children of God, are persecuted. Such is ever the way of the carnal church.

If our church is true to God and His Word, Esau will never feel comfortable and relaxed among us. If he does, Jacob won't.

* * * *

Arithmetic in the Christian School.

If you aren't interested in christian instruction you will not read this article.

Prin. M. Van Vuren, from California, has done the Cause of Chr. Instr. a great benefit by presenting a concept of how arithmetic can be taught in our christian schools, so that it bears out the proper distinction between a christian and a public school.

"What has arithmetic or geometry or algebra to do with God?" The writer, in the Christian Home and School Magazine, proceeds to show that arithmetic is a revelation of God, revealing Him as sovereign, independent, unchangeable, infinite, etc. As to the more practical angle of it the writer declares, "Our arithmetic cannot be disassociated from our morality. I must either add, subtract, multiply or divide numbers to the honor and glory of God, or to His dishonor". He continues to say that our arithmetic books are replete with problems about earning, getting, buying and selling, but where are problems based on sharing or giv-

ing?" Is life after all only buying, selling, earning, gaining, etc.?

But, you say, I am not a teacher.

Aren't you?

We parents are dealing with arithmetic all the time. Much of it is vulgar arithmetic. How much can you earn in how short a time, and how can you get ahead in the world—period—God is left out. Arithmetic is an exact science. You have to count right or you come out wrong. We have to learn to count, add, subtract, etc. so that we end in God.

Our Christian schools are built upon the principle of the truth and the love of God. They have been erected in order to give our children a world-and-life view truly distinct. The world and life is full of numbers, full of arithmetic, and although we and the world have the same arithmetic, our use of figures and numbers must be God-ward. Our teachers are called to teach our children that.

If we acquire schools of our own, our boards and teachers must also understand that Arithmetic is more than "Johnny earned 25c on Monday and 35c every other day of the week, how much did he have in all?"

The arithmetic of the world is 6-6-6. Is that the type we teach? Or do we get to the number seven?

* * * *

38,000 Killed.

You say, what is that, thirty-eight thousand killed, I thought the war was over?

No, the war isn't over. An Insurance Company writes that with the Boys home they are paying a greater amount of death policies than when they were Across.

The war is on our streets and highways. The 38,000 is the computed figure of accidental deaths for the year 1946. If the rate continues as high as for the months of January and February the figure will be still higher.

Worn out cars, dangerous tires, too much speed, these are some of the causes.

How we rejoiced when the automobile came. What a step ahead it was from the horse and buggy days. Our automobiles however cost us 38,000 lives, besides the casualties of wounded and maimed.

The automobile is a wonderful thing, indeed. But man is by nature "vicious" as the Confessions say. The vicious automobile driver is today this country's No. 1 enemy. There are thousands of them.

Are you one? Tragedy can befall the best and the most careful of us, but God has said, "Thou shalt not kill". That includes driving carefully and cautiously, always.

M. G.