

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

VOLUME XXII

JUNE 1, 1946 — Grand Rapids, Michigan

NUMBER 17

## MEDITATION

### Koninklijke Opvaart

*Daarom zegt Hij: als Hij opgevaren is in de hoogte, heeft Hij de gevangenis gevangen genomen, en heeft den menschen gaven gegeven. Nu dit: hij is opgevaren; wat is het dan dat hij ook eerst is nedergedaald in de nederste deelen der aarde? Die nedergedaald is, is dezelfde ook, die opgevaren is ver boven al de hemelen, opdat hij alle dingen vervullen zou.*

*Ef. 4:8-10.*

Opgevaren in de hoogte!

Opgevaren als de Koning Sions, als de overwinnaar in den strijd, om Zich als Sions Vorst metterwoon te vestigen op den berg Zijner heiligheid!

Van dit heuglijke heilsfeit zong reeds de Kerk der oude bedeeling, toen het alles nog slechts in schaduw gezien werd:

Gods wagens, boven 't luchting zwerk,  
Zijn tien- en tienmaal duizend sterk,  
Verdubbeld in getalen:  
Bij hen is Zijne majesteit  
Een Sinai in heiligheid,  
Omringd van bliksemstralen.  
Gij voert ten hemel op, vol eer;  
De kerker werd Uw buit, o Heer;  
Gij zaagt Uw strijdt bekronen  
Met gaven, tot der menschen troost;  
Opdat zelfs 't wederhoorig kroost  
Altijd bij U zou wonen.

Daarom kon, en kan nog diezelfde Kerke, de vijanden tartend, zingen:

Dat Bazans hemelhooge berg  
Met al zijn heuveln Sion terg,  
En wane 't overtreffen;  
Wat springt gij, bergen! trotsch omhoog?

Wat wilt g' u in der volk'ren oog,  
Bij Sions berg verheffen?  
God Zelf heeft dezen berg begeerd  
Ter woning, om, aldaar geëerd,  
Zijn heerlijkheid te toonen;  
De Heer, Die hem verkozen heeft,  
Die trouwe houdt, en eeuwig leeft,  
Zal hier ook eeuwig wonen.

't Was slechts een zwakke schaduw van de werkelijkheid, die nog vervuld moest worden, waarvan de Kerk der oude bedeeling zong in den acht en zestigen Psalm, hier door de Schrift aangehaald als vervuld in de hemelvaart en verhooving van den Christus. Heel die Psalm bezingt de grootheid en majesteit en macht van Israels God, als overwinnaar over Zijne en Zijns volks vijanden, en als den God der genade over Israel. God had Zich Sion ter woonplaats verkoren, om aldaar onder Zijn volk te wonen, en over hen te regeren. Als een machtig veldheer trok Hij voor Zijn volk uit. En toen Hij uittoog voor hen in de woestijn, daverde de aarde, en dropen de hemelen voor Zijn aangezicht. Voor Zijn volk bereidde Hij de erfenis hun beloofd; de koningen, die daarin woonden, vertrooide Hij; en Hij nam Zijn woonplaats op Sion, die juist daardoor ver verheven is boven de bergen, zelfs boven den bultigen Basan.

“Gij zijt opgevaren in de hoogte!”

Letterlijk, in den historischen zin, ziet dit woord dan ook op de in bezit neming van den burcht der Jebuzieten. God wilde daar wonen. De vijanden hadden den burcht in bezit. God toog op in de hoogte, nam de gevangenis gevangen, vestigde Zijne woning aldaar, om vandaar Zijn volk te zegenen, gaven uit de deelen onder de menschenkinderen, en de wederhoorigen bij Zich te doen wonen!

't Was de vervulling der belofte!

En toch was 't nog slechts een begin, eene schaduw der werkelijkheid.

Daarom verklaart dan ook de Heilige Geest in den Efezerbrief deze plaats in Psalm 68 als eindelijk en ten principale vervuld door de hemelvaart en verhooving van Christus.

Toen, toen de discipelen den Heiland zagen opgenomen van den Olijfberg, is Hij opgevaren in de hoogte.

Toen is de belofte eindelijk vervuld, en heeft de Koning Israels Zijne plaats ingenomen op den berg van Gods heiligheid, waartoe Hij van eeuwigheid is verordineerd.

Toen is Hij in Zijne overwinning ingegaan, de gevangenis gevankelijk wegvoerend.

En nu deelt Hij gaven uit "tot der menschen troost."

En woont zelfs 't wederhoorig kroost bij Hem!

De belofte werd werkelijkheid!

In den verhoogden Christus!

Toen Hij opvoer in de hoogte!

Heeft Hij de gevangenis gevangen genomen!

Hij was immers Koning bij de gratie Gods! Voor de grondlegging der wereld was Hij gezalfd tot Koning op den berg Sions. God had tot Hem gezegd: Eisch van Mij, en Ik zal de Heidenen geven tot Uw erfdeel, en de einden der aarde tot Uwe bezitting." Een volk, een erfdeel, uit alle volkeren der aarde, had Zijn God Hem beloofd. Maar bovendien was Hij gesteld tot eenen eerstgeboren Zoon over alle dingen, opdat Hij als Hoofd der schepping Gods, en als de Knecht des Heeren eeuwiglijk over alle dingen zou regeeren!

Maar dat erfdeel was gevangen!

In den eersten Adam was het gansche menschdom, en met dat menschdom ook het erfdeel van den Zoon Gods, gevallen in de macht der zonde en des doods. Banden des doods hielden het omkneld. Er was een schuld, die door den mensch nooit te delgen was. Er was eene overheersching van de macht der duisternis, die nooit te verbreken was. De schepping lag onder den vloek. De wereld lag onder de heerschappij van den vorst der duisternis. Het erfdeel van den Christus zat gevangen in de burcht, waarover hij, die het geweld des doods had, heerschappij voerde.

Die burcht moet geslecht!

De gevangenis moet gevangen genomen!

Uit banden des doods en der hel moet Hij, de Koning Israels, Zijn erfdeel verlossen!

Daartoe daalde Hij eerst neder. Zoo verklaart de Schrift het woord uit den acht en zestigsten Psalm. "Nu dit: Hij is opgevaren; wat is het dan dat Hij ook eerst is nedergedaald in de nederste deelen der aarde?" Dat ligt daar immers in? Dat volgt daar immers uit? Het woord van Psalm 68 slaat immers op God? Het was God, Die opvoer in de hoogte. Maar hoe zal God, Die in het hooge en verhevene woont, nu ooit opvaren, indien Hij niet eerst nederdaalt in de nederste deelen der aarde?

In Christus daalde God Zelf neder!

Hij daalde neder, niet zoo, dat Hij werkelijk de eeuwige hoogte Zijner Godheid verliet, maar zoo, dat

de Hooge nu ook bij den nederige Zijne woning kwam maken; zoo, dat Hij, Die eeuwiglijk verheven is boven al de hemelen, nu ook indaalde in de benedenste deelen der aarde; zoo, dat de eeuwige God ook mensch werd, en zich aan de menschenlijke natuur onafscheidelijk en persoonlijk verbond.

Hij drong den burcht binnen, waar Zijn erfdeel gevangen zat!

En daar bond Hij den strijd aan met de machten der duisternis. Neen, Hij kwam niet met duizenden en tienduizenden van engelen tot verlossing van Zijn volk. De strijd was, wat Hem betrof, geen kwestie van macht. Het was immers de burcht van zonde en dood, waarin Zijn volk gevangen zat. En ofschoon Satan het geweld des doods had, en in de sfeer des doods regeerde, toch was de verlossing Zijns volks een kwestie van recht, van de gerechtigheid Gods. Aan die gerechtigheid moest worden voldaan. En die gerechtigheid Gods kon alleen voldaan worden in den weg van gehoorzaamheid, van gehoorzaamheid tot den dood, ja, den dood des kruises.

Dien weg bewandelde Hij, Immanuel, God met ons, de Knecht des Heeren.

Daarom was Zijn weg een weg van nederdaling. Hij voerde naar de diepte. Hij daalde neder uit de hoogte in Zijne vleeschwording. Maar vanaf dat punt voerde Zijn weg, als weg der volkomene gehoorzaamheid, naar de diepte des doods en der hel. . . .

De nederste deelen der aarde!

Maar Hij vaart weer op!

In de diepste diepten van Zijne ellende bleef Hij gehoorzaam. Den last van den toorn Gods droeg Hij gewilliglijk. Zijn leven stortte Hij uit in den dood, als een offer der liefde. In de gehoorzaamheid der liefde ten einde toe daalde Hij neder in die bange diepte, waar Hem de bange kreet der verlatenheid van God uit de borst werd geperst. Uit diepten van ellende schreeuwde Hij tot God, Die Hem uit de vreeze des doods kon verlossen. . . .

En God verhoorde Hem!

Hij heeft Zijne ziel in de hel niet verlaten. Uit de dooden wekte Hij Zijnen Knecht op, Hem getuigenis gevend, dat Hij rechtvaardig is als het Hoofd der Zijnen, dat het lijden en de tranen, die Hij Zijn God had opgeofferd den Heere welbehagelijk waren, en dat Hij metterdaad volbracht had, en de Zijnen uit de gevangenis had verlost!

En zoo voer Hij op in de hoogte!

Hij heeft de gevangenis gevangen genomen!

De sleutelen der hel en des doods zijn in Zijne hand!

Over de machten der duisternis, van Satan, zonde en dood, voert Hij thans heerschappij! Hem zijn ze onderworpen!

En zoo vaart Hij als overwinnaar ten hemel op vol eer, om op den Hem beloofden troon plaats te nemen, en vandaar Zijne macht uit te oefenen, tot de vol-

komene verlossing van Zijn erfdeel, en tot de einde-  
lijke overwinning over alle Zijne vijanden!

Hij is opgevaren, Hij, Die eerst nedergedaald was!  
De strijd is beslist; de overwinning is behaald!  
De belofte is vervuld!

Hij is opgevaren!  
Met rijken buit beladen!

Gezegend zij de God en Vader van onzen Heere Jezus  
Christus, Die ons gezegend heeft met alle geestelijke  
zegening in den hemel in Christus. . . .

Want Hij heeft den menschen gaven gegeven.

Zoo schrijft de apostel, verklarende het woord van  
den acht en zestigsten psalm, zooals het in de nieuwe  
bedeeling in vervulling ging. Daar, in den Psalm staat  
het wel eenigszins anders. Daar toch lezen we: "Gij  
hebt gaven genomen, om uit de deelen onder de men-  
schen." Verschil maakt dit echter niet. Veeleer vult  
het eene het andere aan. Immers heeft Christus een  
strijd gestreden, en in dien strijd is Hij volkomen over-  
winnaar. En nu Hij als overwinnaar ten hemel op-  
vaart, neemt Hij den buit, dien Hij in dien strijd be-  
haalde, met zich mee naar de hoogte. Echter behaalde  
Hij dien buit niet voor Zichzelf, maar voor de Zijnen,  
om uit de deelen onder de menschen. Zoo is de voorstel-  
ling in Psalm 68. Maar toen de apostel zijn brief aan  
de Efezen schreef, was ook die uitdeeling reeds werke-  
lijk geworden. Vandaar: "en heeft den menschen  
gaven gegeven."

Gaven der genade!  
De volheid des heils!

Want Hij heeft door Zijne vernedering in de neder-  
ste deelen der aarde alles verworven, wat noodig is, om  
Zijn erfdeel te verlossen uit de macht der zonde, en op  
te voeren tot de hoogte der hemelsche heerlijkheid in  
den tabernakel Gods bij de menschen. Gaven deelt Hij  
uit aan de Zijnen van verzoening en vergeving der  
zonde, van gerechtigheid en het kinschap Gods, van  
wedergeboorte en heiligmaking, van geloof en liefde,  
van kennis en wijsheid, van blijdschap in God en de  
levende hope; gaven ook voor Zijne Kerk op aarde in  
den bijzonderen zin, van leering en vermaning en ver-  
troosting, van regeering en opzicht en uitdeeling. Hij  
is de rijke Christus, Die Zijn gemeente verrijkt en be-  
waart, beschermt en regeert, en het eeuwige leven  
schenkt.

Deze gaven zijn Zijn buit.

Want om ze te verwerven heeft Hij den strijd ge-  
streden ten einde toe, en de overwinning behaalt.

En Hij deelt ze uit.

Het is immers in den grond der zaak niet zoo met  
deze geestelijke gaven, dat ze door Hem den menschen  
worden aangeboden, maar het nu voorts aan den  
mensch ligt of hij ze zal ontvangen dan wel zal weige-  
ren om ze in ontvangst te nemen. Zoo staat het met  
geestelijke gaven nimmer. Want wel nemen zij, die

verwaardigd worden om deze gaven te ontvangen, ze  
wel metterdaad aan, en dat door het geloof; maar dan  
toch altijd zoo, dat de uitdeeling aan de aanneming  
vooraf gaat, en dat ook de aanneming slechts mogelijk  
is doordat Christus eerst begon Zijne gaven uit te  
deelen.

Hij deelt ze uit.

En dat wel naar den regel der Goddelijke verkie-  
zing. Want altijd doet Christus den wil des Vaders,  
ook in Zijne verhooring. En het is de wil des Vaders,  
dat al wat Hij den Christus gegeven heeft, niet ver-  
loren ga, maar ten einde toe behouden worde.

Hij deelt ze uit.

Want daartoe is Hij verhoogd, en heeft Hij alle  
macht ontvangen in hemel en op aarde.

En, aan de rechterhand Gods verhoogd zijnde, heeft  
Hij, onze hemelsche Heere, den Geest ontvangen, Hem  
door den Vader beloofd.

Hij is de levendmakende Geest geworden.

Opdat Hij ons met Zijne zegeningen vervullen zou!  
O, rijke Heiland!

Opgevaren in de hoogte!

Boven alle hemelen!

Opdat Hij alle dingen vervullen zou!

Want zoo zal het einde zijn: Christus zal ten slotte  
alle dingen in hemel en op aarde vervullen. En daar-  
toe, omdat einddoel te bereiken, om dat welbehagen  
Gods te verwerkelijken, is Hij verhoogd boven alle  
hemelen, staat Hij, als de Koning Sions aan de spitse  
aller dingen, en Zijn Hem ook thans alle dingen in  
hemel en op aarde onderworpen.

Zeker, in beginsel vervult Hij ook thans alle dingen.

Want Hij woont, door Zijnen Geest, in Zijne Kerk,  
die Zijn lichaam is, de vervulling Desgenen, Die alles  
in allen vervult. Op den Pinksterdag keerde Hij, de  
verhoogde Heiland tot de Zijnen weer, en werden zij  
allen vervuld met den Heiligen Geest. En Hij regeert  
met macht ook over alle dingen. De gevangenis heeft  
Hij gevangen genomen. De machten der duisternis,  
hoe ze ook woeden, zijn Hem toch onderworpen, en ook  
zij worden door Hem gebruikt tot vervulling van den  
raad des Vaders.

Doch het einde is nog niet.

Dat Hij alle dingen vervult, is nog niet openbaar  
geworden.

De vijand, schoon volkomen in de macht van Chris-  
tus, en door Hem geregeerd, woedt nog. En de laatste  
vijand is nog niet teniet gedaan, schoon ook Hij Chris-  
tus moet dienen.

Doch straks maakt Hij alle dingen nieuw! En dan  
zal Hij alle dingen vervullen met Zijne heerlijkheid!

Tot heerlijkheid des Vaders!

Kom, Heere Jezus!

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

### As To Books

*The New Modernism*, by Dr. C. Van Til.  
Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing  
Company, 525 Locust St., Philadelphia,  
Pa. March 1946. Price \$3.75.

This is not a book for the general reading public. But to those that are interested in the study of the Theology of Crisis, we recommend the reading of this work by Dr. Van Til. It can hardly be meant as an introduction to the Barthian Theology, for the book rather presupposes a measure of acquaintance with Barthian conceptions and terminology; and, besides, this criticism of Barth should itself be read critically, i.e. the reader should be able to compare Dr. Van Til's evaluation of Dr. Barth with the latter's own writings. But the student of the Theology of Crisis can hardly afford to ignore this thorough criticism. In any library containing the works of Barth and Brunner, and of the many works that have been written about their theology, the work of Dr. Van Til should have a place.

There is, perhaps, no theologian of modern times that enjoys, or suffers from, if you like, a more widely different and contradictory appraisal and criticism than Karl Barth. Modernists have hailed him as a new and most brilliant expositor of their views; and modernists have condemned him as one who, in modern terms, camouflages an orthodox and long obsolete theology. Orthodox theologians appraised him as a defender of the true faith, as one who puts the old truths in a new light. Reformed theologians hailed him as a Calvinist. And other Reformed theologians condemn his theology as a camouflaged modernism. To these latter critics belongs Dr. Van Til. His book is a sweeping condemnation of Barthian theology.

The book is, evidently, the fruit of thorough study. It is a scholarly work. It is evident that the author quite thoroughly examined the works of Barth. Moreover, in the way of a historical-critical study of Barthian theology, he made a serious attempt to synthesize its various elements into one conception. That conception is expressed in "The New Modernism."

In fourteen chapters, the author describes the background of what he calls "the new modernism" in Kant's criticism, and the earlier and later dialecticism; presents the views of Barth and Brunner up to the time of their separation in 1927, as well as their later development; and sets forth the significance of their theology with a view to its application to the Chris-



tian church, the Christian life, and the Christian hope.

The conclusion which the author reaches in his study of the *Theology of Crisis* may be presented in his own words:

"The Theology of Crisis, with which we have been concerned, has shown itself in all fundamental respects to be the same as the Modernism of Schleiermacher and his school. Barth and Brunner have what is, basically, the same sort of view of reality and knowledge as marks the works of Schleiermacher or Ritschl. Fundamental to everything they say about individual doctrines is the fact that they have, throughout and with vigor, cast away as a filthy garment that on which everything in the field of historic Christianity rests, the notion of the self-contained or absolute God. Against modern Protestantism, Barth contends that man needs an absolutely other God. But the absolute otherness, or transcendence, of the God of Barth consists in nothing more than a certain irrational aspect of Reality. Barth would make rationality even more formal and abstract than Modernism has made it, and he would make the concept of pure Chance even more basic than Modernism has made it. Following this, he would make all the concepts of theology still more deeply correlative to the mind of man than Modernism has conceived of them". . . . pp. 371-372.

He points out how Barth's critical theory "makes him reject the orthodox doctrine of temporal creation, creation *ex nihilo*. Adopting this doctrine in words, as he adopts all the doctrines of historic Christianity in words, he denies it in fact"; how "Barth's phenomenalist doctrine of God makes him reject also the historic Christian doctrine of providence"; how "involved in the rejection of historic Christian doctrine of providence is the rejection of the Christian doctrine of natural law"; and how "it follows, of course, that the Christian conception of miracle is also cast aside. Miracles for Barth and Brunner are what they are for the modern scientist or philosopher, certain strange phenomena erupting here and there because man has not completely learned to harness the forces of Chance. Peter's walking on the water is nothing unique, it is not something that has to do with the comprehensive and absolute plan of redemption, fixed upon from times eternal. Peter's walking on the water is merely a symbol of the fact that all men everywhere are in distress in a universe in which ultimate Chance has a large part to play. The resurrection of Christ is unique, but unique because it is inclusive of all reality. . . . Hence, too, the miracles of the consummation period of history are but symbols of the fact man is resolved to go on, through the worst that Chance can do, to higher and still higher heights. The whole idea of the supernatural is reduced to mean merely that ultimate of irrationality which we as men are

ever approaching, but never reaching with our rationalizing efforts. To think thus is, for Barth, to think eschatologically." pp. 373, 374.

And so, finally, Dr. Van Til calls upon evangelical Christianity, but especially upon the believers of the Reformed Faith, to "recognize in the Theology of Crisis a mortal enemy." The Reformed faith, with its emphasis upon the truth of predestination implying "the coterminity of being and consciousness of God as He exists in Himself, apart from all activity of the consciousness of the human mind," stands directly and sharply opposed to the principles of the "New Modernism". To quote the author once more: "But those who maintain the doctrine of election and maintain it not only for itself but, most of all, as the apex of the Christian motif *per se* literally have all to lose if the Theology of Crisis is not repulsed in its glacial descent upon the church of Christ in our day." p. 377.

Dr. Van Til here meets a possible objection. Does not Barth himself teach the doctrine of election, and even emphasize the truth of predestination in its extreme form, that of supralapsarianism? To this he replies: "Barth is not a particularist in the historic sense of the term. He believes in election and he believes in reprobation. But for him this belief is not only consistent with, but requires for its very meaning, the idea of the universal salvation of all men. Election and reprobation are part of the process of God and man as together they come into existence. Or, rather, the idea of election is for Barth identical with the notion that men do not in the full sense of the word exist as men till they have reached the pinnacle of what they can think as rational and moral. The election doctrine for both of the crisis theologians indicates merely that the human person, in the nature of the case, must set absolute ideals for himself and that he must seek to identify himself in all his striving with those ideals." p. 377.

And the author warns especially against the danger that orthodox Christians should be deceived by the camouflaged modernism of the Theology of Crisis:

"It is in the interest of plain intellectual honesty, then, that the theology of Crisis should be seen for what it is. Both the liberal and the believer in historic Christianity should know who is friend and who is foe. The Theology of Crisis is a friend of modernism and a foe of historic Christianity. . . . The danger is rather that orthodox Christians, in spite of much experience with camouflage, will once more permit the wolf to enter their home and that to their own destruction." pp. 377, 378.

It was, originally my purpose, in this review, to offer a careful criticism of Dr. Van Til's book. This,

however, would require a detailed comparison of the author's evaluation of Barth with the references to the latter's works that are found abundantly at the bottom of the pages. This would have been easier if literal quotations, rather than mere references, from Barth had been offered. As it is, especially since I have a later edition of "Die Kirchliche Dogmatiek," which renders the many references to this work of Barth in Dr. Van Til's book practically useless, it would require more time than I have at present to carry out my original purpose. Hence, I decided, at this time, merely to acknowledge receipt of the book, pay my respects to the author for his labors, and recommend the work to all that are interested in the study of Barthian theology.

However, even now I cannot refrain from offering a few critical remarks.

First of all, in my opinion, an appendix containing rather elaborate quotations from the works of Barth (and Brunner) would raise the value of the book considerably.

Secondly, it is quite clear that no Reformed theologian who sees Barth as Dr. Van Til sees him could possibly come to another conclusion than the author of "The New Modernism."

Thirdly, let it be said, for fear lest some one provides me with a night's lodging in the same bed with Barth, that no Reformed theologian, in my judgment, can be a Barthian. Think, e.g. of his conception of the Word of God, the Scriptures, his definition of dogmatics, his eschatological views.

Fourthly, however, I do not believe that "The New Modernism" offers a fair and objective presentation of the theology of Karl Barth. As I read the book, I could not escape the impression that the mould of "new modernism" was rather preconceived, and that the author's synthesis of Barth was formed accordingly. If I try to conceive of Barth as a modernist pure and simple, too many elements of his theology will not fit into that concept. Besides, despite Dr. Van Til's contention to the contrary, I still believe that one must distinguish between the earlier and the latter Barth.

To substantiate this criticism, let me call attention to just one important point, Barth's view on predestination. In regard to this point of doctrine, I believe: 1. That Dr. Barth changed his view since he wrote the Epistle to the Romans Commentary; and 2. That Dr. Van Til does him an injustice when he writes: "The election doctrine for both of the crisis theologians indicates merely that the human person, in the nature of the case, must set absolute ideals for himself and that he must seek to identify himself in all his striving with those ideals."

It is well known that Barth in "Der Römerbrief"

presents election and reprobation as having reference to the relation of the same persons to God, and not to a divine distinction between different persons. "Sie (predestination, H.H.) scheidet nicht zwischen diesen und jenen Menschen, sondern sie ist ihre tiefste Gemeinschaft. Ihr gegenüber stehen sie alle in einer Linie. Ihr gegenüber ist Jakob in jedem Augenblick der Zeit auch Esau, ist Esau im ewigen Augenblick der Offenbarung auch Jakob. Jakob ist der unanschauliche Esau, Esau der anschauliche Jakob." Der Römerbrief, München 1929, p. 332.

But it is equally well known to students of Barth that he presents a different view in his "Die Kirchliche Dogmatiek." There he speaks of the twofold effect of the efficacious Word of God, and finds the source of this illuminating and blinding effect of the Word in God's sovereign predestination. "Dass est Entscheidend und also Wahl ist, das ist der innere Grund dieser doppelten Möglichkeit. Müssen wir einen Grund dieser Wahl wissen, eine Rechtfertigung Gottes wegen der Freiheit, die er an sich nimmt und hat, indem er zum Menschen redet, jetzt um ihn anzunehmen, jetzt um ihn zu verwerfen, diesen mit seinem Licht zu erleuchten, diesen mit demselben Licht zu blenden, also diesen als Petrus, diesen als Judas zu behandeln? Zur Rechtfertigung genügt hier wie bei dem hier sichtbar werdenden Dogma der Prädestination überhaupt: die im Worte fallende Entscheidung ist Gottes, und darum ist sie gerechte und gute Entscheidung." Dogmatiek I, München 1932, p. 165.

I could, without a careful check-up mention other points in which, in my opinion, the author misrepresents Barth. He writes, for instance, on page 159, representing Barth's view on man's receiving the Word of God: "And as God, to reveal Himself to man in the Son, had to become exhaustively man, so now man, if he is to know God, must become exhaustively divine. As God, the great Subject had, to reveal Himself, to be so truly God as to be more than God, namely man, so man, the mere object, to receive the revelation of God, has to be more than man, namely God. God can be known by God only."

As was said, Dr. Van Til has an earlier edition of the "Dogmatiek" than I, which makes it very difficult for me to check up on his references. But I do not believe that he could quote Barth to substantiate the above statement concerning his views.

With all respect for the author's work, and for his warning against the Theology of Crisis as he sees it, I still maintain that the book fails to do justice to Barth.

It would be interesting to get Barth's own reaction to the book.

H. H.

## THE TRIPLE KNOWLEDGE

### An Exposition Of The Heidelberg Catechism

Part Two.

Of Man's Redemption

LORD'S DAY XIX

4.

The Final Judgment. (cont.)

This also implies that the final judgment will take place through the Spirit of Christ. This already follows from the fact that all the works of God are of the Father, through the Son, and in or by the Spirit. And if the judgment is to be accomplished by Christ, as the visible Representative of the invisible God, it must be the Spirit of Christ through Whom the verdict is bound undeniably upon the consciences of men. Besides, thus the Scriptures teach us directly. Even now, the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, Whom Christ promised to send after His departure, has come. And of Him it was said: "he will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. Of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." John 16: 8-11. By the Word and in the Spirit of Christ, the world is even now judged, either unto life or death, unto salvation or damnation. And thus it will also be in the day of the revelation of God's righteous judgment, by which the history of the present world will be brought to a close.

And this judgment will concern all moral creatures, angels and men, the righteous and the wicked, small and great.

This is often denied.

Especially under Pelagian influence, always individualistic, it is claimed that only those can be brought into judgment that have been in contact with the gospel, and had the opportunity to accept or to reject Christ. All others, heathen and small children, must be excluded. But, as already stated, this view is individualistic. Scripture always proceeds from the organic idea. The "world" is to be judged. And the sin of the "world" and not of a few individuals, has already been revealed through the crucifixion of the Son of God. Besides, this view is based on the erroneous supposition that one can be brought into judgment and condemned only because of his rejection of the Christ. It is true that "this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved dark-

ness rather than light, because their deeds were evil"; and that, therefore, "he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God." John 3:18, 19. But this can only mean that, through the coming of the Son of God in the world, and His rejection by men, the sin of the world is clearly manifested as sin. Even before and apart from the coming of Christ, however, the whole world lies in sin, and under condemnation, in the first man Adam.

Nor is it to be maintained, in the light of Scripture, that only the ungodly will be brought into judgment, as is the contention of others. This would be correct, if the purpose of the final judgment were only the condemnation of the wicked. But this is not the case. As has been said, the chief purpose of this closing judgment will be the theodicy, the justification of God as the righteous Judge of heaven and earth. And this will be revealed, not only in the condemnation of the ungodly, but also in the public justification of the righteous in Christ.

The Word of God plainly teaches that the whole world, all God's moral creatures, shall be brought into the judgment of that final day. It concerns the angels, both good and bad, for also the good angels must be publicly justified, and the fallen angels still await their final judgment and punishment. The apostle writes to the church of Corinth: "Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life." I Cor. 6:3. The angels that sinned are "delivered into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment." II Pet. 2:4. And again: "the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." Jude 6. Then, too, the final judgment will summon all nations before the judgment seat of Christ, and there they shall at once be separated into the righteous and the wicked. This is the plain teaching of Matt. 25:32ff. And that the people of God are not excluded from this last judgment is definitely taught in such passages as Rom. 14:10: "But why dost thou judge thy brother, or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." And II Cor. 5:10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

In this connection we may mention that it is, to say the least, worthy of consideration, whether the person of Satan, and the persons of the anti-christ and of the false prophet are not to be excluded from this general appearance before the tribunal of Christ, that is, whether their iniquity will not be so great, and their worthiness of damnation so evident, that they will be cast into hell without any formal process

of judgment. It is, at least, striking that we read in Rev. 19:20: "And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both *were cast alive* into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." And again in Rev. 20:10, before the vision of the final judgment, we read: "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

As to the judgment itself, Scripture teaches that it shall be according to the works of those that are judged. For the Lord comes quickly, and his reward will be with him, "to give every man according as his work will be." Rev. 22:12. And when we appear before the judgment seat of Christ, it will be in order that "everyone may receive the things done in his body, whether it be good or evil." II Cor. 5:10. "For there is no respect of persons with God. For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law. For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified." Rom. 2:11-13.

These works include, not only the outward deeds, but also the inner thoughts, desires, purposes, motives. We shall be made manifest, that is, we shall be turned inside out, and our works shall be evaluated in the light of God's perfect law. The secrets of men shall be exposed in their true value. Nothing shall be hid. Our personal works, in connection with our talents and powers, with our position in the world, with the age in which we lived, and with our circumstances and means, as well as with relation to the light of revelation we possessed, will then be manifest in their proper meaning and ethical worth. It will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon than for Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethsaida, in that day. There is nothing hid that will not be made public in the day of the Lord!

Nor can one possibly maintain, in the light of Scripture, that this universal and complete exposure and manifestation of all our works must exclude the sins of the people of God. Scripture is far too explicit on this point to leave any room for doubt. It is exactly of believers that the apostle writes in II Cor. 5:10, that we must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ. In fact, we may well accept that in that day we shall see our sins as we never saw them before. Only, it must never be forgotten, that, in that day, Christ, and our belonging to Him, will be our only, but also our perfect comfort. The Catechism declares that the believer looks for that day "with uplifted head," and that, exactly, because he looks "for the very same person, who before offered himself"

for his sake, and who has removed all curse from him, to come as judge from heaven. Indeed, also the sins of the people of God shall be exposed, but only in the light of the everlasting love of God, wherewith He loved them in Christ. Also they shall see their sins, shall see them as never before, but only to adore all the more the perfect righteousness of God in Christ, whereby they are justified forever. They shall see their sins, but only as blotted out in the blood of the Lamb. Because of Christ, and because of their living part with Him, they shall have no fear in the day of judgment. Even in respect to their own sins, they shall be of God's party in that day, take His side in the condemnation of all iniquity, even their own; only to cling in the perfect consciousness of faith to Christ, and to adore forever the wondrous grace whereby they have been redeemed from so great a darkness of death, and become worthy of eternal life and glory!

And the end will be the perfect theodicy.

All will acknowledge that God is good. The damned in hell will forever have to confess that their damnation is just.

The saved in glory will everlastingly behold themselves in Christ, and boast in God's wondrous grace only.

No flesh shall ever glory in His presence!

## LORD' DAY XX

Q. 53. What dost thou believe concerning the Holy Ghost?

A. First, that he is true and co-eternal God with the Father and the Son; secondly, that he is also given me, to make me by a true faith, partaker of Christ and all his benefits, that he may comfort me and abide with me for ever.

### 1.

#### The Spirit Of God.

In this Lord's Day, the Heidelberg Catechism begins the discussion of the third part of the Apostolic Confession.

The first part dealt with the truth concerning "God the Father and our creation," the truth that is confessed by the Church in the first article of the *Apostolicum*. The second part concerned the truth of "God the Son and our redemption," and includes articles two to seven of the Confession. The third part sets forth the truth concerning the Holy Ghost and our sanctification," as it is expressed in articles eight to the end of the catholic confession of faith.

Strictly speaking, as the connection of this article with the preceding part of the Confession, and its position in the whole of the *Apostolicum*, plainly indicate, we are not now dealing with the problem of the

Trinity, nor of the Holy Spirit as Third Person in the Holy Trinity, but of that Spirit as the Spirit of Christ, and in relation to the work of salvation. Thus also the Catechism considers this truth, as is evident from the second part of its answer in this Lord's Day: "that he is also given me, to make me by a true faith, partaker of Christ and all his benefits, that he may comfort me and abide with me for ever."

The question, namely, arises here: how do we become partakers of the salvation Christ merited and obtained for us?

Thus far, in its explanation of articles two to seven of the Confession, the Catechism expounded the truth concerning Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, our Lord, Who, through the conception by the Holy Ghost and His birth from the virgin Mary, became like unto us in all things, sin excepted; Who suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried, and descended into hell; Who was raised from the dead, ascended to heaven, sits at the right hand of God, and will come to judge both the quick and the dead. That is, the Christ of the Scriptures as the fulness of our salvation was set forth. He merited for us all the blessings of grace, forgiveness, righteousness, the adoption unto children, life from the dead. And these benefits are in Him.

And how are these benefits to come into our possession?

Many in our superficial age would, perhaps, in this connection begin to speak of the work of man. God in Christ has now done all He could to save us. All things are now ready. Moreover, the gospel is preached to all the world, and in the preaching of the gospel a Christ-for-all is presented, a well-meaning offer of grace and salvation on the part of God to all men comes to the sinner. Now it is up to man. He must accept the offer. On his willingness to receive Christ and all His benefits the salvation of the sinner henceforth depends. In the light of such preaching it would seem that, after the articles of the Confession that delineate the truth concerning Christ and our objectively prepared salvation, it should have continued in some such fashion as this: "I believe in the ability of all men to accept this Christ, or to reject Him, and thus to determine their own salvation."

But the Church could never give expression of her faith in this way.

For, first of all, her confession is derived from and based on the Holy Scriptures; and according to it, salvation is the work of God from beginning to end, never and in no sense of man. By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God! The Church, whose chief business it is to preach the Word, could never attribute the work of God to man. It, therefore, speaks of God throughout.

Secondly, her Confession is a confession of *faith*.

And it would be quite contrary to the experience of the Church to attribute this faith to man. She knows full well that also this faith, whereby she lays hold upon all the blessings of salvation, and embraces Christ, is not of herself, but belongs to the marvellous work of grace and salvation that is accomplished by God alone.

And so, in her Confession, the Church continues to speak of God!

In answer to the question, how a sinner, that is in himself dead through trespasses and sins, becomes partaker of Christ and all His benefits, the Church confesses: "I believe in the Holy Ghost."

We are, therefore, in this connection, especially to speak of the Holy Ghost from the viewpoint of His being the Spirit of Christ, in and through Whom Christ continues His work, gathers His own, makes them partakers of all His benefits, preserves them, and leads them on to everlasting glory.

Nevertheless, even as the confession concerning Jesus Christ began by emphasizing that He is the only begotten Son, so also must begin our confession concerning the Holy Ghost, by setting forth Who and what He is in Himself, as the third Person of the Holy Trinity, in relation to the Father, and to the Son. And although the Catechism is exceptionally brief in its exposition of this doctrine, it nevertheless mentions all the essential elements of the truth concerning the Holy Spirit in the words: "that he is true and co-eternal God with the Father and the Son."

Three elements must be emphasized in this connection.

The first is that the Holy Spirit is God, co-equal with the Father and the Son. Even as the Father and as the Son, so also the Holy Ghost subsists in the divine essence. All the divine attributes of self-existence, independence, eternity, infinitude, immutability, simplicity, omniscience, and omnipotence, belong to Him, as well as to the Father and to the Son. It is not superfluous to make special mention of this truth. We are, perhaps, easily inclined to ascribe to the Holy Spirit a subordinate position. That the Father is God is never a question with us. He is the Almighty Creator of all things in heaven and on earth. That the Son is co-equal with the Father we also have little difficulty to believe and to maintain. He is our mighty redeemer that overcame sin and death for us. But does not the Holy Spirit seem to occupy a position of inferiority, in subordination to the Father and the Son? Does not the Bible speak of Him as a means, or an instrument, by Whom God works all things? And is not an instrument inferior to Him that employs it? It is, therefore, not superfluous to remind ourselves that also the third Person of the Holy Trinity is very God, not subordinate to, but co-equal with the Father and the Son.



Such is the plain teaching of Holy Writ.

He is called God. To Ananias the apostle Peter says: "Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost? . . . thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." The direct implication of these words is that the Holy Ghost is God. That He, and not the Father or the Son, is especially mentioned in this connection, is probably due to the fact, that the deceit of Ananias and his wife was directed against the Church in which the Holy Spirit made His abode. The same applies to I Cor. 3:16, 17: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." The implication of these words, with respect to the divinity of the Holy Spirit, is plain. To say that the Church is the temple of the Holy Spirit is the same as saying that God dwells in the Church, and this is again the same as saying that the Holy Spirit dwells in her, for the Spirit is God.

Besides, all that is ascribed to the Holy Spirit proceeds from the truth that He is very God, co-equal with the Father and the Son.

Together with the Father and the Son, He is the Author of God's eternal counsel and good pleasure with regard to all things in time. For "who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed him the way of understanding? Isa. 40:13, 14.

H. H.

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## THROUGH THE AGES

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### The War of Innocent III Against Th Cathari

As was explained in former articles, already in the time of the apostles many Jews and pagans became Christians in name only and thus clung to their old beliefs and practices, which they smuggled into the church, where they matured and eventually became known as Ebionism and Gnosticism. The Ebionists and the Gnostics were the heretics in the christian church of the first five centuries. The Ebion and Gnostic teachers and their followers were wolves in sheep's clothing. Their presence in the church speaks the attempt of the evil one to Judanize and paganize the church by the propagation of the lie as

garbed in the vesture of the truth. And the lie struck root. The heretical bodies multiplied and numbered their thousands. There were in all nineteen gnostic schools of thought, and the heretics were named after their leaders of the special schools to which they belonged. Gnosticism, being the successor of Neo-Platonism, derived, as did Neo-Platonism, its materials from all the existing religions, pagan and Christian alike. From all these it gathers everything that could be of use to it. Thus it was more comprehensive than Neo-Platonism. The latter was hostile to Christianity and therefore spurned the Scriptures. But not so Gnosticism. It took from the Scriptures whatever it could use. It was the most comprehensive form of speculative syncretism known in history,—*syncretism* from the Greek *syncretizein* meaning to combine, unite. Gnosticism was thus a union and development of tenets, beliefs, and rites from all the existing religions—pagan and christian—which it aimed to displace. It was an infusing of paganism into Christianity and thus a paganizing of Christianity.

Gnosticism gradually lost its influence after the middle of the third century, A.D. circa 250; but it was revived at the close of that century by a highborn Persian, Mani by name, who gave to the system its name, hence Manicheism. In the point of view of the great number of adherents it gained, Manicheism ranked with Christianity, which had to wage with it a long conflict. Unlike the Gnostics of former days, the Manicheists organized congregations. Manicheism therefore was more than a school; it was a church in the formal sense and as such a formidable rival of organized Christianity.

In every point of view, Manicheism was the crowning achievement of darkness. Its pagan gnosis was almost complete. It retained all the mythologies of the old pagan semitic religions of nature and transformed them into doctrines but abolished all their immoral cultus and substituted instead a spiritual worship and a strict morality. It offered further redemption (by man's own efforts), revelation, and life everlasting.

Manicheism accompanied the church until about the twelfth century. At about this time it had nearly wholly disappeared as an organized religion, the reason being that it was everywhere persecuted. The Christian Roman emperors had enacted strict laws against its adherents. But it had not actually disappeared. In the early years of the eleventh century it everywhere reappeared in Europe in a new dress and under the new name of Catharism. Being the spiritual offspring of Manicheism, Catharism was also called New Manicheism. It bore still other names. In Southern France its adherents were called Albigenses, from the town Albi, one of the centers of their strength. In Eastern Europe they were called Bulgari, Bulgaries,

or Bugres. In France they were known as Tessarents, Textores, from their influence with the weavers and industrial classes.

Like Gnosticism and Manicheism, Catharism was a dangerous heresy. These are its main tenets. The things invisible—the spirits—are the creations of the good God, while the things visible—including men's bodies—have their source in Satan, the God of the Old Testament. Christ is the most perfect of these spirits and the chief of angels. He took not a real body of flesh and blood and existed in this world only in a spiritual manner. Such a doctrine of the Christ is a denial of His atonement, as it denies the reality of the assumed human nature in which he suffered and died for the sins of His people. Hence, according to this heresy, redemption consists in Christ's proclaiming the truth in an unreal body and returning to heaven after an apparent death. They hearing and obeying the truth are purified by deliverance from the body, which is essentially evil. And this is salvation. The trinity first began to exist at the birth of Christ. When, by the teachings of Jesus, others were attracted, the Holy Spirit began to exist. There is no resurrection of the body, as the body, having sprung from an evil principle, is the prison of the soul. The New Testament is opposed to the Old, and the latter must be rejected.

It is plain that in this heresy we have to do with the union of the vilest lies. And yet, the growth of the Cathari was rapid. According to contemporary writers, by 1160, they were numerous as the sands of the sea. Four million is given as a safe estimate of their number; and they were found in one thousand cities, and in every country of Europe, in France, Italy, Spain, Germany, and England. By the close of the century a third of the population of Florence were Cathari. They were most numerous in Southern France, where nearly all the princes and barons had embraced the heresy.

The Cathari reviled the Roman Catholic Church, definitely the Roman hierarchy. They held in derision the priests. They said that the established church is the harlot of the Apocalypse and that the pope is the anti-Christ, and that the fruits of the church prove this. It prescribes persecution. It baptizes first and then teaches. It has dignitaries, prelates, cardinals, arch-deacons, bishops and arch-bishops and the pope sits in the place of power in a throne of gold and is clothed in purple and fine linen. These accusations are true. The Roman hierarchy is an invention of man and the pope is a usurper. But it is not true, certainly that the Cathari themselves formed, as they said the true church, outside of which there is no salvation.

The Cathari were a real danger. They threatened the whole of Christendom, more particularly the

Roman Catholic hierarchy, especially in Southern France. That the Cathari flourished in Southern France is easily explained. Here all the heresies that had troubled the Christian church from the second century to the ninth had crept in and spread abroad. Here were Arians, Manicheans, Paulicians, Gnostics and other sects given over to vain speculations and licentious living or asceticism. Here the Roman missionaries and monastic reformers had obtained no dominion, as they had in the north and east of Europe, where they had been obliged to deal with little more than the ignorance of Barbarians. From the latter half of the eleventh century, the popes and the spiritual heads of the Roman church in France became alarmed at the religious condition in Southern France. In 1145, St. Bernard went and preached against the heretics. "We see here," he wrote to the count of Toulouse, "churches without flocks, flocks without priests, priests without the respect which is their due, and Christians without Christ; men die in their sins without being reconciled by penance or admitted to the body of communion; souls are sent pell-mell before the awful tribunal of God; the grace of baptism is refused to little children. . . ." Bernard went to a place in Southern France where he was told he would find heretics numerous and powerful. "He repaired," says a contemporary chronicler, "to the castle of Verfeil, where flourished at the time the scions of a numerous nobility and of a multitude of people, thinking that he could extinguish heretical perversity in this place where it was so very much spread, it would be easy for him to make headway against it elsewhere. When he had begun preaching, in the church, against those who were of most consideration in the place, they went out, and the people followed them; but the holy man, going out after them, gave utterance to the word of God in the public streets. The nobles then hid themselves on all sides in their houses; and as for him, he continued to preach to the common people who came about him. Whereupon the others making uproar and knocking upon the doors, so that the crowd could not hear his voice, he then, having shaken off the dust from his feet as a testimony against them, departed from their midst, and looking on the town, cursed it, saying, 'God wither thee'."

For half a century thereafter—Bernard died in 1153—Roman missionaries labored among the heretics in Southern France but with negligible success. The heresy continued to spread and in 1167 the Cathari held a synod, at which bishops were appointed for districts where their followers were most numerous. In 1198 Innocent III was elected pope. He determined to destroy the heresy in Southern France. At first he employed only spiritual weapons. He sent among the Cathari a great number of missionaries, men of proved zeal, many of whom were legates. They

preached throughout the whole country, contacting the princes and the lay lords, and holding meetings with the heretics themselves. A knight said to one of the missionaries, "We could not have believed that Rome had so many powerful arguments against these folks here." "See you not," said the missionary, "how little force there is in their objections?" Certainly," replied the knight. "Why then do you not expel them from your lands?" "We cannot," answered the knight, "we have been brought up with them; we have amongst them folk near and dear to us, and we see them living honorably." The popes missionaries, as their labors bore no fruit, urged the lay princes to extirpate the heretics. One of them, Raymond IV, count of Toulouse, made the promise but took no action. A legate of the pope, enraged by his hesitancy, placed him under sentence of excommunication, and the pope wrote him a threatening letter, giving him to understand that stronger measures would be adopted against him. The enraged legate, Peter de Castelnau, departed with his companion without delay. Approaching the Rhone, they were approached by two strangers one of whom, falling upon Peter, thrust him through with a lance, so that he died, exclaiming, "God forgive thee, as I do."

The murder of Peter created a great commotion in France and in Rome. Had Raymond VI instigated the murder of the pope's prelate? Throughout the Catholic Church it was believed that he had. The emotion was great. As the king of kings and the chief prince of the church—Innocent was this in his own eyes—the pope summoned the king of France and all the lay rulers, knights, the clergy, secular and regular, of his patriarchate, to go forth and extirpate from Southern France the Cathari; and to get action, he promised the chiefs of the crusaders, the great lords of his kingdom, the domains that they should win by conquest from the princes who were heretics or protectors of heretics. And the faithful he exhorted in a general letter as follows, "O most mighty soldiers of Christ, most brave warriors: Ye oppose the agents of Anti-Christ, and ye fight against the servants of the old serpent (meaning the Cathari). Perchance up to this time ye have fought for transitory glory, now fight for the glory which is everlasting. Ye have fought for the body, now fight for the soul. Ye have fought for the world, now do ye fight for God. For we have not exhorted you to the service of God for a worldly prize, but for the heavenly kingdom, which for this reason, we promised to you with all confidence." Lords and knights, burghers and peasants, laymen and clergy, responded to the call to arms, but not so the king of France. "From near and by they come," writes a contemporary writer, "there be men from Auvergne and Bergundy, France and Limousin; there be men from all the world; there be Germans,

Poitevines, Gasmons, Rounergates, and Saintongese. Never did God make scribe who, whatever his pains, could set them all down in writing, in two months or in three." The war lasted fifteen years—from 1208 to 1223. They were years of pillage, sack, and massacre, and burning of all the towns in Southern France with the zeal of fanatics and the greed of conquerors. The two chief actors in this war were Innocent III and Simon, count of Montfort, the one ordering and the other executing. Five years after the commencement of the war this Simon was chosen lord and governor of the conquests on publication of a charter that read, "Simon, lord of Montfort, earl of Leicester, viscount of Beziers and Carcassonne. The Lord, having delivered into my hands the lands of the heretics, an unbelieving people, that is to say, whatever He hath thought fit to take from them by the hand of the crusaders his servants, I have accepted humbly and devoutly this charge and administration, with confidence in his aid." The pope forthwith confirmed him in hereditary possessions of his dominion. From this time on it was a war against the native princes of Southern France, the design being to conquer their domains. Simon's ambition was boundless. He invaded the domains of princes uncontaminated by heresy, and persecuted and despoiled them. Innocent III rebuked him in a letter as follows, "Ye have not been content with invading all the places wherein there were heretics, but ye have further gotten possession of those wherein there was no suspicion of heresy." Innocent's attempt to check the fury of Simon was futile. There was no stopping of the force to which the pope had once appealed. In 1218 Simon was killed in battle. The struggle dragged on for five more years, when Amaury, the son and successor of Simon, concluded a treaty with the counts of Toulouse, and the war was ended. Arriving at the court of the king of France, Louis VIII, who had just succeeded his father, Philip Augustus, Amaury ceded to the king his rights over the domains, which the crusaders had conquered. During the long war one of the fairest provinces in France had been laid waste; its farms and villages were in ruins and vast numbers of its population had been put to the sword.

But the war against the Cathari was continued by the machinery of the Roman Inquisition, which was now put into full action. In 1244 their last stronghold was taken and two hundred of the Perfect were burned. After the 13th century, heresy in Southern France was a "noiseless underground stream."

G. M. O.

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From sorrow, toil and pain, and sin, we shall be free;  
And perfect love and friendship reign, thru all eternity.

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## THE DAY OF SHADOWS

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### Israel Smitten Before the Philistines

Having called Samuel and revealed to him the doom of Eli's house, "the Lord appeared again in Shiloh," so we read, "for the Lord revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord." As was pointed out, this statement closes the third chapter. The narrative continues at chapter 4:1 as follows, "And the word of Samuel came to all Israel. . . ." It is evident, as already has been observed, that here the narrative flows on in unbroken continuity. The word of Samuel that came to all Israel of chapter 4:1 is the revelation of the Lord of chapter 3:21, so that we should read, "And the Lord appeared again in Shiloh: for the Lord revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord. And the word of Samuel came to all Israel." Then we read, "Now Israel went out against the Philistines to battle." Doubtless there is connection between the fact of Samuel's word coming to all Israel, the Lord's bringing to pass all Samuel's prophecies, and thereby establishing him a prophet in Israel on the one hand, and Israel's going out against the Philistines to battle, on the other. The word of Samuel that came to all Israel was not a command to the effect that Israel march to battle against the Philistines. The matter is this. The whole period of the judges—a period of some 375 or possibly 400 years—knew but four prophets, three of whom were obscure men, whose words were exceedingly few. It means that, in the language of the sacred writer, "the word of the Lord was precious in those days, there being no vision breaking through and spread abroad." This notice was explained as meaning that in the age of the judges no new revelations were added to those already given in preceding centuries, that, otherwise said, there was no word of God that came to Israel *directly* from the Lord by prophetic announcement. The Lord had spoken in the past but spake no more. Hence, there was no man, prophet of God who could confront Israel with a "thus saith the Lord." Revelation, intercourse of God with the people of Israel, had ceased. Then, after all those years of silence, the Lord again spake. There were again visions breaking through and spread abroad. Israel again had a prophet, and that prophet was Samuel. The true Israel rejoiced. Samuel was an answer to their cry, "There is no more any prophet; neither is there any among us that knoweth how long. O God, how long shall the adversary reproach." The adversary was reproaching in those days. Israel was being oppressed by the Philistines. And the worship at the sanctuary was in charge of the wicked sons of

Eli. And they were not being restrained. But Israel again had a prophet, God's gift to His people. And the faithful again took heart. They knew that the Lord again was about to do great and terrible things. Their salvation was nigh. Even by the mouth of two prophets—"the man of God" and Samuel, judgment had been pronounced on Eli's house. The Lord had promised salvation, to include, certainly, the lifting of the oppression of the Philistines. Hannah had made mention of it in her prayer of thanksgiving, "The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven he shall thunder upon them. . . ." If the Lord had looked upon her affliction, would He not look upon the affliction of her people, the true Israel, who cried unto him day and night? And though she could not have vowed that her son be a prophet all the days of his life, yet it is not unlikely that she knew, by prophetic inspiration, that the Lord would send salvation in the way of Samuel's intercessions. And Samuel had grown to be a youth. And all Israel knew that he was established to be a prophet of the Lord. His word came to all Israel. The land again had a prophet.

The faithful were reassured; but not only they but the carnal Israel as well. They, too, concluded that salvation was nigh even for them. And though their hearts were far from God, their expectations ran high, so that they dared to risk a war with the Philistines and expected that the Lord would fight for them. Defeated in battle, they were amazed and asked, "Wherefore hath the Lord smitten us today before our enemies?" Why had the Lord done that, they meant to say, after reviving their hopes by the gift of Samuel? What they were willingly ignorant of is that the presence of Samuel among them could only indicate that the Lord was about to send salvation to His people, the penitent in Israel, but not to men such as they. What they wanted is deliverance without repentance. But the Lord smote them before their enemies. Still they would not be instructed. They took to them the ark of the covenant of Jehovah out of Shiloh and removed it among them that *it* might save them out of the hand of their enemies. They thought that it would save them as if by magic, it being the *ark* of the covenant and Jehovah's throne, and in this lifeless thing they now put their trust, and said to it: "Thou art my God." Rather than forsake their sins and turn to the living God for help, they put their trust in a religious symbol. They made an idol of God's throne, and believed that it would stand by them in their warfare with the Philistines. To such foolishness God gives up men who know God, as did the apostate Israel—they knew Him by special revelation—but who glorify Him not as God and are not thankful (Rom. 1:20), and whose religion has ceased to be a thing of the heart and become a thing only of the head.

Then men of religion go to trusting in God's symbols, His *means* of grace—the sacraments and the church, the dead letter of the word and even prayer—instead of in the living Christ and His Father, as when, to illustrate, they imagine that they are saved just because they are sprinkled with the water of baptism, eat the Lord's Supper, spend much time in prayer and Bible reading, and belong to a church. We have a name for such foolishness. We call it superstition, but the Scripture calls it idolatry. That was precisely the sin of those men of Israel; they trusted in the ark instead of in Jehovah. It is against this sin that the church warns when she says to parents, who present their children for baptism, that they must not use this sacrament out of custom or *superstition*; and she exhorts communicants not to cleave with their hearts unto the external bread and wine, but to lift them up on high in heaven, where Christ is our advocate. Sinful man, by nature hateful of God, dissociates from God's person His power and grace and shuts them up in things harmless, lifeless, speechless, sightless, and deaf, yet mighty to save out of all trouble, so man likes to imagine contrary to his better knowledge. Certainly, the people of Israel could not do without the Ark, the priests, the sanctuary, and the sacrifices, no more than we can do without the sacraments and the church. But it is Christ's God who saves His people.

Let us try to understand well the doing of those men of Israel and the imaginings back of that doing. Judging from their complaint "wherefore hath the Lord smitten us today before our enemies", they had made the Lord their expectation prior to their defeat, yet not actually the Lord but the Lord as changed by them as to His glory—as to all His goodnesses—into an image made like to corruptible man (Rom. 1:23), capable of the vices of such a man. For they wanted the Lord to send salvation as walking with them in their sins. But this the Lord could not do, he being Holy God. He could only be against them as long as they continued impenitent. Thus their problem was how to get Israel's God to work for the success of their arms without laying upon them the necessity to repent. That their solution was the ark, shows that in their minds they connected God's power with this vessel or rather identified the two and thus reduced God to a blind, impersonal, non-intelligent, non-volitional, and non-ethical force, to a kind of atomic bomb, in His essence and terrible energy locked in the ark; and that they believed that this vessel, if only removed to the theatre of war, would spend its energy against the Philistines. Was it not Jehovah's throne? Was it not the token of His presence among them, and the sign of His covenant? It had made for their fathers a path through the Red Sea and led them on their journeys through the wilderness. So they concluded

that the thing for them to do was to instruct the priests to fetch the ark to the camp, which they did, in the expectation that it would save them. To be sure, they knew better, for they were rational men. Their blindness was not intellectual but spiritual-moral. Being apostates, they refused to think and act realistically in matters of religion. The fault lay with the hardness of their heart. It was not a lack of theoretical knowledge about the true God and the impotence of idols that can account for their doing. What they needed is not more instruction in the field of theology but a new heart to receive the instruction that already had been given them. What they needed is severe chastisement, a hard blow that, as blessed to their hearts by Christ's spirit, would gender in them the will to put away their idols, including the ark, cleanse themselves of their vain imaginings, think right of God, the knowledge of whom they were holding in unrighteousness, and serve the living God with all their hearts, repenting of their sins. That would be the only solution of their troubles. Hence, the Lord does not give them more instruction, but He deals them that blow.

The ark came into the camp, "and all Israel shouted with a great shout, so that the earth rang again." Thus they were wildly enthusiastic. Victory should be theirs, considering their splendid morale and the state of mind of the Philistines. And yet Israel was smitten even with "a very great slaughter; for there fell in Israel thirty thousand footmen." If courage counts for anything in war, the men of Israel should have won that battle. But despite their shouts of joy, true courage was lacking to those men. They were afraid of God and afraid therefore of the Philistines. For being apostates, they received testimony in their hearts that the Lord was against them. Hence, they were defeated before the commencement of the battle. As to the Philistines, investigating the shout of the Israelites, they learned that the ark of the Lord had come into their camp, and with it, so they believed, the Lord Himself; for being heathen men, they, too, identified God and His throne. And they were sore afraid. They thought that they all were dead men. For they were not unacquainted with Israel's God. The works that He had performed in delivering Israel from the bondage of Egypt had clearly demonstrated that He was God and none else. And the report of that mighty demonstration of His power had travelled far and wide. Indeed His name had been declared throughout all the earth. And the Philistines remembered. And their plight seemed hopeless to them. This is what they said, "God is come into the camp. And they said, Woe unto us! for there has not been such a thing heretofore. Woe unto us! who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty gods? These are the gods that smote the Egyptians with all the plagues of the wilder-



ness." The description here is lively and distinct. The shout that rose from the camp must have astonished the philistines; for in that first battle Israel had been vanguished. But when they learned through scouts that the ark of the Lord had come into the camp of the Israelites, their astonishment gave way to fear and terror. Yet they did not seek safety in flight. Stouthearted men among them spake words of encouragement, urging the terrified body of the army to bold struggle. They said, "Be strong, and quit yourselves like men, O ye Philistines, that ye may not be servants unto the Hebrews, as they have been to you: quit yourselves like men and fight." It was doubtless the leaders that were here speaking, the generals in the army. They were of the world's brave. Their "be men" was twice repeated and opposed to the twofold "Woe unto us". So did they appeal to the pride of those fearful ones in the attempt to shame them into fighting the war to its finish. If they be men, let them act the part of men and not be dismayed even by the consideration that the adversary with whom they have to do is the mighty God of the Hebrews. They must not allow themselves to be demoralized by the consideration that Jehovah is invincible God as he was reputed to be. That doubtless was fable. "Be strong, quit yourself like men". Thus these leaders appealed not only to the pride of those fearful ones but they also exhorted them to consider that they were strong men, stronger even than God, and that therefore the thing for them to do was to realize that they were strong. And trusting in their own strength they would not be put to shame, in a warfare with Israel's God. Let them fight therefore. This "Be strong and fight" the leaders oppose to the "Who will save us" of those fearful ones. Who would save them? They themselves, if only they fought. Therefore "Be strong and fight." These leaders had one more argument. That they quit themselves like men, and fight was a dire necessity in view of what would result from their being vanguished. They would be servants to the Hebrew as the latter had been to them. That would be insufferable. That certainly their pride would not be able to endure. Well then, Let them fight. The words of the leaders took effect. But only because God worked. By that vain, curt, and martial address of those Philistine leaders, God worked in the hearts of those fearful ones the fierce and iron determination to fight. And he made their arms strong and their hearts hard, so that they went forth to do battle with Israel's God. And the Philistines fought, "and Israel was smitten, and they fled every man into his tent: and there was a very great slaughter; for there fell of Israel thirty thousand footmen." That was the second defeat and a major disaster. That was the second blow that God dealt them. It was a blow much harder than the first. For they had refused to be corrected.

So had the Philistines been gloriously victorious, so they thought. They had proven to themselves that they were men indeed, if only they wanted to be. Trusting in their own strength, they had not been put to shame. Even the invincible God of the Hebrews, could not stand before them, when once they had aroused themselves. Having captured the ark, they even concluded that He had fallen into their hands and that they now had Him in their power. And they took the ark, and brought it into the temple of Dagon and set it by Dagon, who had given them the victory, as they said.

G. M. O.

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## SION'S ZANGEN

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### Uit Den Treure

(Psalm 90; Derde Deel)

We zijn bijna aan het einde van dezen heerlijken Psalm: het gebed van Mozes, den man Gods.

De vorige maal zijn we opgehouden van praten over dit merkwaardige lied toen Mozes bad: Leer ons alzóó onze dagen tellen, dat wij een wijs hart bekomen.

Tot hiertoe weende Mozes aangaande het verleden. Zijn zingen was "uit den treure".

Nu zal Hij den Heere aanloopen voor het deel des levens dat nog komen moet: de toekomst. Aangaande de toekomst heeft Mozes nog een gebed.

"Keer weder, Heere, tot hoe lang? En het berouwe U over Uwe knechten." Een zeer zwaar vers.

Hoe kan men toch aan den Heere vragen om "weder te keeren"? Is er dan ooit sprake bij God van verandering, van weggaan, van terugkeeren? Is Hij naar Zijn Wezen dan de Onveranderlijke niet?

Eerst moet vaststaan, dat er bij God geen verandering is, nog schaduw van omkeering. Bij God is er een eeuwig onveranderlijk Heden. Hij is de Rots die altijd stille staat. Zijn werk is *af*. Als dat niet zoo ware, zou ik de eeuwigheid niet in durven gaan. In die waarheid ligt juist onze troost. Ik de Heere worde niet veranderd, daarom zijt gij, o wormpje Jakobs, niet verteerd.

Evenwel, er is verschil in de ervaring van Gods onveranderlijke nabijheid. Bij den goedertierene houdt Gij U goedertieren, bij den oprechten man houdt Gij U oprecht. Bij den reine houdt Gij U rein, maar bij den verkeerde bewijst Gij U een worstelaar." Psalm 18:26, 27. Daar zit eigenlijk ons antwoord op de vraag: Hoe kan Mozes zeggen: Keer weder, Heere! Toen Israel zijn weg voor den Heere verloor, scheen het alsof God veranderde, wegliep, verdween om nimmer weer te keeren. Wat echter werkelijk gebeurde is

dat de Heere Zich een worstelaar bewees aan Zijn zondig volk. En nu vraagt Mozes aan God of Hij weer Zichzelf wil openbaren in al Zijn liefde en barmhartigheid. Keer weder, Heere, wil zeggen: Toon ons Uw lieflijk Aangezicht weer!

En de Goddelijke drijfveer zij: Het berouwe U over Uwe knechten! Het lijkt wel wat stout om den Heere zóó aan te spreken, het Hem alvast maar te vertellen, waarom Hij een zekere houding aan moet nemen; maar meer dan schijn is het niet. Mozes kende God. Hij wist dat de Heere Zijn volk van eeuwigheid liefhad. En dat Hij nimmer zou laten varen de werken Zijner handen. Hij grijpt God aan in Zijn geopenbaarde, eeuwige liefde voor Israel. Ziet ge, de Heere kan Zichzelf niet verloochen. Keer op keer lezen we het in Gods Woord: Toen dacht Hij aan Zijn verbond! En dan werd het beter. Dat Verbond is eeuwig. Van eeuwigheid ligt Gods volk gestrengeld in de armen Gods en kan nooit verloren gaan. Het gebed van Mozes den man God wordt zekerlijk verhoord. De Heere is weergekeerd. Hij riep Jozua en daar ging het door den Jordaan des doods het land Kanaäns binnen! Een type van Jezus die Zijn volk leidt door de vallei der schaduw des doods tot in het hemelsche Kanaän daar boven bij God.

In de volgende verzen zal Mozes tot in bijzonderheden treden en het den Heere vertellen hoe die wederkeering van God zal zijn. Daar zal dan eerst zijn de verzadiging der goedertierenheid Gods in den morgenstond. Wat schoone beschrijving van het zalige nabij-God-te-zijn!

De goedertierenheid Gods, wat is zij?

Geliefde lezer, de goedertierenheid Gods is die deugd van den Drieëenigen God, waardoor alles in Zijn ontzaglijke Wezen Hem dringt om goed te zijn voor Zijn volk en hen te zegenen tot in eeuwigheid! Goedertierenheid is een hartstocht. In dit geval, een hartstocht Gods. Zijn geheele Wezen denkt aan U in gena en wil naar U toe om U te omhelzen, te omarmen en te beladen en overladen met zegeningen! In concreto, beteekent het niets anders dan dat Hij, de Drieëenige God, Zichzelf aan U schenkt.

En als ge het dringen en waaien van die Goddelijke hartstocht nu eens duidelijk wilt zien, ga dan naar Golgotha en wacht totdat het duister wordt voor drie lange, bange uren. Dat was één uur voor elk der Drie Personen. Wacht daar dan in den donker, totdat Jezus Christus begint te schreeuwen, neen, brullen: Mijn God! Waarom hebt Gij Mij verlaten?! (Het is eenvoudig niet doenlijk om hier ontelbare millioenen van uitroepstekens achter deze woorden te zetten. Ik heb er geen tijd voor: trouwens: Die riep was een eeuwige toorn aan 't wegdragen!)

En als ge dan die brullende stem goed gehoord hebt, dan moet ge tegen Uzelven zeggen: Dat is de goedertierenheid Gods voor mij! Het tocht bij Golgotha.

Het zijn de winden Gods die waaien, waaien, om Zijn volk te zegenen.

Verzadig ons nu, Heere, met die goedertierenheid! Dat is het tweede lid.

We zingen in t' Engelsch: "Then, then, I shall be satisfied!" Then? Wanneer? Wanneer we aankomen aan de stranden der eeuwigheid. Toen ik een heel kleine jongen was, o zoo klein, toen heb ik mijn drie oudere zusters vaak de liederen Sions hooren zingen. Een van die versjes had een strophe die jubelde van het feit, dat we daar nimmer scheiden, en scheiden nimmer, nimmermeer! Ik moet daar nu aan denken. Jezus zeide tot de Samaritaansche vrouw: Vrouw, wanneer ge drinkt van het water dat Ik U geven zal, zoo zult ge nimmermeer dorsten. Maar het water dat Ik U geven zal, zal in U worden een fontein van water opspringende tot in het eeuwige leven. Er is geen einde aan de verzadiging der goedertierenheid Gods in Jezus Christus, den Heere!

Verzadig ons, O Heere!

O, als God tot ons komt en als Hij ons Jezus Christus geeft, en dat is immers Zijn Eigen Goddelijk Hart, dan is het goed, dan wordt het stil. Dan zijn we gelijk een kind, dat stil inslaapt aan 's moeders borst. Het is verzadigd, gelukkig, vredig en stil daarboven bij God.

En doe dat, Heere, in den morgenstond!

Wat mag dat toch wel beteekenen? Och, geliefde lezer, dat beteekent *nu, direkt, aan het begin van alles*. In den morgenstond begint toch immers Uw dag, de dag van Uw kind, van Uw land, van de historie? In den morgenstond openen wij de oogen en worden onszelven bewust. In dienzelfden morgenstond vind ik bij mijn bed direkt de vragen Gods, de geboden des Heeren, mijn nooddriften, mijn materie voor historiemaken. En nu is de bede: Heere, we hebben het in de bange woestijn geleerd: we vertrouwen onszelven niet meer. Laat nu aan den morgenstond direkt Uw goedertierenheid ons beïnvloeden, ons vervullen, ons versadigen. Laat Jezus ons leiden.

En dan is 't goed. Dan zullen wij juichen en verblijd zijn in alle onze dagen.

Hoe zouden de gasten toch treuren terwijl de Bruidegom met en bij hen is. Ge moogt zelfs wel zeggen, dat de Bruidegom in hen is. Hij vervult, verzadigt hen.

Verblijd ons naar de dagen in dewelke Gij ons gedrukt hebt, naar de jaren in dewelke wij het kwaad gezien hebben!

Mozes heeft het oog, eerst, op de jaren van de woestijn die achter hem liggen. In die jaren, veertig in getal, hadden zij het kwade gezien. Dat zal waar zijn. Ach, hoe zullen we in staat zijn om al dat kwaad op te sommen? Er was de openbaring van schromelijke ongehoorzaamheid, ongeloof, mouterij, ondankbaarheid voor 's Heeren groote daden. Het was zelfs zóó ver gegaan, dat sommigen onder hen, des Heeren autori-

teit, die op Mozes was, verwierpen. Sommigen moesten levend ter helle varen. Duizenden en tienduizenden zijn door God neergeworpen in de wildernis. In het meerendeel had God geen welgevallen. Het ging Mozes aan het hart.

En toen was keer op keer Gods slaande hand gekomen om Israel te slaan, te straffen, te geeselen. O ja, zij hadden het kwade gezien. Het was immers zóó erg, dat Mozes klaagde: de uitnemendste onzer dagen zijn moeite en verdriet, en het wordt snellijk afgesneden en we vliegen daarhenen!

Daarom, Heere, in dezelfde mate nu, dat we het kwade gezien en geproefd hebben, schenk ons nu Uwe goedertierenheid, en dan in die mate, dat wij den ganschen dag ons mogen kunnen verblijden.

Die bede wordt wel verhoord, doch slechts in beginsel geschonken. Ja, we zullen verblijd zijn en juichen, doch steeds uit den treure. We moeten door vele smarten ingaan in het Koninkrijk der hemelen. Vraagt me niet om U dat tot in bijzonderheden te verklaren. Ik weet het niet. Ik weet wel, dat het een goddelijke wet is, maar ik kan het niet verklaren. Ge kunt het voor Uw oogen zien gebeuren, dat Gods volk moet zondigen hier en door God gegeeseld en gekastijd worden. En ook weet ik, dat dit goed is, dat dit wijsheid van God is, dat het een wet van het koninkrijk is, want Hij zegt eenvoudig: Hij geeselt een iegelijken zoon die Hij aanneemt. Het moet, het zal aanstonds getoond worden en bewezen, dat het zoo moest om vele zonen tot God te brengen. Immers zoo is het ook met Jezus. Alleen door den weg van ontzettende vernedering en smarten komt Hij op den troon. En zoo ook wij. We zullen blijven zingen uit den treure.

Doch een beginsel van de blijdschap ontvangen we, Mozes bidt er om in de laatste twee verzen.

Laat Uw werk aan Uwe knechten gezien worden, en Uwe heerlijkheid over hunne kinderen. En de lieflijkheid des Heeren onzes Gods zij over ons; en bevestig God het werk onzer handen over ons, ja het werk onzer handen, bevestig dat.

En dat is het beginsel van blijdschap, van hemelsche blijdschap.

Het werk des Heeren is het werk dat Hij doet in Christus, Zijn Zoon. Het is de roeping van Zijn Zoon uit Egypte. Het is het werk van de verheerlijking Zijns naams in Zijn Zoon en Zijn volk, die eeuwiglijk rondom Zijn troon zullen staan om Hem toe te zingen alle lof en prijs en majesteit tot in eeuwigheid. Het is werk, daarom, van verkiezing en verwerping.

Stempt ge mij dat toe? Of wilt ge exegetisch bewijs hebben? Welnu, het is toch Mozes die hier zingt? En wat ander werk kan Mozes nu toch op het oog hebben, dan de verlossing van Israel uit Egypte? Daar liep alle mond van over, zelfs in het heidendom rondom. En dat werk was toch tweeërlei geweest? Israel was gered, doch Egypte schreide voor jaren. De bloem van

dat volk was verwoest. En Egypte dat Israel benauwt, doch straks haar prooi moet overgeven, is toch een type van de verlossing van Gods volk uit de klauwen van Satan, de wereld en de macht der zonde. Hoort ge het niet telkenkeer als er een kindje gedoopt wordt: . . . en Uw volk Israel droogvoets. . . door hetwelk de doop beduid werd?

En Mozes wil, dat Gods volk dat werk zal zien. En geen wonder. Dat werk te zien is de hemel. Dat werk van God te bezien en te bezingen was het groote doel van God voor Zijn volk. Hij wilde een groote schare voor Zich hebben tot in alle eeuwigheid om het Hem toe te zingen, dat Zijn werken, en dat is ook een openbaring van Zichzelf, heerlijk zijn. Dat is de hemel.

Mozes vraagt hier eigenlijk, dat, eerstens, het gezien mag worden aan Israel, dat zij gered, verlost zijn. En, tweedens, dat dit verlost volk dat werk der verlossing mag gadeslaan.

Hetzelfde vraagt hij voor hunne kinderen. We hebben hier een vingerwijzings Gods, dat wij voor onze kinderen en kindskinderen moeten bidden. En dan vragen we dat de glorie Gods over onze kinderen kome. Dat is het zelfde als dat we vragen, dat zij met het aangezicht tot God gekeerd mogen staan om de afstraling van Zijn deugden te zien.

En dan zal 't gaan.

Dan komt er een beschrijving van zegen, zooals het moeilijk is om in woorden te brengen. Hier beluisteren we hemelsche klanken.

De lieflijkheid Gods.

Letterlijk staat er in het Hebreeuwsch: De zoetheid Gods.

Hetzelfde woord hebt ge in den naam van Naomi: "Mijn lieflijkheid". Mozes heeft hier het oog op al de aantrekkelijkheid van Gods deugden. God is aantrekkelijk, lieflijk, schoon: het is de hemel zelf om slechts te mogen staren naar het aangezicht Gods.

En het slot is, dat die lieflijkheid van God, de uitwerking van het staren naar God en Zijn werk, ons werk bevestige, vast make, bestendige.

Geliefde lezer, het beteekent niet anders, dan dat het ons in staat stellen mag om ons werk te volbrengen.

Vraagt ge mij: wat is dat werk, dat bevestigd moet? Dan is mijn antwoord: Al zingende en lovende naar den hemel loopen!

Jaren, veel jaren herwaarts, heb ik er van hooren zingen: "Schraag op dat spoor mijn wankelende gangen!"

Ja, Heere, we komen al: want Gij zijt onze God!

G. V.

#### NETHERLAND SUBSCRIPTIONS

At the last Board meeting of the R.F.P.A., held May 16, a charge of \$4.00 was placed on Netherlands yearly subscriptions to meet the added cost of postage and printing.

Board of the R. F. P. A.

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## IN HIS FEAR

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### To The Utmost Of Your Power

#### V.

*Am I Using All My Power In Conformity  
With My Vow? (Continued)*

Johnny was naughty again today. The rod had to be taken down from the place where it is kept, and Johnny felt its sting. Johnny walked away crying, and only too often, with nothing less than an increased degree of fear for his father or mother. His fear of the Lord had not increased at all. What is wrong with the above description of Johnny's experience with the rod?

Surely we are not advocating the sparing of the rod. The fear of the Lord is never taught that way. "Spare the rod and spoil the child." The Lord Himself declared in Proverbs 13:24, "He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes." In this world of sin and folly in which we live there is a growing tendency among the worldly minded to cast the rod away entirely or even to put it in the hands of the child to use against his parents. At least the practice of the world has that effect. But a properly used rod is a necessity in the Christian home. You have God's word for it in the text quoted above. God approves of its use. You better not do away with yours, and if you have none by all means provide yourself with one. Have no fear of being cruel or of being considered to be cruel by God. The rod indeed can be and often is misused but that is not because the practice itself is of the devil rather than an instrument for bringing up children in the fear of the Lord. The misuse is simply due to the fact that one does not use it in the fear of the Lord. He who misuses the rod is not living himself from the principle of this fear and consequently in using it, he does not instruct in the fear of the Lord by means of it. He teaches his child to fear the rod or to fear his own violent temper. But that parent who does not use the rod and lets his child grow up with the impression that he can sin and "get away with it" is cruel. You have God's word for that too. The text above declares that such a parent *hates* his son.

However, a parent may use that rod faithfully and be under the impression that he is doing what God demands of him while he really is not bringing up his child in the fear of the Lord. As we stated in our first paragraph, the child learns only to fear his parent. This occurs when parents fail to make use of this opportunity to speak to their children about

the Lord of heaven and earth, whom they must fear and obey. In using the rod the parents certainly ought to explain to their children that their disobedience was not simply a failure to do what father and mother demanded or a performing of that which they had forbidden but that it is a sin against the Lord and that it is the Lord who has given this rod to the parents for the correction and chastisement of His sinning children. How often is the parent himself conscious of that fact? How often is it not the child sees and hears nothing to give him any other impression than that he must simply fear his parents and that makes him long for the time when he will get from under this terrible bondage when he becomes of age? He must early be taught that he is the Lord's servant and that he can never outgrow his obligation to serve Him. He must then also be taught that even though he may disobey his parents and not be found out, there is still the Lord with whom he must contend and to whom he must still give an answer for his deed. Our contention is that when the rod is applied the parent must use a few words of Christian admonition and explanation to the child. You can whip a horse and beat a dog because they must simply obey your will, but your child is a rational moral creature who can know God and concerning whom you have promised that you will instruct him in the fear of the Lord to the utmost of your power. As we saw last time, God declares in Deut. 6:7 that we should diligently teach our children to serve God and that we should talk of His precepts to our children when we sit down with them in our house or walk on the way. Surely when they have disobeyed these precepts we should talk about them and call their attention to the fact that they sinned against God. Let us remember that you can never frighten a child out of sin and into obedience. Only by teaching them the fear of the Lord so that they have a profound respect and reverence for Him in love can you train them in the way of righteousness and obedience.

The ability of the one parent or the other to do this when the rod is applied varies. Yet we are convinced that there is not a Christian father or mother who cannot tell his or her child that God demands obedience and that He says that the disobedient must be punished. There is not a Christian parent who cannot tell his child how God punished Israel for its sins when Israel was in the wilderness, when the Judges ruled the land or even in the times of the Kings. Scripture is full of examples and stories which can be told to the younger children in connection with their own punishment. Oh, I know, it takes time, and—well, it is easier just to apply the rod and go back to what we were doing ourselves, but please read again Deuteronomy 6:1-9 and see once if God does not demand it of you to take the time.

What is to be said to the child depends a great deal

on the age of the child. You cannot speak of the fear of the Lord when you spank a two-year-old child. At the age where he begins to attend school, it is quite different. When, however, they get to be in their early teens and the rod becomes almost impossible to wield on a big strapping lad, bigger and stronger than you are yourself, the punishment may assume the form of depriving them of things. God did that also in certain instances in Israel. He kept them in the wilderness and out of Canaan for 40 years. He did not allow Moses to enter it. By the way what an example we have here! Even Moses, who had served so faithfully for 40 years, is punished by God. But to return to our line of thought, when we deprive our children of things as punishment we ought also to do so in the fear of the Lord, and then when they are of that age we can add to our instruction by explaining to them that before God they deserve a greater punishment than we could ever meet out to them even if they commit but one sin, namely, the torments of hell and that we escape only because the Lord whom we fear has inflicted it upon His Son for us. Then you teach the fear of the Lord.

Mary was sick and was in bed for a few days. Her friends asked for her to come out and play. Mother said, "No, Mary cannot come out yet." Mary gets a little better and wants to go outside. Mother still says, "No, Mary, you were sick and might get worse if you go out now." Mary asks, "Well, why did I get sick? Johnny and Ruthie and the rest did not get sick." "Well, Mary," mother replies, "you were not careful and you got yourself all wet and cold when you ran out in the rain last week". Or she may say, "There was a case of Measles in school and you caught it from some one." Mary walks away with a pout on her face considering herself to be quite an unfortunate creature for being one of those who happened to get sick.

But has Mary's mother done all that she could? What more could she say to Mary? She has not told her any lies, surely not intentionally at least. Surely, though, you will agree that Mary's mother has not really satisfied her question or explained that sickness in a way that Mary's thoughts are turned to God Who made her sick. What an opportunity her mother really had to teach her one of the fundamental truths of the fear of the Lord! Our Heidelberg Catechism devotes a whole section to the knowledge of our misery. What a wonderful opportunity Mary's mother had to tell Mary a few things about this! She could have put down her work for a minute and called Mary to her side and told her how wonderfully God made us in the beginning, placing us in a world where there was no sickness, pain or death. She could repeat the story of the fall to her and remind her that all the sickness, pain and death that we now have in this world are due

to the fact that we sinned against God. She could tell Mary that all the sickness and pain we have in this life ought to remind us of the fact that we are sinful people and ought to remind us of how thankful we ought to be that God sent His Son to die for us that we might presently go to a better world where once more there shall be no suffering, pain and death. Let her tell Mary that she ought to be thankful to God now that He has made her almost completely well again.

It takes time to do that. Of course it does. Yet we promised that we would turn the thoughts of our children to God to the utmost of our power, and rather than to *overlook* these opportunities we ought to look *for* them. Especially since we live in these days when things are rapidly moving toward the end of time and when the devil has such an array of subtle deceptions invented and in operation whereby he is striving to tempt our children to look for the Antichrist and accept his offerings, we ought to do all we can to turn the thoughts of our children to God and to His Christ. We must teach them the fear of the Lord when we sit down with them in our houses, on the way, when we arise and when we retire at night according to Deut. 6:1-9. Does that not also include all these incidents in the home? Of course it does.

The same thing may be said of the times that we are on the way with our children as Deut. 6:7 also suggests. The family is out on a picnic or out for a ride, and everywhere the works of God's hands are manifest. The fields are filled with beautiful flowers. Birds of brilliant plumage present themselves momentarily. Everything speaks of God's praises and glory. Everything does except man who either fails to see God's glory or else if he sees it makes no mention of these things to his children that their thoughts also may be turned to their Creator and that they may be caused to stand in awe before Him because of what they see of Him and His glory. The falling star, the song of a bird not heard before, the new flower, the thunderstorm and a host of other things which the child observes are not interpreted for him as they ought.

Parents so quickly shrug their shoulders and say, "Oh, I cannot do that. It is all right for Ministers and School teachers, but I cannot do that." In conclusion therefore a few remarks ought to be made in regard to this. First of all we would remind you that Deut. 6:1-9 was not directed to Ministers and School teachers. It was directed to uneducated—that is in the earthly sense of the word, for spiritually they were educated—keepers of sheep who but recently were slaves in Egypt. Besides, with the fulness of the revelation we have in possessing both the Old and New Testaments and having had the privilege of attending catechism classes from early childhood onward and having the abundant



means for growth in spiritual knowledge which is our portion today, no one ought to feel even that he has the right to try to hide behind such an excuse. If we are so unspiritual that we do not desire to put forth the effort to do these things and to seek to increase our own knowledge, the fault is not with the principle but with us. Remember that God demands the utmost of *your* power. If then He has given your neighbour who is a school teacher more ability than you, He is not going to hold you responsible for as much as your neighbour. The Parable of the Talents ought to teach you that. But He will demand of you the *utmost* of the power He has given *you*.

We would present one question yet to those who feel their incapability of bringing up their children in the fear of the Lord and desire to have their power increased. Have you made this a matter of prayer? Have you prayed to God to give you wisdom and even courage to speak of these things to your children? That prayer ought to begin before the child is born and ought to be uttered every morning when we arise with them, at evening when we retire with them and as frequently during the day as new problems arise. That prayer is pleasing to God, you may be sure. It pleased Him to have Solomon pray for wisdom to rule His people. It will please Him to have you pray for wisdom to bring up His children in the fear of His name. He alone can give you that wisdom, and James tells us that he that lacketh wisdom should ask of God "Who giveth liberally to all and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him."

J. A. H.

#### IN MEMORIAM

Op den morgenstond van April 25, overleed zacht en kalm, onze geliefde echtgenoot en zuster

MINNIE IDEMA, geb. Ensing

in den ouderdom van 73 jaar en vijf maanden.

Dit is onze groote troost dat zij is ingegaan in de rust die er overblijft voor het volk van God.

Mr. T. Idema

Mrs. Jennie Nagel

#### IN MEMORIAM

The consistory of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids hereby wishes to express its sympathy to our brother consistory member, Elder G. Stonehouse, in the loss of his brother

B. STONEHOUSE

May the Lord graciously sanctify this sorrow unto the bereaved, to the glory of His name.

Rev. H. De Wolf, Vice Pres.

Mr. J. Bouwman, Vice Sec'y.

## FROM HOLY WRIT

"In whom also ye, having heard the Word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom also (in which (gospel) also) having believed ye were sealed. . . . by the Holy Spirit of Promise unto the redemption of the (final) possession, unto the praise of His glory."—Ephesians 1:13, 14.

That the "sealing" of which the Bible speaks must not be conceived of as being realized in a mechanical way, nor in such a way as to render man a "mere stock and block" became evident, we trust, in our former writing. This act of the God of our salvation is, according to the clear teaching of Holy Writ, such a work of God in Christ that it honors the moral-rational, the spiritual-ethical nature of man. It is so performed by God, that it takes place in the "heart" of man. This means that man consciously and actively is partaker of the "sealing" while he undergoes this act of God. God is first, He is the primary and efficacious Author of this work. He assures us through this sealing, that the treasures of the Promise to Abraham are ours, that we are partakers of them now in very truth, and that finally we shall receive all that God has prepared for us in His Christ completely.

Such is the sealing of which the Bible speaks. It is a reality in our lives. The truth of this the apostle teaches us rather in detail in these two verses. When all the elements of this passage are carefully analyzed and viewed in the light of all of Scripture, it is not difficult to form a rather clear conception of this marvelous work of God.

Let us take notice of the following:

That the *Agent* who realizes this work of grace in our hearts is none other than the Holy Spirit. The text says "by the Holy Spirit of Promise". Concerning this phrase we would ask various questions. First of all we ask: Who is He? We would emphasize that He is the third person in the Trinity. He is not merely an influence, but a Person. He wills, desires, works, gives. Of Him the apostle writes, that "He searches all things, yea, the deep things of God". I Cor. 2:10. And we believe that He proceeds from the Father and from the Son. He is very God, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and with the Son. He is therefore all the Divine attributes and perfections of the God-head.

In our text He is first of all called "Holy". As the angels sing "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty" and bow their faces to the earth in worship and adoration, so we bow to this Spirit, Who is this God thrice Holy. By the "holiness" of this Spirit is first of all expressed, that He is exalted far above the creature.

He is the Transcendent God. He is not subject to the law and limitations of the creature. He is not to be compared with the "spirit of man". Man's spirit is finite, temporal, limited, increases and decreases in its powers. It cannot reach to the Infinite. It cannot know the "mind" the deep things of God. Of God, the Holy One, Who dwelleth in eternity, in the unapproachable light, man can only say, "Behold God is great and we know Him not; the number of His years is unsearchable". Job 36:26 and idem 37:5. "God thundereth marvelously with His voice, great things doeth He which we cannot comprehend." And, let us not overlook the fact in this connection, that this marvelous transcendancy is expressed in the term "holy" with relation to the Spirit. This should cause us to put off our shoes from our feet. Let us be very humble when we think of this Holy Spirit, Who is the High and Lofty One. Isa. 57:15. That this idea of the "transcendancy" of the Spirit is expressed in the appellation "holy" is evidently the clear implication of the apostle here first of all. This is clear from a comparative study of Eph. 4:30. We read here "And grieve not the *Holy* Spirit of God, in Whom ye were sealed unto the day of redemption." The apostle here raises a warning finger. "Beware" he would say, that you keep all the commandments, live after the new man in Christ, lest ye grieve this Holy One!

Besides this idea of "transcendancy", the term "holy" also refers to ethical perfection. This Spirit is never down on the level of sinful and unholy man. He is separated from sinners. He never does evil. He is wholly consecrated to God, to Himself. And, further He always consecrates all to God and to His service. Whatever He brings about in the Church, in the hearts of the believers, is always placed in God's service. He is, indeed, holy! And He is the *Divine Agent* of our being sealed.

The apostle tells us one more important matter concerning this Spirit, Agent of our sealing. It is an element which must be seen, be understood, to correctly appreciate that it is just *this* Spirit that *seals* us to the final redemption. The Spirit is here, therefore, called "the Holy Spirit of the Promise". Only this Spirit of the Promise is the certain pledge of our final redemption. Only such a Spirit can finish the work of God; He alone can and shall realize the consummation of the work of God.

That the foregoing is true is explicitly taught in many passages of the Word of God. Although this is not the place to enter into any detailed quotations, we would call to your attention, first of all, to Rom. 8:11, where we read: "But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall give life also to your mortal bodies through His Spirit that dwelleth in you." From this quotation it is evident,

that it is the Holy Spirit, that will raise our bodies from the grave, even as it is He who dwells in our hearts. That the Holy Spirit is the one, who will finish the work of God, is furthermore, the clear teaching of all of Scripture. Pentacost is the last event before the return of Christ. "Christ", the apostle tells us, "became a curse for us, that the blessing of Abraham (which was for all nations) might become a reality in Jesus Christ, and that thus we might receive the Promise of the Spirit through faith" Gal. 3:14.

We may, therefore, deem it established, that the Holy Spirit is the finisher of the work of God. However, the question remains, why just this Spirit, as the Spirit of "Promise"? What is this "Promise"? And how is this Spirit *related* to this Promise?

As to the first of these questions we would answer that the Promise is what always and again in the Bible is called "the Promise". In it God promised to make of Abraham a great and mighty nation. Gen. 12:1-3. This Promise is ratified by God Himself, and to it God has added His word of Oath. Gen. 22:16, 17; Heb. 4:13, 14. This Promise cannot fail, for God, Who has made it, is faithful. This promise is realized by God in such a way, that always and again it is impossible for man to realize it. The underlying axiom is ever and again: "What is impossible with man, is possible with God". Nothing shall be too great for Him. Gen. 18:24; Luke 1:37.

This promise is therefore much more than a mere announcement of what God is willing to do. God in His Promise, does not promise something conditional. He will surely bring it to pass. For God is one. His Promise is not weak. God is His own party in this Promise. And those who will be partakers of the Promise He makes to be of His party. Nothing can change this promise of God. The law did not that came later by the space of 430 years. For the ratified covenant of God, His promise is to "Abraham and his seed". Compare Gen. 12:7; 13:15; 17:7; 22:18 and 24:7. And the Apostle hastens to tell us, that we must notice that in all these passages in Genesis the writer employs the singular tense. We read, says he, "and not unto seeds as of many, but as of one; And unto Thy Seed, that is, Christ". Christ is the Seed of Abraham. Gal. 3:16. And in the last verse of Gal. 3 we read: "Now if ye be of Christ, then are ye Abraham's Seed and heirs according to the Promise".

As to this promise we may, therefore, conclude the following:

1. That there is one Promise of God. It is very really God's. He has thought it out, has revealed it, spoken it to Abraham and His Seed. God in realizing this Promise, performs His wonders. In the last analysis, this Promise is as it is just because God willed it thus in His sovereign good-pleasure.

2. Centrally this Promise touches the Christ. In Him the Promise shall be realized. For all God's Promises are yea in Him and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God the Father. And it is realized centrally in the death and resurrection of Christ from the dead. Acts 13:33.

3. And this Promise is thus realized by God, not at all by man. God was in Christ realizing it. And it is God who must and who shall realize it to the end. The Promise is out of God and through Him and unto Him. There is nothing of the weakness of sinful flesh in it. It is wholly of the Lord!

4. It touches all the children of Abraham. These children are not the natural children. This became evident during the life of Abraham in all His experiences. Not in Ishmael, the son of the bond-woman, but "in Isaac shall thy seed be called". The children of the faith are accounted for the seed. And this seed are those who are born from above, born out of water and Spirit. Gal. 4:25; John 3:3, 6.

This is the marvelous Promise of God, which in the Bible is called "the Promise". Because of the very nature of this Promise, namely, that it is most emphatically "God's Promise" it finds its completion in the Holy Spirit.

Thus it is in our text. The Holy Spirit, Who seals us to the final redemption (this is the Promise fulfilled) is called the Spirit of the Promise! This implies two things. Firstly, that this Spirit is the one who had long been Promised to come. When God gave His Promise to Abraham He assured Him of the heavenly blessings and not merely of earthly blessings. And, these blessings were to be: all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. Implicit in the "blessing of Abraham" is the Holy Spirit. This is literally stated thus in Acts 2:38, 39. We here have Peter speaking on the day of Pentecost. To the question of those who were pricked in their hearts, and who ask, "Men and brethren, what must we do?" Peter answers: "Repent ye, and be baptized each of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the forgiveness of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." And if we further enquire, as we are attempting here, why those repenting receive the forgiveness of sins and the Holy Spirit, the answer is "for unto you is the Promise and to your children. . . ." Exactly in the Holy Spirit the Promise is realized—realized on Pentecost. It is the feast of the first-fruits of the full harvest! The Spirit is the "promised One" in the very Promise to Abraham and his seed!

Secondly, this Promise is the Spirit of *Promise* because He it is that will realize the work centrally fulfilled in Christ. Thus we read in John 7:38, 39, "He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, from within him shall flow rivers of living water. But this He spake of the Spirit, which they that be-

lieved on them were to receive, for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." Again, this Spirit is the One who will finish the work of Christ. He was Promise to the Seed, that is, to Christ. Christ would receive this Spirit in the way of His suffering and death at His exaltation. Thus Peter says in Acts 3:33 "Wherefore, having been exalted unto the right hand of God, and *having received the Promise of the Holy Spirit* from the Father, hath shed this forth what ye now see and hear."

From the foregoing we learn, that the Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of the Promise, because He is to become the Agent of the crucified and exalted Christ, to realize the Promise. This is a very beautiful and important truth of Scripture, that should not be misunderstood. We should not conceive of this giving of the Spirit of Promise to Christ as though the Father, the first Person in the Trinity, were giving the Third Person, the Holy Spirit, to the Second Person, the Son. This would be a very serious heresy. It would be the subordination of the three persons to each other. Earlier in this essay we pointed out that the Spirit is "Holy", that He is the adorable God. Rather must we understand this giving of the Spirit to the Son as pertaining to this Son in the flesh. In the flesh this Son suffered and died, and was "exalted unto the right hand of God". And this God is the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Father, who gave the Spirit to the Son in the flesh is none other, but the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. (See verse 3 of Eph. 1, as also verse 17 where we read: "in order that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . .") The Triune God out of the Father, through the Son and in the Spirit gave the Spirit of Promise to the Son in the flesh, and thus enables Him to be the Life-giving Spirit for His people.

Of this Christ the Apostle says in II Cor. 3:17 "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit is, there is liberty." And because Christ is anointed and empowered by the Holy Spirit of Promise we can almost without contradiction call Christ the Spirit and the Spirit Christ. In Rom. 8:2 we read "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus". In the verses 9 and 10 of this same chapter "the Spirit" and "Christ" are inter-changed. Thus we read in verse 9 "But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." Now notice in verse 10, that the apostle does not say "the Spirit dwells in you", but "And if Christ is in you—the Spirit is life because of righteousness".

Such, then, is the Spirit of the Promise. He is wholly in the Service of the risen and glorified Christ. He receives His all out of Christ and gives it to us. He is willing and able to seal us and to assure us of our final salvation.

G. L.

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## PERISCOPE

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### *Marriage, Heaven-Made or Not.*

In an attempt to adjust its marriage canons to the existing conditions, and thus, to "take a more realistic approach to the subject of re-marriage", Bishop J. Davis of the P. E. Church wants to decide the validity of marriages, at least of those that prove unhappy and unsuccessful, on the basis of the question whether it we a heaven-made marriage or not.

How fertile are men's minds.

Eureka. How simple that really was. Here we have been groping about for a solution to the knotty problem of marriage and the re-marriage of divorced people, and right here under our eyes, at our fingers' tips, in fact, was a tailor made solution.

It only needs to be decided whether the marriage was heaven-made. And how shall that be determined. That too is simple. The very fact that this particular marriage was unhappy and unsuccessful proves that it was not heaven-made. The parties were not really married at all. Hence divorce and re-marriage is quite in order. Perhaps if they find new mates, they can strike a heaven-made marriage. Just that easy.

But is it that easy?

Jesus said, "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder". And Jesus said something about the sin which divorced persons commit when they re-marry.

But, you must remember Jesus lived a full nineteen hundred years ago and today we have to take a "realistic stand." Jesus' approach evidently was not realistic enough.

Dear reader, did you ever presume to be wiser than Jesus? Wiser than God. When we see poor fellowmen attempt to be wiser than God, we ought not vainly to puff up ourselves, as though we would not do that. Perhaps we have often done it in respect to various practical problems of life today. Whether the bishop of the P. E. Church or whether we presume to be wiser than God, God passes judgment, declares us to be fools and then God proceeds to let subsequent history and Final Judgment bear out that we are fools and that we know nothing. All we know is what Jesus taught us, whatever we contribute comes under the heading of "private interpretation" and therefore foolishness.

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### *Alas for Denominationalism.*

If one carefully observes religious trends in these

days one easily feels that today's religious world is on the move, away from narrow denominationalism to world-wide unity. Perusing a few religious magazines we find statements announcing an Alliance of Calvinistic Denominations whose purpose it is to bring churches of reformed persuasion into closer fraternal relationship. A little later we read about the Proposed Merger of the Congregational Christian and the Evangelical and Reformed.

Editor of the U.E.E., J. E. Wright, complained impatiently of "quibbling over small differences". An editor of another reformed periodical tells us that the difference between many of today's factions is as great as the difference between fiddle-dee-dee and fiddle-dee-dum.

Dr. Dan Poling, editor of Christian Herald, holds before us the example of a baptism, where, "A Catholic (he means a Roman Catholic evidently, M.G.) held the basin of water, a Jew assisted and Dr. Poling baptized". That's unity, says the Dr. Dr. A. L. Warnshuis from New York tells us that "emphasis on denominationalism means out of step with the European Church". What Europe needs from us is religious unity, not bigoted denominationalism; not more disunity but more unity.

Dr. Fosdick, speaking before the Protestant Council of the City of New York, after telling us that Protestantism has broken up into about two hundred and fifty sects and that our divided estate has become unbearable and an outrage to the intelligence, proceeds to ridicule this business by telling the story of Lloyd George. Lloyd George was riding with a friend. He said to his friend, "The Church to which I belong is torn with a fierce dispute. One section says that Baptism is IN the Name of the Father, the other that it is INTO the Name of the Father. I belong to one of these two parties. I feel most strongly about it, I would die for it, in fact. . . but I forget which it is."

Modern intelligence is outraged by emphasis on doctrinal differences. Mankind is impatient with it. The divided Europe cries for unity. The Atom Bomb threatens to blow us to smithereens of we do not hurry and decide to patch up our differences and unite.

Alas for denominationalism.

We naturally deplore the cults and Sects that, like so many boils and cancers on a body erupt upon the surface of the historical church.

But we ought to let none of these things deceive us into a unity which is no unity. If and when we hold the Truth as Christ and the Apostles have given it us, and if we can unite with others who do that same thing, well and good. That is ever our calling. Howbeit, such union does not make us any stronger for our strength is never in numbers. But if we unite with such as have here or there departed from the



Truth and the Traditions of Scripture, we only destroy ourselves against that Rock upon which is written, "For we can do nothing against the truth".

Antichrist shall sit in the Temple of God saying he is God, and what could be more convenient for him than to find in the temple a united church-world?

The clamor for unity tells us that on God's clock it is already a late hour and its notes sound the warning, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols".

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### *Horses or Tractors.*

While we are on the subject of denominationalism anyway, I find something here about horses and tractors that ought to prove interesting.

It appears that there is in this country a Sect called the Amish. This sect again divided into two groups, one group is called the Church Amish the other is called the House Amish.

One of the differences between them is that the Church Amish are allowed to use tractors for their farm tillage, but the House Amish find this strictly forbidden. I cannot find out just why tractors are "verboden" but "verboden" they are.

Imagine it, if you can. The difference being horses and tractors. No doubt they are serious about these things. But when Protestantism is charged with breaking up into two hundred and fifty sects and denominations and the differences between some of them is no greater than the question of horses or tractors, we are reminded of the fiddle-dee-dee and fiddle-dee-dum. It is indeed sorry when antiquity, pride and imagination build high fences and enclose their followers within them.

So insistent moreover are these House Amish about their rules that when the Government urged them to use tractors in view of the labor shortage, they retorted that the government must release the sect's sons held as conscientious objectors. . . then, evidently, they could get more farm work done but still use only horses.

By the test of God's Word either horses or tractors are all right. This has nothing to do with the Truth. Therefore it is vain strife about words and mens' ideas.

But we ought not to laugh at them. For if outsiders hear about a schism over Common Grace and Particular Grace, they would in turn perhaps laugh at us and count us foolish. Although we know that it is not foolish nor is it a strife about words.

What we wanted to say however is that if we do

not diligently instruct our children in the difference between us and the others, these children will eventually see nothing greater between us than the difference between horses and tractors. And if we do not confess and practice our Reformed Truth before men, we will lead them to think that the difference between us and others is about as great as this, that we use horses only while others use tractors also. God save us from becoming such laughing stock in the eyes of men.

M. G.

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### STANDARD BEARER DUES

For information as to when your subscription becomes due, you will find the numbers which indicate the month and year stamped with your address.

We have found that payments made by means of the mail is less confusing and much delay is eliminated. Therefore we ask your cooperation in making your payments by mail whenever possible.

The Board of the R. F. P. A.

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### ! IMPORTANT NOTICE !

*Attention, All Consistories!* — The Mission Committee desires to obtain a mailing list of individuals outside our Churches who may be interested in our Cause. Our purpose is to send them literature, including the Standard Bearer, free of charge, for a trial period of six months; expenses to be borne by the Mission Committee. We herewith kindly request all of our Consistories to aid us in compiling such a list. We would suggest that each Consistory give its Congregation opportunity to suggest names and addresses and that these be forwarded to the Mission Committee by the Consistory. The Mission Committee feels that the distribution of literature will be a positive testimony to the Truth and may result in the opening of a field for future personal work. May we please have your cooperation?

Kindly send all names and addresses to our secretary:

Rev. W. Hofman,  
105 W. 19th Street,  
Holland, Michigan.