

# THE STANDARD

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## MEDITATION

### 't Gescheurde Voorhangsel

*... en het voorhangsel des tempels scheurde  
midden door.*

*Luk. 23:45b.*

't Voorhangsel scheurde!

Dáár in Jeruzalem, in den tempel, waar God nu reeds voor eeuwen onder Zijn volk, maar dan in schaduwen, had gewoond.

Maar ook, dáár, op de hoofdschedelplaats, waar God in het vleesch, die voor drie en dertig jaren achter het voorhangsel van de "gelijkheid des zondigen vleesch" onder ons had getabernakeld, niet in schaduw, maar in de werkelijkheid van het vleeschgeworden Woord, uit diepten van ellenden roept tot Hem, Die heil kan zenden: "Mijn God, mijn God, waarom hebt Gij Mij verlaten?"

Dáár in Jeruzalem, dat in dienst moest staan van den Herder Israels, Die Jeruzalem's kinderen wilde vergaderen, gelijk een hen hare kiekens onder hare vleugelen roept, maar die dien dienst niet had gewild; dáár, in dat Jeruzalem, dat de profeten altijd had gedood, en gesteenigd had degenen, die van Godswege tot haar gezonden waren; waarin de nagalm nog kon worden gehoord van het over zichzelf uitgeroepen oordeel: "Zijn bloed kome over ons en over onze kinderen!" en dat de mate der ongerechtigheid had vol gemaakt door den Zoon des Allerhoogsten, den Christus Gods, aan het kruis te nagelen,—dáár scheurde het voorhangsel des tempels.

Maar ook dáár op Golgotha, waar de Herder Israels, de Goede Herder, Zijn leven aflegt voor de schapen, omdat Hij, de Knecht des Heeren, wel gewillig is in den dienst van Gods heilig Verbond te staan, gewillig tot het einde, het bittere einde toe, en omdat Hij een gebod van den Vader heeft ontvangen: dáár, waar de Zoon, in dien dienst van Gods Verbond, Zichzelf onttledigt, en,

tot in de diepte van het van God verlaten zijn, worstelt met en tegen de machten der zonde en des doods. worstelt in de bange duisternis van Gods oordeel, om door het voorhangsel Zijns vleesch heen te breken tot in het binnenste heiligdom van Gods Verbond der vriendschap, aan de spitse van, ten behoeve van, en mét de Zijnen, die Hem de Vader gegeven heeft.—ook dáár scheurde het voorhangsel!

En het voorhangsel des tempels scheurde. . . .

't Wil zeggen: God heeft het oordeel voltrokken, beginnende van Zijn huis, zijn oude huis. 't Wil ook zeggen: God heeft Zijn Huis gebouwd, Zijn nieuw, Zijn eeuwig Huis!

't Is de vervulling van het Woord: "Ziet, uw huis worde u woest gelaten!" 't Is ook de vervulling der belofte: "Zie, hier ben Ik, Uw God, Die U Zijne zonen en dochteren wil noemen, en bij u wonen, en onder u wandelen wil: de tabernakel Gods bij de mensen!"

't Beteekent: *exit* God, want Gods hand heeft vanuit het Heilige der heiligen, waar Hij eeuwen heeft gewoond, maar dan in de schaduwen, het voorhangsel gescheurd, om het voor altijd onbewoond te laten. Maar 't beteekent ook: *adit* God, want God in het vleesch heeft daar op Golgotha heel den bitteren weg van uit het voorhof en het brandofferaltaar, naar het heilige en het gouden reukofferaltaar, afgelegd, en gaat nu door het gescheurde voorhangsel Zijns vleesch in het binnenste Heiligdom in, om daar Zijn eigen bloed op het verzoendeksel te sprengen voor Gods aangezicht, en eeuwig bij Hem te wonen.

Luide roept het teeken van 't gescheurde voorhangsel: "het oude is voorbijgegaan!" Maar ook verkondigt het de blijde boodschap: "Ziet, het is alles nieuw geworden!"

Daarom verbindt het Evangelie naar Lukas het scheuren van het voorhangsel onmiddellijk met de ingevallen duisternis: "En de zon werd verduisterd, en het voorhangsel des tempels scheurde middendoor."

Maar in de Evangelie-beschrijvingen van Mattheüs en Markus, wordt dit teeken na den dood van Jezus geplaatst: "En Jezus, wederom met eene groote stem

roepende, gaf den geest. En ziet, het voorhangsel des tempels scheurde in tweeën, van boven tot beneden."

Och, de vraag naar het juiste moment van het scheuren van het voorhangsel is slechts een nieuwsgierigheidsvraag, van geen wezenlijke beteekenis. 't Is niet onwaarschijnlijk, dat het gebeurde op het oogeblik, dat de Heiland was ingedaald in de diepte van Zijn verlaten zijn van God.

Maar van wezenlijke beteekenis is Gods tijdsorde, het verband der dingen in Gods eeuwige gedachten.

En dan stond de zaak zoo, dat het scheuren van het voorhangsel in onmiddelijk verband stond met de duisternis: het oordeel van den grooten dag des Heeren is voltrokken over Zijn huis!

Maar niet minder staat het scheuren van het voorhangsel in verband met des Heilands dood: dat was het wezenlijke scheuren, en door Zijn dood is het scheidingsmakende voorhangsel weg genomen, en den weg geopend tot in het binnenste Heiligdom.

En het voorhangsel des tempels scheurde midden-door.

Geweldig teeken!

Het voorhangsel des tempels!

Om de centrale beteekenis van het scheuren van dit voorhangsel te verstaan, moeten we allereerst vragen: wat was de eigenlijke beteekenis van dit zware gordijn, dat scheiding maakte tusschen het heilige en het heilige der heiligen in den Oud Testamentischen tempel?

En daarbij moeten we ook een antwoord zoeken op de tweede vraag: en wat was de beteekenis van den tempel voor het leven van Israel, en voor de oude beëdeling van Gods Verbond?

Om eindelijk de vraag te stellen: wat was het bijzondere, het eigenaardig karakter van de beëdeling van Gods Verbond met Israel, het volk des Heeren van den ouden dag?

In het algemeen mag worden opgemerkt, dat de tempel te Jeruzalem een beeld toonde van Gods Verbond der vriendschap met Zijn volk. Daar, in het binnenste heiligdom, achter het voorhangsel, woonde God tusschen de cherubim. Daar stond de ark des Verbonds met het verzoendeksel. Zoo was het althans naar de oorspronkelijke idee van dat heiligdom. En naar die oorspronkelijke, die Goddelijke gedachte van het heilige der heiligen, moeten we zeker het voorhangsel verklaren, ook al is het, dat, in de werkelijkheid, na de ballingschap, de ark des Verbonds nimmer terug gevonden werd, en men beweert, dat het binnenste heiligdom ledig stond. Achter het voorhangsel was de woning God. En, in het heilige, aan deze zijde van het voorhangsel, was Gods volk vertegenwoordigd; in de toonbrooden, als uit de hand van Zijn God levend, in het gouden altaar, als het volk, dat Gode gewijd was, en in de lichtende kandelaar, als het volk, dat geroepen was om zijn licht te laten schijnen in de duisternis, en

de deugden zijns Gods te verkondigen. Zoo was de tempel beeld van Gods Verbond. Hij woonde daar met Zijn volk onder één dak in de intieme gemeenschap der vriendschap. Daar was Gods tabernakel bij de menschen.

't Was alles echter nog schaduw.

Eens had Gods Verbond in werkelijkheid, zij het dan ook in aardse werkelijkheid bestaan. Dat was in het eerste Paradijs. Want ook dat Paradijs was een tempel Gods, met zijn voorhof in het land van Eden, zijn heiligdom in den hof, en zijn binnenste heiligdom in het midden van den hof. Daar echter hing geen voorhangsel. Adam was beeldträger Gods. Hij stond in ware kennis, gerechtigheid, en heiligheid voor het aangezicht des Heeren. Hij was Gods Verbonds-vriend-knecht. Hij leefde in Gods gemeenschap, en had vrije toegang tot het binnenste van den hof, waar de boom des levens stond.

Dien tempel hebben wij echter verwoest.

Want we zijn afgefallen van den levenden God, hebben Zijn Woord veracht, en een verbond gemaakt tegen Hem met den vorst der duisternis. Daardoor hebben wij, voor zoover het aan ons lag, Gods Verbond der vriendschap verbroken. Verbannen werden we uit Zijne zalige gemeenschap, verdreven uit het paradijs, ver van den boom des levens, en den weg naar den boom des levens werd ons voor altijd versperd door de cherubim en het vlammende zwaard van den heiligen toorn Gods tegen ons.

God echter had wat beters over ons voorzien.

Zijn doel toch was het, niet om Zijn Verbond door ons te laten verbreken, maar om het voor eeuwig vast te leggen in Zijnen eeniggeboren Zoon, en om het op te voeren tot de hoogere, hemelsche heerlijkheid van Zijnen eeuwigen tabernakel, die in de nieuwe schepping bij de menschen zijn zou. Door dien Zoon, van eeuwigheid verordineerd als de Christus, in Wien als het vleeschgeworden Woord Gods Verbond centraal zou worden verwezenlijkt, en die door den diepen weg Zijns lijdens de hoogere heerlijkheid van het opstandingsleven zou beërven, en erfgenaam aller dingen zou worden, zou Hij de macht der zonde en des doods verbreken, vijandschap zetten tusschen Zijn volk en den Satan, en het Verbond Zijner vriendschap in eeuwigheid bevestigen.

Dat Verbond richt Hij op, reeds aanstonds na den val.

Dat Verbond bevestigt Hij van kind tot kind, in de lijn van Seth, Enoch, Noach, Sem, Abraham en zijn zaad.

Van dat Verbond spreekt Hij in de belofte des Evangelies.

En het is dat Verbond, dat Hij opricht met Israel, en dat Hij in schaduwbeeld realiseert door al de instellingen en ceremoniën der wet, door profeet en priester en koning, door tempel en altaar en offerande, door

het land der belofte, Jeruzalem, en Sion, door sabbaten, feestdagen, en eerstelingen, en centraal door het tee-ken der besnijdenis.

Alles sprak tot Israel van God's eeuwig Verbond der vriendschap, en toch getuigde tevens ook alles, dat de werkelijkheid nog niet gekomen was, en dat de weg tot in het binnenste heiligdom nog niet geopenbaard was!

In die schaduwbedeeling van Gods Verbond nam de tempel een centrale plaats in. Van dien tempel was het heilige der heiligen het wezen, want daar woonde God. Met het oog op dat binnenste heiligdom, die woonplaats God, bracht het volk zijn offeranden en eerstelingen, vierde het zijn sabbaten en feestdagen. Alleen door dat binnenste heiligdom verkregen priester en altaar, kandelaar en tafel der toonbrooden, hun beteekenis. Met dat binnenste heiligdom was heel het bestaan van Israel als Gods Verbondsvolk, en heel hun leven in dat Verbond Gods, onafscheidelijk verbonden.

En voor dat binnenste heiligdom hing het voorhangsel!

Zonder dat voorhangsel kon God in het heilige der heiligen niet wonen!

Want de werkelijkheid was nog niet!

Dat voorhangsel verkondigde eenerzijds, dat het vleesch, de zonde, de schuld nog altijd scheiding maakte tusschen God en Zijn volk; en geen bloed van stieren en bokken kon den weg tot in het binnenste heiligdom van Gods gemeenschap openen; maar anderzijds, juist doordat het slechts een gordijn was, dat het heilige van het binnenste heiligdom scheidde, alsmede ook doordat het den hooge priester vergund was, eenmaal des jaars in dat binnenste heiligdom in te gaan, was het ook beeld van de belofte, dat God Zelf Zijn Verbond zou volmaken.

Zonder het voorhangsel geen binnenste heiligdom in de bedeeling der schaduwen, geen tempel, geen altaar en offerande, geen priester of koning, geen Jeruzalem en geen volk van God!

Maar straks Gods Verbond, Zijn eeuwige woning bij ons, zonder voorhangsel!

Zoo sprak Gods Woord door het voorhangsel!

Het voorhangsel scheurde!

Niet maar bij geval, of doordat het van ouderdom uiteen viel.

Ook niet slechts in den weg der gewone Gods-regeering, waardoor alle dingen ons "als van Zijne hand" toekomen, en geschieden.

Hier was het de God van Israel, de God, Die Zijn Huis bouwt, Zijn Verbond bevestigt en Zijn volk redt en opvoert naar de eeuwige heerlijkheid, de God der zaligheid, Wiens hand het voorhangsel vaneen had getrokken. Geen "natuurlijke" oorzaken konden ter verklaring dienen van dit vreemd verschijnsel. Want immers, het was gescheurd *van boven tot beneden!*

God had het huis der schaduwen afgebroken, verwoest, ledig gelaten! Het heiligdom stond wijd open! Men kon tot in het binnenste heiligdom zijn blik werpen. En het was ledig. God woonde er niet meer. Hij had Zijn woning onder Israel verlaten. Maar zonder dat binnenste heiligdom, zonder dat wonen Gods achter het voorhangsel, had niets, dat in bijzonderen zin Israels deel was, en behoorde tot de schaduwachtige bedeeling van Gods Verbond, beteekenis meer. Het gescheurde voorhangsel was Gods Woord tot Israel, dat Zijn oordeel over Israel was voltrokken. De mate der ongerechtigheid was vol geworden. In de kruisiging van den Zoon Gods hadden ze zich ten volle geopenbaard als tempelverwoesters. De bijl, die reeds in de dagen van Johannes den Dooper aan den wortel des booms lag, had thans den boom omgehouden.

Breek dezen tempel af! . . .

Dat hadden ze gedaan, dáár op Golgotha.

Maar daarmee hadden ze ook den tempel der schaduwen in Jeruzalem afgebroken.

Hun huis was hun woest gelaten: God had Zijn woning onder hen verlaten.

Door 't gescheurde voorhangsel!

Uitgang, maar ook ingang!

Oordeel, maar ook vervulling der belofte!

Verwoesting, maar ook opbouw van den tempel!

Want dat gescheurde voorhangsel is ook evangelie, het evangelie, dat de weg tot in het binnenste heiligdom thans open is.

Immers, dat voorhangsel, dat scheiding maakte, is Zijn vleesch, ons vleesch, onze zonde en schuld, onze dood en verdorvenheid, maar dan zooals Hij, de Zoon des levenden Gods, God Zelf, het op Zich genomen, het aangenomen had.

Hij, de Zoon, die in den schoot des Vaders is, die eeuwiglijk met den Vader aan gene zijde van het voorhangsel, in het binnenste heiligdom woont, was in de volheid des tijds in ons vleesch gekomen, en daarmee was Hij ook bij ons, in het heilige, aan deze zijde van het voorhangsel, komen wonen, en dat wel met de opdracht om dat voorhangsel te scheuren, en den weg tot in het binnenste heiligdom van Gods vriendschaps-Verbond te openbaren. En daartoe worstelde Hij op Golgotha, ten bloede toe. Dáár op Golgotha droeg Hij den last onzer zonden en van den toorn Gods, en door Zijne volkomene voldoening had Hij het voorhangsel gescheurd.

Laat ons dan met vrijmoedigheid toegaan, op den met Zijn bloed besprengden weg, door het voorhangsel, dat is Zijn vleesch!

't Gescheurde voorhangsel is evangelie!

Het heiligdom is open!

Kom tot Mij!

H. H.

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### — CONTENTS —

#### MEDITATION:—

't GESCHEURDE VOORHANGSEL .....289  
Rev. H. Hoeksema.

#### EDITORIALS:—

JUST FOR ONCE .....292  
A CLOSED SHOP WITH A LOOPHOLE .....294  
EXPOSITION OF THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM .....295  
Rev. H. Hoeksema.

CHURCH POLITY .....298  
THE VICTORY OVER NAHASH .....302  
Rev. G. M. Ophoff.

EEN NIEUW LIED DEN HEERE! .....303  
Rev. G. Vos.

IN HIS FEAR .....306  
Rev. M. Gritters.

FROM HOLY WRIT .....308  
Rev. G. Lubbers.

PERISCOPE .....310  
Rev. W. Hofman.

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## EDITORIALS

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### Just For Once

I received the following communication on Ladies Aid Sales. I place it, not in order to introduce another discussion on the question in our paper, but because I was foolish enough to put my nose into it. In the issue of Feb. 15 I wrote in connection with a remark made by Mr. G. Ten Elshof in *Concordia*: "This remark has nothing to do, of course, with the debate about the sales conducted by our Ladies Aid Societies. It is not my purpose to become a party in this debate. Nor is this necessary. The arguments raised against such sales in the debate will not prevent our ladies to continue, with a free conscience, to devote their time and efforts to the support of various causes such as the Standard Bearer, Christian Schools, our own schools, and the like. Only, instead of being compared to money changers in the temple, our ladies deserve a word of commendation and encouragement."

It was not my purpose at all to start a discussion on the question that was thrashed out in *Concordia*. What I wanted is an explanation of the remark by Mr. Ten Elshof. (And I still want this. Mr. Ten Elshof never replied to my request). But I should never have written one word about those sales, if I wanted to avoid a discussion about them.

However, let me emphasize that the article by Mr. Van Putten is the only article that will be published. What follows here is not the beginning but the end of a discussion on the subject of sales, as far as the Standard Bearer is concerned.

Dear Editor of the Standard Bearer:

In the Standard Bearer of Feb. 15, the editor makes several statements that cannot go unchallenged but need clarification. In regard to the remarks concerning Ladies Aids, I would like to state the following: 1. That we all have a place for the Ladies Aids and that they can serve a blessed purpose in God's Kingdom. 2. That the zeal of the Ladies is worthy of our highest praise. 3. However, that does not mean that the manner in which some of their activities is carried on necessarily deserves commendation and can carry away God's blessing. If this is true we certainly cannot commend them in this and uphold these activities.

In the article referred to the Editor makes a short statement in which he brushes aside everything that has thus far been written on the subject of Ladies Aid Sales. Personally, I felt that this statement was a bit premature since the Editor had not read the last article that appeared on this subject. The Editor may change

his mind and correct his statement, which is his privilege and which I expect he will also do.

However this may be, I feel that these statements, although very brief, need clarification and possibly retraction. With a view to that I would like to raise the following considerations:

1. The Editor states: "The arguments raised against such sales in the debate will not prevent our ladies to continue, with a free conscience. . . ." Here with one sweep of his pen he brushes aside all that has been raised in objection to these activities. The Rev. Hoeksema states that he does not wish to become a party to the debate but how can he evade that when he makes such a sweeping statement? Does he maintain that all that which has been written entirely misses the point and are not grounded objections? Is all that is being done and the manner in which it is being done to be lauded and encouraged?

2. Isn't it, rather, pathetic that we must have sales and suppers in order to raise money for God's Cause and Kingdom? Does the Editor commend such tactics?

3. In his statement the Editor implies that no wrong is done; nothing worthy of note has been said against the practise. But is this true? Does the Editor encourage this method of business by our Church Societies? If so, what is to refrain us from making business or recreation centers of our Churches under the auspices of the Societies? As long as all is done decently and in good order why not do it on a large scale? In this way we might possibly be able to raise all our Church and School expenses. It is evident, however, that this would supplant our offerings and the Church would no longer function. But if the large scale business is not right is it correct to permit it on a small scale?

4. The Editor gives the Ladies the "greenlight" when he writes "continue, with a free conscience". Here, it seems to me, it would have been much better if he had entered the debate rather than to write as he did. Here the Editor judges the conscientious objections that have been raised rather than to state his own position and let the readers judge. Possibly, I misunderstood him.

5. Far be it from any of us to compare our ladies to the money-changers in the Temple or liken them to robbers and thieves. However, when through their activities the true worship of offering is being supplanted by other forms, the principle is contrary to the law of God. We may never believe that we need the aids to help the Church. I foresee a danger here.

6. I for one do not hesitate to object to the fact that I cannot find it proper to carry on a business under the name Church. I am a member of that Church and it makes a great deal of difference to me what our societies do in the buildings where we con-

gregate to worship God. I object to be classified with business affairs of this nature, as long as this is conducted under the name of Church and in our church parlor. Let the Ladies buy and sell but disassociate themselves with the name Church in these activities. Let them buy their sales license and carry on outside of the Church, and I heartily bid them prosper. Let them sew and give to the poor and needy as Aids, as Dorcas of old, and I rejoice with them.

7. Finally, I wish to remark that if the Editor will carefully take note of our State Laws then the "green light" will turn "red". I have checked the law since I read Mr. Kortering's last article and find that if we wish to be law abiding all these sales are done. The general Sales Tax Law forbids all these sales without a license to conduct them. I refer to article No. 167, Public Acts of 1933 as amended to March 1, 1940, rule No. 15 which deals with Ladies Aids or Societies or Churches. This law is carefully defined and rules out all these activities. So much so that I feel our consistories will have to rule them out in order to obey God's law of Rom. 13:1-8, unless we as Churches desire to come under the law as taxable corporations.

In closing I wish to state that I have always been a promoter of Ladies Aid activities under the Scriptural idea of aid to the poor and needy. On the other hand I have always opposed these sales no matter how small they may be. As we crave God's blessing upon our Churches let us guide our affairs in the way of blessing.

Your brother in Christ,

H. A. Van Putten.

A few brief remarks in reply:

1. To begin with the last argument. If the Sales Tax Law would apply to Ladies' Aid Sales, it would not follow that they had to be outlawed. Our Ladies' Aid Societies, I suppose, could obtain a license and collect sales tax.

On the face of it, however, this argument is false. If it were true, the law would certainly prosecute. Ladies' Aid Sales are conducted quite generally and openly. There is nothing secret about it. Yet the authorities never require that they be licensed.

If brother Van Putten had inquired of those that are in a position and have authority to interpret the law, instead of trying to read it himself, he would have discovered that the Sales Tax Law does not at all apply to such matters as Ladies' Aid Sales. Lest our ladies, perhaps, should be troubled in conscience by this bogey, I made such inquiry. The result is that I found out that, according to authorities on this matter, the Sales Tax Law does not at all apply to such affairs as Ladies' Aid Sales, but only to those to which the term "regularly engaged" can be applied. According to a ruling by the attorney general, such things as Ladies' Aid Sales

*absolutely do not come under the Tax Law.*

2. Ladies' Aid Sales are a work of Christian love pure and simple. They do not fall under the term "business". The ladies donate everything for such a sale: their time, their effort, and the material for the goods sold. And the money received they donate to some cause of God's kingdom. Why it is wrong to donate one's time and effort to the kingdom of God is impossible for me to see.

3. As far as I know, Ladies' Aid Sales in our churches are not necessitated by the fact that our people are unwilling to offer freely for God's Kingdom, or to meet the Church budget. But if ever such conditions should develop anywhere, don't blame the Ladies' Aid Sales (they still do a good work), but the people that have no love for the cause of God's Kingdom.

4. Our Ladies' Aids are not the Church in any sense, nor do they represent the Church, nor do they conduct their sales in the name of the Church. They are free societies. That they use the name of the Church to which their members belong is merely to distinguish them from other Ladies' Aids. In no sense, therefore, can it be said that the Church conducts sales when the ladies sell their goods.

5. If the work of Dorcas, which would appear to pertain especially to the deaconate, is justifiable (and I have no objections), that of our Ladies' Aids, which has nothing to do with the work of the Church institute, certainly cannot be condemned.

6. If there is anything objectionable in the way the sales are conducted, remove the objectionable element: don't throw the baby overboard with the bath.

*Punctum.*

H. H.

## A Closed Shop With A Loophole

The following is a clipping from the Christian Labor Herald:

The contract with the Hekman Biscuit Company will be renewed on March 15, 1947. Negotiations began already in January when an additional wage increase was sought by the unions involved, United Truckers and Warehousemen, C.L.A., and United Bakery Workers, C.L.A. A wage increase retroactive to January 15, 1947, was agreed upon, which brings wages in the Hekman plant to a level as high as that of any bakery workers in either A.F.L. or C.I.O. bakeries in the nation.

Several other changes in the contract were also agreed upon. Foremost among them is the union-shop employment clause. We must add at once that the clause leaves room for the employment of conscientious

objectors to union membership without such membership. But all others will have to join the union or face discharge. There will be those who will criticize the C.L.A. for this, that's why we want to give a thorough explanation.

The C.L.A. has always taken the position that those who share in the benefits of organization should also contribute to the cost. That is fair. However, we have also maintained that no-one should be compelled to join a union against which he has conscientious objections. That is why we want men to be free to join the union of their choice, thus contributing to the cause of organized labor as a whole. And in the case of men or women who believe that it is wrong to join any union we have taken the position that such people should not be bothered at all, if they give proof of acting in good faith in the matter.

All that has been maintained in the new contract. It was necessary to have such a union-shop setup. In spite of the fact that the unions had done much for the employees a considerable number refused to join, giving no reason whatsoever for their refusal. There was only one explanation for it, which is that those employees just couldn't part with that dollar once a month. That in spite of the fact that since the unions began bargaining wages were increased on an average of at least 25%, so that even the workers in the lower wage brackets are receiving about ten dollars more weekly. To take 25 cents out of that for the union was too much.

The management could also see the unfairness of it and therefore agreed to the union's proposal to make it a union shop with provision made for conscientious objectors. So, after March 15, those employees who are not members of one of the two unions will have to join within 15 days or be discharged, unless they have valid conscientious objections to union membership and give the company and the Union a written statement setting forth their objections.

We expect some criticism. But, let no one say that the C.L.A. has gone in for the closed shop. It has not. The employer can hire whom he pleases to hire. But new employees must after a trial period join one of the unions or submit a written statement setting forth their conscientious objections to such a membership. And if an employee has objections to membership in the C.L.A. but will keep up membership in another union then the C.L.A. is not going to bother him at all. That is the kind of modified union shop we have always believed in.

The above speaks for itself.

I can only say that I am sorry that the C.L.A. more and more obliterates the distinction between itself and any worldly union. It can only blame itself when, before long, men draw the conclusion that they



can better join the C.I.O. or the A.F.L. than the C.L.A. If it is a question of obtaining higher wages and better working conditions by developing power and employing force, the men can use the means of membership in a worldly union to better advantage than that in the C.L.A.

First, the article acknowledging the sovereignty of God had to be eliminated from the Constitution, in order to obtain the status of a *bone fide* union.

Then the strike clause had to be maintained, and the right to picket.

Now the "union shop."

The writer states: "Let no one say that the C.L.A. has gone in for the closed shop."

I think it has. But let us put it this way: the C.L.A. has taken a stand for the closed shop with a loophole.

For me that loophole does not even exist. I deny that the C.L.A. has any authority to put itself up as a judge over my or anybody's conscientious objections to the C.L.A.

Besides, the principle and purpose of this "union shop" is the same as those of the closed shop: to gain membership and influence by force.

Moreover, the loophole is very small. What self-respecting laborer would want a job by the grace of the C.L.A., presently to be looked at askance and with suspicion as a "conscientious objector" by his fellow-workers?

I predict that this loophole will soon, virtually if not in principle, be closed.

And that is, of course, the purpose of this act on the part of the C.L.A.

H. H.

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## THE TRIPLE KNOWLEDGE

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### An Exposition Of The Heidelberg Catechism

Part Two.

Of Man's Redemption

Lord's Day XXII.

2.

The Resurrection Of The Body.

The next to the last article of the *Apostolicum* reads: "(I believe) the resurrection of the body," or, literally, according to the original, "the resurrection of the flesh."

From the place of this article in the whole of the Confession, it is quite evident that the resurrection

unto life is meant. For it is the same Church, the same believer, that professed his faith in God Almighty, the Creator, and in Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, our Lord, Who assumed our flesh from the Virgin, Who died and was raised again from the dead, and Who is exalted at the right hand of God, upon Whose coming again the believer fixes his hope; who, moreover, confesses his faith of having a place in the holy catholic Church and in the communion of saints, and of rejoicing in the forgiveness of sins,—that same believer now looks forward to the final and eternal perfection of all he has in Christ, and therefore, speaks of the resurrection of the body, and, in the last article, of the life everlasting.

There is, indeed, also a resurrection of the dead unto death, for "the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John 5:28, 29. Of this general resurrection our Netherland Confession also speaks in its thirty seventh article: "And then all men will personally appear before this great judge, both men and women and children, that have been from the beginning of the world to the end thereof, being summoned by the voice of the archangel, and by the sound of the trumpet of God. For all the dead shall be raised out of the earth, and their souls joined and united with their proper bodies, in which they formerly lived."

However, the resurrection of the wicked is not referred to in the Apostolic Confession. It lies without the scope of its conception. Only of the resurrection as it is embraced by the Christian faith, as an object of the Christian hope, does it speak.

Of this resurrection the Catechism also treats, when it answers the question: "What comfort doth the resurrection of the body afford thee?" And it describes this glorious resurrection in the words: "that this my body, being raised by the power of Christ, shall be reunited with my soul, and made like unto the glorious body of Christ."

The faith that God quickens the dead must not be confused with a general philosophy about immortality, nor with the universalist's notion concerning a general *apokatastasis* or restoration, but is very definitely and peculiarly Christian. The Christian believes the glorious resurrection, and looks forward to it as the object of a sure hope, only because he believes in Christ, crucified and raised. The two are inseparable. Only through the resurrection of Christ does he know, by faith, that there is a resurrection of the dead; and only because he is, by faith, united with Christ, is he assured that he, personally, shall have a part in the resurrection unto eternal life. Apart from Christ, it is impossible to know anything about this mystery. Without Him there is no hope of glory.

This is so true that the apostle in First Corinthians, the fifteenth chapter, can maintain that to deny the resurrection implies the denial of the resurrection of Christ: "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: And If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then Christ is not raised: And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins." 12-17. Notice that the apostle here argues from the position of some in the church of Corinth, that there is no resurrection of the dead, and exposes the dire consequences of such a position. For they that deny the resurrection of the dead deny, by implication, the resurrection of Christ. This is not to be understood as an argumentation from the general (the resurrection of the dead) to the particular (the resurrection of Christ), as if the apostle merely meant to say: 1. You say that the dead rise not. 2. Christ was dead. 3. Christ did not rise. For it is evident that the Corinthians had not drawn the conclusion that Christ had not risen. From the proposition: the dead rise not, they excluded Christ. But the apostle wants to make them see the impossibility of this position. For this reason, he argues from the effect (the resurrection of the dead) to its cause (the resurrection of Christ). The underlying idea is that the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of the dead are inseparably connected as cause and effect. The cause must needs produce the effect. It follows then that, if the alleged effect (the resurrection of the dead) be not true, the cause also (the resurrection of Christ) must be denied. If Christ be raised, His resurrection must surely have the fruit of the resurrection of the dead. Hence, if the dead rise not, Christ is not raised.

His resurrection is the resurrection of the dead in principle for all that are His own. And it is the sole resurrection. Outside of His resurrection, there is no resurrection at all. For He is the head of the body, the Church, both in the forensic and in the organic sense. When He was raised from the dead, all the members of His body were raised. By His resurrection and exaltation, He received the power to impart His resurrection-life to all those whom the Father gave Him. In this resurrection-life of their Lord they receive a share when He draws them unto Himself, by faith, and unites them with Him. And this resurrection shall be perfected when He shall call them forth from the grave, and make their mortal bodies like unto His most glorious body.

The same truth, from a different viewpoint, may

also be expressed in as follows: that God quickens the dead (Rom. 4:17) is a truth that can be apprehended only by the Christian faith. No human philosophy can ever discover or embrace this truth. The reason is that the truth that God quickens the dead is evident only from the resurrection of Christ. O, that God is able to raise the dead is quite self-evident. "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you," the apostle asks king Agrippa, "that God should raise the dead?" Acts 26:8. But that He is not merely able, but also willing to raise the dead, that this resurrection actually belongs to His eternal purpose, that He actually does quicken the dead, has been revealed, and can be known only through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Now, what does the Bible reveal to us concerning the mystery of the resurrection of the dead?

Let us begin by establishing the fact that it is *the dead* that rise, and that this resurrection concerns their very person, and their whole nature, body and soul. It is true, the *Apostolicum* makes mention of the resurrection of *the body*, and, literally, as has been said, it speaks of the resurrection of the flesh. And it is, no doubt, expedient to maintain this terminology to guard against the error of a purely spiritual resurrection. That, in the resurrection, the body shall be quickened, is the plain teaching of Scripture. It is evident from the empty tomb, and the place where Jesus had lain in the sepulchre of Joseph, that the body of our Lord had been quickened. The apostle writes in Rom. 8:11: "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Jesus Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." In I Cor. 15:35ff. the apostle asks and answers the question: "How are the dead raised up, and with what body will they come?" And Phil. 3:21 teaches us that the Saviour "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself." However, the Word of God always speaks of the resurrection of the dead. In that resurrection the body shall be quickened, to be sure, but it nevertheless concerns our whole existence, according to body and soul. Just as it was *Christ* that was raised, so it is also the *believers* that shall be raised with Him in glory. Just as in death, it is the believer that dies, so that his body is laid in the grave, while his soul is unclothed, and in its bodiless state enters into the house from God in heaven; so in the resurrection, it is the same believer that is raised from this state of death: his body is quickened, and his soul is clothed upon with the resurrection-body. The final resurrection is a glorification of the whole nature, such a glorification as will enable the saints to inherit the kingdom of God in the new heavens and the new



earth. For "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God," neither can the unclothed soul, apart from the body, enter into the final and perfect inheritance of that kingdom. This must wait until the resurrection of the dead, when death shall be swallowed in victory.

The Catechism, too, refers to this truth when it describes the resurrection as a quickening of the body, but also as a reuniting of that glorified body with the soul.

But: "How shall the dead be raised up? and with what body do they come?"

In answer to this question, the Scriptures teach us clearly, first of all, that the same body that was buried shall be raised from the dead. The resurrection is not a new creation. Essentially, we shall receive our own bodies in the resurrection. That this is true is evident from the resurrection body of our Lord. That, in His case, no new body was created, is evident from the empty grave, as well as from the fact that He could show to His disciples the marks of His suffering in hands and feet, and in His side. Although His body was completely changed and glorified, it was nevertheless the very same body in which He had walked among us in the days of His flesh, and in which He had been "crucified, dead, and buried." This is also the teaching of Scripture in I Cor. 15:42-44: "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body: it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." The identity of the body that is buried and the body that is raised is plainly taught in this passage. The subject remains the same: *it is sown, it is raised*. Besides, the figure of the sowing is based on the same notion: when one sows wheat, he expects to harvest wheat, not oats or rye. This is a profound mystery. It lies beyond, exactly beyond, the scope of our comprehension. It belongs to those things "which eyes hath not seen, neither ear heard, nor have ever arisen in the heart of man." When we consider what becomes of our bodies in physical death, how completely they are disintegrated, dissolved into their very elements, how literally they return unto the dust whence they are taken, even so that their substances become part of other bodies; if we contemplate how many bodies of the believers were never even buried, were drowned into the depth of the sea, cut to pieces, or burnt at the stake and their ashes blown to the four corners of heaven,—the resurrection becomes utterly inconceivable to us. It would seem easier, perhaps, to think of it as a new creation. Yet, God will bring all those bodies, and unite them with their proper souls. He is the One that calls the things that are not as if they were, and that quicken-

eth the dead. He is God, and becomes known as God exactly in performing wondrous things. Always His way is in the sea, and the things that are impossible with man are possible with Him. He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken our mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in us!

The question may be asked: what belongs to the essence of our body? For that the resurrection-body will only be *essentially* the same, but for the rest will be wholly different from our present body, is also very plain from Holy Writ.

Three elements, it seems, may be mentioned here.

First of all, it belongs to the essence of a body that it is material. A spiritual substance is not a body. The resurrection-body also will be material. When the apostle, in I Cor. 15:44 speaks of a "spiritual" body, he does not use the word in the sense of "immaterial", as we hope to explain in a different connection. There the term is not employed in contrast with and opposition to "material", but in distinction from "natural" or, according to the literal meaning of the original, "psychical". When, however, we insist that also the body of the resurrection is material, we must not be understood as saying that it will be of the same kind of matter as the "flesh and blood" of our present bodies. We must remember what the apostle teaches us in I Cor. 15:39-41: "All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial, but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory." Essentially the same matter may assume different forms. Ice may be melted into water, yet the ice and the water are the same matter. And when the water evaporates, the invisible and intangible vapor is still the same matter as the ice. When you sow the seed of a tulip, and you finally develop the bulb, the bulb and the seed you originally sowed are essentially the same. Thus the human body will, no doubt, assume a different form, through the wonder of the resurrection. It will not be of "flesh and blood," for that cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Yet it will be a material body, and essentially the same as the body that was interred at death.

Secondly, it will be a *human* body. Through the resurrection, man will not be changed into a different being. Through all the changes to which he is subject, sin, death, regeneration, the intermediate state in heaven, and the final resurrection, he remains *man*. And this means that he is a rational creature. His nature is such that it is adapted to bear the image of God. Through the body of an animal, the human soul could not possibly function. Hence, also the body of

the resurrection, that will be reunited with the soul, will be an essentially human body, a body that is capable of serving as an instrument to express and reflect the image of God in the new creation. God predestinated His people to be conformed according to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Rom. 8:29. The body of the resurrection must serve the reflection of this likeness.

Thirdly, we may no doubt assert that, through death and the resurrection, the body shall preserve its individuality, that which distinguishes it from all other human bodies. It is the glory of God that He is able to create millions upon millions of variations of the same nature. All men have the same human nature in common, and wherever you meet man you experience no difficulty to recognize him in distinction from other creatures. Yet, among the millions of men, there are no two alike. Each has his own individuality. And those individual characteristics that distinguish men from one another, belong to the body as well as to the soul. There can be no doubt that to each individual soul belongs its proper body, even so that the soul of the one could not possibly function in the body of another. And as the personal identity and individuality of the soul will be preserved through death and in the glory of our heavenly house, so in the resurrection of the dead, the body will appear with its own individual characteristics. Each soul will be reunited with its proper body.

For the rest, many questions may be asked about the form of the resurrection-body that cannot possibly be answered, and that, besides, are more or less irrelevant. All we have thus far established is that the body of the resurrection will be no new and separate creation. The body that is "sown" will be raised from the dead.

However, more must be said, and, on the basis of Holy Writ, can be said about the resurrection-body.

For, although it will be essentially the same as our present body, it will nevertheless be radically different in form. And, in general, this difference may be expressed by saying that, while now we bear the image of the earthy, after the resurrection we will bear the image of the heavenly. Through the wonder of the resurrection, our "vile" or humiliated bodies will be made like unto the glorious body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

H. H.

#### CLASSIS EAST

of the Protestant Reformed Churches will meet in regular session, D. V., Wednesday morning at 9 o'clock, April 9, 1947, at Fuller Ave. All matters for the Synod must be brought to this meeting.

D. JONKER, Stated Clerk,

## CHURCH POLITY

As was stated, also Dr. Ridderbos of the Synodicals, takes the stand that, according to the Church Order, Classis (Synod) rightfully deposes officebearers. But the doctor is certainly mistaken. The Church Order does not vest the Classis (Synod) with the right to depose officebearers. It confers this right only upon the Consistory. This is the discovery of every one, who, as interpreter of the Church Order, is willing to allow himself to be bound by the God-created laws of exposition. The doctor's exegesis of the articles of the Church Order, of the ones that bear directly on the point at issue, is mal-exegesis. The task to which I address myself in this article is to make good this statement.

The doctor wrote a brochure, which he entitled "Kerkscheuring". In this booklet, from which I quote, he defends the action according to which Classis (Synod) deposes officebearers. He does so in opposition to the Schilder group. For the latter pronounce the action to be in conflict with Art. 84 of Dort's Church Order. The article reads:

"No Church shall in any way lord it over other Churches, no Minister over other Ministers, no Elder or Deacon over other Elders or Deacons".

Dr. Ridderbos's reply reads as follows:

"De nuchtere lezer zal wel eenigzins verwonderd vragen: 'Maar waarvoor wordt dit aangehaald (the above-cited article, he means. G.M.O.)? Daar hebben we toch nooit van gehoord, dat onder ons de eene kerk over de andere, of de eene ambtsdrager over de anderen heerschappij zou voeren. Dat hebben toch ook de bezwaarden niet beweerd; zij spreken enkel over het zgn. aangemaatigd gezag van de Synode, en dat is toch iets anders dan wat hier staat'.

Dit is juist, maar men moet de redeneering van de bezwaarden kennen. Die is aldus: wanneer de eene kerk over de andere niets te zeggen heeft, dan hebben ook achthonderd kerken, in Synode vergaderd, over één kerk niets te zeggen. Want achthonderd maal nul blijft nul."

Translation:

Somewhat surprised the alert reader without fail will ask, 'But to what purpose is this (Art. 84) quoted? We have never heard of it, that among us the one church lorded it over other churches, or the one officebearer over others. That certainly has not been the allegation of the aggrieved; they speak only of the arrogated power of the Synod, and that is something different than what we read here (in Art. 84 of the Church Order)'.

This is correct (namely, the allegation of the alert reader that Art. 84 of the Church Order has absolutely nothing to do with the arrogation of power by Synod). But we must know the reasoning of the aggrieved (Schilder group). It is this: when the one church has nothing to say over the other, then also eight-hundred churches, assembled in Synod, have nothing to say over one church. For eight-hundred times zero remains zero." Kerk-scheuring, p. 23.

In the above-cited excerpt Dr. Ridderbos means to express his amazement at the aggrieved for finding in Art. 84 of the Church Order the teaching that eight-hundred churches, assembled in Synod, have nothing to say over the one church. He pronounces this reasoning wrong and refutes it with the Church Order. He writes:

"Deze redeneering wordt het best weerlegt door een eenvoudig beroep op Art. 36 der K. O. 't Zelfde zeggen heeft de Classe over den Kerkeraad, 't welk de particuliere Synode heeft over de Classe, en de Generale Synod over de Particuliere'.

Hier wordt dus zeer duidelijk uitgesproken, dat de meerder vergadering over de mindere 'zeggen', d.i. zeggenschap, gezag heeft. Als de eene kerk zich zulk een zeggenschap over de andere wil toe-eigenen, dan is dat 'heerschappij voeren'; maar als de kerken in meerdere vergadering samenkomen, komt haar dat gezag wettig toe. Zoo staat het in de kerkeordening, en daarmee is heel die redeneering van 'achthonderd maal nul blijft nul' weerlegt.

Natuurlijk zullen de bezwaarden dat in Art. 36 uitgesproken gezag niet uitdrukkelijk ontkennen; maar uit het feit, dat zij dit Art. *niet* aanhalen en wel Art. 85 (84 in the revised Church Order), dat niet over het gezag der Synodes handelt, blijkt wel, dat zij meer geneigd zijn, dat gezag met spitsvondige redeneeringen te ondermijnen dan het te erkennen." Kerk-scheuring pp. 22, 23.

#### Translation:

This reasoning (of the aggrieved) is best refuted by a simple appeal to Art. 36 of the Church Order'. The Classis has the same jurisdiction over the Consistory as the Particular Synod has over the Classis and the General Synod over the Particular. Here it is plainly stated that the major assemblies have jurisdiction, authority, over the minor. If the one church appropriates such authority over the other, then that is 'lording it over'; but if the churches assemble in major assemblies, this power becomes legally theirs. So it is stated in the Church Order, and herewith is refuted that whole argument of 'eight-hundred times zero remains zero.

Naturally the aggrieved will not expressly deny the authority of which Art. 36 makes mention, but from the fact that they do not quote this Art. but do quote Art. 85, an article that does not deal with the authority of the Synods, it appears that they are more inclined to undermine that authority with subtle reasonings than to acknowledge it."

The doctor supplied his booklet with a brief foreword, the first paragraph of which reads, "The general synod asked me to write a simple brochure for the enlightenment of the members of the church regarding the crisis in our churches."

The doctor's reasoning on Artt. 36 and 84 of the Church Order in connection with the construction that the aggrieved place upon these articles is simple indeed, much too simple in fact, and therefore misleading in its simplicity. Attend to the working of the doctor's mind as reflected in the above-cited excerpts. It is this, "The only teaching of Art. 84 of the Church Order is that the one church does not have "zeggenschap", authority over the other. To say that the article by implication also declares that eight-hundred churches assembled in synod have no authority over the one church is wrong. No such teaching can be gotten from this article. Fact is, that Art. 36 of the Church Order declares that they do. And that settles the matter." So reasons the doctor.

The reasoning is that simple that it should have caused the doctor to reconsider his argument, and challenge its truthfulness. The argument is not truthful; it is spurious. And it is fatal to the whole Church Order. For it throws the Church Order in conflict with itself and thereby destroys it. The doctor's argument is actually that bad that it makes of Art. 36 a sinful rule, thus a rule that as obeyed would involve the churches in sin. That these accusing statements of mine are true, I shall now show.

The performance of this task requires of us that we ascertain first of all the meaning of Art. 84, "No Church shall in any way lord it over other churches, no Minister over other Ministers, no Elder or Deacon over other Elders or Deacons." This article very actually declares: 1) That no church shall lord it over other churches; 2) that also 800 churches assembled in Synod shall refrain from lording it over the one church. The latter (and this is what the doctor denies) is truly implied in the former.

#### Proof:

a) The way the article reads: *No church* shall lord it over other churches, which logically is equivalent to saying that all the churches shall refrain from this action. (The mandate: "No man shall kill," is equivalent certainly to the mandate: "All men shall not kill".) Further, if the article read, "All the churches *separately, each by itself*, shall refrain from lording it over

one or more churches," the implied mandate indeed would be, "In association with one another, as assembled in Classis (Synod), the Churches *shall* lord it over one or more churches." Hence, without the expression "separately, each by itself", the implied mandate is, must be, "All the churches in association with one another, that is, as assembled in Classis (Synod), shall refrain from lording it over one or more churches". I write, "in association with one another, *that is*, as assembled in Classis (Synod)". So everyone will write, who, as interpreter of the Church Order, allows himself to be bound by the God-created laws of exposition, exegesis. For the only association or organization of churches the Church Order knows is that of Classis (Synod).

b) The very *action* that the article forbids is conclusive proof. No church *shall* lord it over other churches. Wherein this action consists is a question that can wait. What is important for our argument just now is the action as such, its kind or category, which is always sinful. Eating and drinking is a good or bad work depending on the motive. But so it is not with *lording it over the church*. Here we have to do with a work that like stealing and murder is always sinful. No one can lord it over the church under the impulse of love and to the glory of God. Lording it over the flock of God can be a work of darkness only. The apostle therefore exhorts the elders to feed the flock of God . . . "neither as being lords over God's heritage. . . ."

What of necessity follows from this? That Art. 84 *must* contain by implication the mandate to the effect that the churches assembled in Synod also refrain from lording it over the one church. This certainly must follow. For lording it over the churches can only be an evil work. Synod should have to refrain from this action, therefore, were it formed of the prophets and apostles returned from the grave. For the action can be sinful only. To aver therefore that one church may not lord it over other churches but that nevertheless an organization of churches may engage in this action is as foolish and wrong as to say that though individuals may not steal, in that stealing is sin, an organization of individuals may commit this crime. I repeat, it is a grave mistake to deny that the implied mandate of Art. 84 is that churches assembled in synod also refrain from lording it over the one church or over churches. Yet this precisely is what Dr. Ridderbos denies. He says, does he not, that "Art. 84 does not deal with the authority of synods and further that "herewith is refuted that whole argument of eight-hundred times zero remaining zero". That in his simple exposition of Art. 84 for the enlightenment of the "gemeenteleden" he forsakes the terminology of this article by speaking of "zeggenschap" instead of

heerschappij voeren" does not alter matters in the least.

The doctor then denies that Art. 84 also requires that synod, too, refrain from lording it over the one church. And the doctor of course makes matters worse for himself by denying this on the ground of Art. 36. This is bad indeed. For to deny on the ground of Art. 36 that Art. 84 actually implies such a mandate one must rid Art. 36 of the verb "jurisdiction", "zeggenschap", and thus make the article read, "The Classis has the same *lordship*—mark you, lordship—over the Consistory as the Particular Synod has over the Classis and the General Synod over the particular." To deal with this article in this fashion is to corrupt it beyond recognition. What is more, as so corrupted, the article lays upon the major assemblies a necessity under which they may not be. In quoting Art. 36, the doctor retained the term "zeggenschap", "jurisdiction". He could do this because to make it possible for himself to quote Art. 36 against Art. 84, he made Art. 84 read in his exposition, "Geen kerk zal over andere Kerken *zeggenschap hebben*" (no church shall have any *jurisdiction* over other churches) instead of reproducing the article as it actually reads, "Geen kerk zal over andere kerken *eenige heerschappij voeren*." (No church shall in any way *lord it over* other churches). So the doctor deals with this article in his exposition of it, definitely in the following paragraph (already quoted and translated), "Dit is juist, maar men moet de redeneering van de bezwaarden kennen. Die is aldus: wanneer de eene kerk over de andere niets te zeggen heeft, dan hebben ook achthonderd kerken, in Synode vergaderd, over één kerk niets te zeggen. . . . Deze redeneering wordt het best weerlegd door een eenvoudig beroep of Art. 36 der K. O.: 't Zelfde zeggen heeft de Classe over den Kerkeraad. . . ."

In this paragraph the doctor reproduces the argument of the aggrieved. He at least makes it appear that he speaks their language. Whether they express themselves in just these words is a question. It makes very little difference. The doctor knew what the aggrieved mean when they use that language. What they mean is of course "heerschappij voeren". How would the argument of the doctor have looked in print and have impressed the "gemeenteleden, had he written as he should have in order to do justice to the aggrieved and truly enlighten "gemeenteleden."—"Dit is juist, maar men moet de redeneering van de bezwaarden kennen. Die is aldus: Wanneer de eene kerk over de andere kerk geen heerschappij mag voeren, dan mogen ook achthonderd kerken, in Synode vergaderd, over één kerk geen heerschappij voeren. Want achthonderd maal nul blijft nul.

Deze redeneering wordt het best weerlegd door een eenvoudig beroep op Art. 36 der K. O.: 't Zelfde zeg-

gen heeft de Classe over de Kerkeraad. . . ." Had the doctor employed this language, many of the "gemeenteleden" across the sea, might still be wondering how Art. 36 can be quoted in refutation of that argument of the aggrieved. For this Art. 36 speaks of *zeggenschap*, while the grievance of the aggrieved concentrates on "Heerschappij voeren". Now certainly the *zeggenschap* of Art. 36 is one and the *heerschappij* of Art. 84 another. And therefore Art. 36 cannot be quoted to disprove the implied mandate of Art. 84. And that is precisely what the doctor does. He identifies the *zeggenschap* of Art. 36 and the *heerschappij voeren* of Art. 84, in order to make it possible for himself to disprove the implied mandate of Art. 84 with Art. 36. But of course he disproves nothing with Art. 36. But this is what he does actually, namely, pit Art. 36 against Art. 84. He thus, as was said, throws the Church Order in conflict with itself and thereby he destroys it.

Attend now to this statement of the doctor (quoted and translated above), "Als de eene kerk zich zulk een *zeggenschap* over de andere wil toeëigenen, dan is dat 'heerschappij voeren'; maar als de kerken in meerdere vergadering samenkomen, komt haar dat gezag wettig toe." Is this true what the doctor here writes? It is as untrue as it can be. Also this reasoning is thoroughly spurious. For, mark you, the "*zeggenschap*" of which the doctor here speaks is the "*zeggenschap*" of Art. 36, and therefore advisory as to its character—advisory and not mandatory. Hence, it is the *zeggenschap* that all the churches have over one another and thus the one church over the other. The proof of this is Art. 79, which states that the elders and deacons, who have committed a gross sin, shall immediately by preceding sentence of the consistory thereof and of the nearest church, be suspended or expelled from office, mark you, by preceding sentence of the *nearest church*. When this is done the *nearest church* exercises the "*zeggenschap*" of Art. 36 with respect to the advice-seeking church, whose elder must be deposed. According to the reasoning of the doctor, that action of the *nearest church* with respect to the advice-seeking church is "heerschappij voeren". But, of course, it isn't. Here again the doctor makes the Church Order teach, now in Art. 79, that the one church, if there is need, shall lord it over another. Yet he closes that paragraph with the remark, "Zoo staat het in de Kerkenordening. . . ." Of course, nothing is further from the truth. No teaching of that character is found in the whole Church Order. And therefore it is also as untrue as can be that "daarmede is heel die rede-neering van 'Achthonderd maal nul blijft nul 'weerlegt'. If X is O, how can anyone disprove that 800 X remains O? If X is O, this is as real and true as that the earth exists. What the doctor meant to say, I suppose, is this: And herewith is refuted that whole

argument that 800 X *as organized* remains O, that is that 800 churches *as organized into synod may not* depose office bearers. But has the doctor at this juncture of his argument actually succeeded in proving this? He has not. He really got no further than to quote Art. 36 to disprove that the implied mandate of Art. 84 is that Synod refrain from lording it over the churches. And this means, of course, that thus far he has gotten nowhere. For certainly it cannot be that Art. 36 should militate against such an action. Truly, the doctor thus far has achieved nothing, except to make Art. 36 of the Church Order declare that Classis (Synod) has the lordship over the local churches and to make Art. 76 require of a church with an elder that must be deposed to allow itself to be lorded over by the neighboring church.

The real questions the doctor has not touched. These questions are: 1) Just what does Art. 84 mean by that forbidden action: lording it over the churches? 2) Just what is the character of that "jurisdiction", that, according to Art. 36 the Classis (Synod) has over the Consistory? It should be acknowledged certainly that the terms "heerschappij voeren" and "zeggenschap" as used by the Church Order refer to two different actions, the one good and the other bad. These two terms must be kept apart and studied first by themselves and then in their context. And the context is first of all the articles in which these two terms appear; and secondly, the whole Church Order. And in this study the doctor, too, must allow himself to be bound by the God-created laws of exposition, exegesis, and not by a determination to prove the thing straight whether it be crooked or straight. Then the effort will bear good fruit; and that fruit certainly will be the discovery that "heerschappij voeren" over the churches by Synod is an evil work that consists in the deposition of officebearers by the major assemblies; and that the term "zeggenschap" as a sentence-element of Art. 36 of the Church Order is the signification of a power that as to its character is advisory and not certainly mandatory. By such a study and the fruit thereof the "gemeenteleden" would be truly enlightened. It has been and is simply being taken for granted that the "zeggenschap" of Art. 36 (of the Church Order) is mandatory as to its character. Dr. Ridderbos simply takes this for granted, as appears from the passages that I quoted from his "Kerkscheuring". This is a mistake. The Church Order, too, must be interpreted in the light of the Church Order in strict obedience to the laws of exposition. Then only will one's interpretation of the Church Order be worthy of the name *interpretation*.

In a following article we will examine what remains of the doctor's effort to prove with the Church Order that Classis (Synod) rightfully deposes officebearers.

G. M. O.

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## THE DAY OF SHADOWS

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### The Victory Over Nahash

Saul having been publicly chosen by the lot, Samuel, so the sacred writer continues, "told the people the *manner of the kingdom*, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the Lord". (I Sam. 10:24). What Samuel told the people is not revealed. The notice therefore raises a question in connection with the divine command to Samuel (chap. 8:9) to the effect that he witness against the people on account of their request that a king be set over them—witness against them by showing "the manner of the king that shall reign over them", *manner of the king*, that is, as was explained, what would be his customary way of acting, normal behaviour, what he would do as king in the throne. This king according to the witness of the seer, would usurp the Lord's place in the Israelitish commonwealth and enslave God's people. Is this "manner of the king" of Samuel's witness the "manner of the kingdom" that the prophet wrote in a book and laid up before the Lord on the occasion of Saul's public election? Doubtless the two are mutually exclusive. What favors this view is the difference between the form of the words of the two expressions "*manner of the king*," and *manner of the kingdom*." Then, too, why should Samuel once more have addressed to the people a word calculated to dissuade them from wanting to be ruled by a human king, seeing that they had gotten their way so that the king now stood before them. It is a safe conjecture, therefore, that the "manner of the kingdom" was the norm of the royal government according to which the king, as the vicar of the Lord, had to order his life, would he enjoy the favor of Heaven and not come to grief. Approximately four-hundred years ago such a norm had been communicated in writing to the nation. It is contained in the book of Deuteronomy (chap. 17). If the above conjecture is correct, and doubtless it is, then it was this norm that formed the basis of the prophet's address to the people on the occasion of Saul's public election. If this conjecture is correct then the substance of what Samuel told the people is that the law of Jehovah must be with the king, and that therein he must read all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of His law to do them. Deut. 17:19. Fearing God, the king would prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel. But God would smite both king and people with the rod of His anger, should they not fear Him to keep His law. In this vein Samuel must have addressed the people. Whether they responded with,

"All that the Lord saith, we will do," is not revealed. It is likely that they kept silence; for they were still impenitent. Yet Samuel wrote his words in a book, which he laid up before the Lord. This doing of the prophet had terrible significance. It indicated that the Lord would mark the transgression of His law by people and king, and avenge Himself upon His adversaries.

Then "Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house." Saul also went home to Gibeah; and there went with him a band of men, whose hearts God had touched. But the children of Belial said, How shall this man save us? And they despised him, and brought him no presents." The behaviour of these children of Belial easily can be explained. What they wanted is a human king to substitute for Jehovah, a man whom they could make their expectation in the room of God. In a word, what they wanted is an idol. Saul would not do, so they concluded, for the man lacked courage, as his hiding himself among the baggage had indicated. How could such a one deliver them out of the hand of their oppressors? He had not in him the makings of a king. He was a coward, that's what he was. "How shall this man save us?" they mockingly asked. For they worshipped not the Lord but man, courage in man, as forgetful that courage is of the Lord. And therefore they could have no patience with human weakness. For they wanted to trust in the arm of flesh, and therefore they wanted so much to trust in Saul. But he had made this impossible for them. He had hid himself among the stuff. And they were sorely disappointed and gave him no gifts. Away with the man.

But there were others who were differently disposed, men whose heart the Lord had touched, representative, it is certain, of the true Israel, and thus men who put their trust in the Lord, and who therefore were confident that the Lord would bring deliverance through Saul, whom they regarded as God's gift to His people. And so they went with him to his home, as believing that through him the Lord would deliver His people.

Saul heard the mockery of the children of Belial. But he was as though he had been deaf, so the text reads in the original. Such were Saul's reactions to the taunts of those wicked men not because he was endowed with that wisdom of which the fear of the Lord is the beginning but rather because he had not the will to reply. For he was afraid and confused. Had he not hid himself among the stuff? So he was glad that he could return to his home. For he wanted to be away from the crowd.

It was about this time that Nahash, king of the Ammonites, marched against Israel, and lay siege to Jabesh-Gilead, situated in Northern Gilead, and belonging to the half-tribe of Manasseh east of the



Jordan. According to the text at 12:12, it was this incursion of the Ammonites that had caused the people of Israel to demand that a king be set over them. They now had their king; but he had returned to his home after his public election and was taking no action. For he had not the courage, as the Lord as yet had not raised him up.

The inhabitants of Jabesh tried to come to terms with Nahash. They said to him, "Make a covenant with us and we will serve thee." Nahash was willing on the condition that they allow him to thrust out all their right eyes, and lay it for a reproach upon all Israel. Let us fathom the wickedness of this proposal. Nahash felt certain that the people were afraid to come to the relief of their brethren in Gilead and that therefore the whole nation was at his mercy. Because he wanted this admitted and proved, he would make a covenant with the Jabeshites on condition that they allow him to thrust out their right eye. That would be to the world the tangible evidence that the whole nation was in his hand, body and soul. This explains his allowing the Jabeshites seven days respite, that they might send messengers unto the coasts of all Israel, appealing for help to their brethren. If the nation failed to respond, there would be nothing left for the Jabeshites to do but to allow Nahash to lay upon them that mark of ignominy.

When the men of Gibeah-Saul received the tidings, they were sore distressed for their brethren's sake. For there was a special attachment between them and the Jabeshites. The latter had not taken part in the war of the ten tribes against Benjamin—a war that had resulted in the near-extirpation of the brother tribe. Coming in from the field, Saul inquired after the cause of the people's weeping, and was told the tidings of the men of Jabesh. And his anger kindled greatly, for the Spirit of the Lord came upon him. Taking a yoke of oxen, he cut them in pieces, and distributed the parts among the tribes by the hands of messengers, who explained the action as meaning that "whosoever cometh not forth after Saul and Samuel, so shall it be done to his oxen." The measure that Saul adopted on this occasion to arouse the nation to action was indicative of the rashness that characterized the man throughout his reign. That the threat took effect was due to one thing: the fear of the Lord fell upon the people (11:7). And the result was that they came out with one consent. The king numbered them; and the children of Israel 300,000, and the men of Judah 30,000. The men of Jabesh were told that help would be forthcoming. They could now reply to Nahash, which they did in these words, "Tomorrow we will come out unto you, and ye shall do with us all that seemeth good unto you." The language employed was calculated to deceive the king, to throw him off guard. And so it did. And the result was that he failed to

prepare for the battle that was pending. On the morrow Saul with the three companies into which he had put his people, suddenly fell upon the unsuspecting and disorganized Ammonitish host. The enemy was slain. They were scattered that badly that two of them were not left together.

The people of Israel were elated. Saul, to their mind had proved his mettle, and they hailed him now as a mighty man of valour. They ended with their victory in their king and thus failed to give God the glory. That they were men thus disposed is evident from their reactions. They said to Samuel, "Who is he that said, Shall Saul reign over us? bring the men, that we may put them to death." They were that excited, now that it appeared that Saul was just the kind of man that they all along had desired. What they were willingly ignorant of is that the Lord had raised up Saul. Had he not hid himself among the stuff? How then were they to account for this sudden surge of courage in the man, being, as they were unmindful of the fact that the Spirit of the Lord had come upon him. Saul had the practical wisdom to resist those wicked men. He said to them, "There shall not a man be put to death this day: for today the Lord hath wrought salvation in Israel." That was a beautiful confession. And it was made by an unbeliever, for that is what Saul was despite his declaring that the victory had been the Lord's.

G. M. O.

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## SION'S ZANGEN

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### Een Nieuw Lied Den Heere!

(Psalm 96; Slot)

De laatste maal dat we stilstonden bij dezen psalm, zagen we hoe de zanger ons opwekte om den Heere te aanbidden. En we moeten zulks doen in de heerlijkheid des heilighdoms. Ook hebben we gezien hoe die heerlijkheid eigenlijk het aangezicht Gods is in den Heere Jezus Christus.

Nu hooren we hoe we opgewekt worden om de boodschap die we van God gehoord en geleerd hebben, moeten uitdragen onder de heidenen.

Het hart van die boodschap is, dat de Heere regeert!

O ja, ik weet het, hoe mijn dwaalziek hart deze boodschap haast niet gelooven kan. Het lijkt zoo geheel anders in onze wereld. De zanger zegt: "De Heere regeert!"

de weduwe klaagt, en de wees wascht zich in zijn tranen. De hoogmoed zit op het gestoelte en de ongerechtigheid verheft zich op de straten. De tong der goddeloozen tast zelfs den hemel aan. Daar komt bij, dat we slechts een zeer klein gedeelte van des wereld's daden zien en beoordeelen kunnen. Verreweg het grootste gedeelte van het leven der menschheid is verborgen voor ons. En oordeelende naar hetgene we zien en weten, dan is er één groot gedoe van onrecht in de wereld.

Hoe moet ik dan verstaan, dat de Heere nochtans regeert?

[Het antwoord kan niet moeilijk zijn, als ge God kent die waarlijk God is. Als ge Hem kent, zooals Hij Zich in Zijn Woord openbaarde, dan hebt ge geleerd, dat alles wat geschiedt niets anders is dan de ontrolling van Zijn eeuwigen Raad. Er is nooit één druppel bloed vergoten, niet één traan gestort, niet één slag gegeven tot kromming der ruggen, of het was vanwege het vreeselijke feit, dat God regeerd. Let slechts op twee teksten: eerst, de tekst waar David zegt van Simeï's vloeken: "Ja, laat hij vloeken; want de Heere toch heeft tot hem gezegd: Vloek David; wie zoude dan zeggen: Waarom hebt gij alzo gedaan?" II Sam. 16:10. Ge verstaat natuurlijk, dat de Heere niet letterlijk, hoorbaar, of zelfs, onhoorbaar, tot Simeï zeide: Vloek David! Maar David ziet in dit vloeken van Simeï de richtende hand des Heeren. David wist, dat God er achter zat. En dat, hoewel Simeï aansprakelijk en verantwoordelijk is voor zijn zonde, God die zonde van Simeï gebruikt om David te tuchtigen. Dus het vloeken van Simeï, zooals alle dingen, is de openbaring van de regeerende hand Gods. Tweedens, en dan raken we het hart van alle historie en van alle wereldgebeuren, hebben we de grootste zonde die er ooit geschiedde: het kruisigen van Jezus! Daarvan zegt de Heilige Geest in Hand. 4:27 en 28. Die verzen moest ieder Christen van buiten leeren. Er staat: "Want in waarheid zijn vergaderd tegen Uw heilig Kind Jezus, welken Gij gezalft hebt, beide Herodes en Pontius Pilatus, met de heidenen en de volken Israels, om te doen al wat Uwe hand en Uw raad te voren bepaald had dat geschieden zoude!" En ik weet, dat ge het mij toestemt als ik zeg, dat we hier te doen hebben met het hoogste richten wat ge U maar denken kunt. God was daar Zijn Zoon aan 't richten. D.w.z., Zijn Zoon, beladen met alle schuld van Gods uitverkoren volk. En het was de hand Gods en de raad Gods die geregeerd hebben daar bij die heuvel Golgotha, even buiten Jeruzalem.

Ja, waarlijk, de Heere regeert!

Daar komt nog één ding bij. En dat is dit: de regeering Gods over alle dingen komt ook hierin uit, dat alle kwaad dat geschiedt, onmiddellijk bezocht wordt. Nog wel niet ten finale, maar toch in beginsel. Er is een spreekwoord in 't Engelsch, dat zegt: He gets away

with it! Dat wil zeggen in 't Hollandsch: die man doet kwaad, en het gelukt hem! Hij ontkomt zonder straf. Nu moet ge wel verstaan, geliefde lezer, dat dit niet waar is. Elk kwaad, dat een mensch doet brengt de straf gedeeltelijk nu al met zich. Niemand kan kwaad doen en vrede hebben. God laat zich niet onbetuigd. Als we zingen: Wat vree heeft elk die Uwe wet bemint; zij zullen aan geen hinderpaal zich stooten! dan zingt ge eigenlijk ook dit: wat onvrede heeft elk die op het pad der boozen wandelt en Gods wet verbreekt. O ja, God regeert! ook nu en alle dagen.

Bedenk daar ook dit bij, dat vanwege Gods almachtige, alomtegenwoordige kracht Hij geduriglijk alle dingen doet gebeuren zooals ze gebeuren, en ik denk, dat ge mij toestemt, dat het heel duidelijk is voor een iegelijk mensch die God kent, dat God altijd regeerde en nog regeert en eeuwiglijk regeeren zal.

Wel zegt dat onder de heidenen!

De zanger roept de kerk van alle eeuwen op om zulks te zingen en aldus zingende door de wereld heen te wandelen. Een schoon getuigenis Gods. Eigenlijk is ons gansche leven dit, om Gode getuigenis te geven. God zal gerechtvaardigd worden. Dat doende sluiten we ons bij den regeerenden God aan, die alle dagen spreekt, ook in de harten der boosdoeners.

Ook zal de wereld bevestigd worden, zij zal niet bewogen worden; Hij zal de volken richten in alle rechtmatigheid!

Nu moet ge wel verstaan, dat het hier nog over dezelfde gedachte gaat als we boven verklaarden. Het gaat hier niet over de physische vastheid en onbewogenheid der aarde. Dat leeren sommigen die zich opmaakten om dezen tekst te verklaren. Eerst deden ze zooals wij, en verklaarden, dat God toch altijd werkelijk regeerde, ook dan als het anders scheen. En dan beginnen ze te spreken over Gods hand die de werelden in balans houdt.

Bewijs, dat het hier ook over den richtenden God gaat, vindt ge in Psalm 82:5. Daar hebt ge dezelfde beeldspraak. Daar gaat het over den wandel der goddeloozen in duisternis. En dan klaagt de zanger, dat door dien wandel duisternissen "alle fundamenten der aarde wankelen". Eigenaardig is, dat in den geheelen psalm bezongen wordt hoe de menschelijke richters der aarde, hoewel geroepen om recht te doen, toch "onrecht oordeelen" en "het aangezicht der goddeloozen aannemen". Welnu, dat doet God niet. En daarom, omdat God wel degelijk regeert en rechtvaardiglijk richt, daarom wordt de wereld bevestigd en zal zij niet bewogen worden.

En zoo kunnen we zingen op het schavot en jubelen als we vertrappt worden. God is nog nooit van Zijn vreeselijken witten troon afgestapt: Hij oordeelt alle dagen.

Slechts dit moet ge altijd onthouden: ge moet nog wat wachten en dan zult ge zien, dat God altijd in

rechtmatigheid geoordeeld heeft. Het was Zijn oordeel en Zijn richten over de goddeloozen, dat zij U moesten verslinden en zóó de maat volmaken die hen straks zal weg doen zinken in het eeuwige verderf. Wacht dan, verlaat U op den Heer!

Nu zullen we het ook eenigzins verstaan hoe de zanger ons opwekt om blijde te zijn.

Eigenlijk staat dat er niet.

Er staat dit: "Dat de hemelen zich verblijden en de aarde zich verheuge, dat de zee bruike met hare volheid!"

We hebben hier te doen met een zeer diepe gedachte, en ik denk niet, dat we hier aan deze zijde van dood en graf de volle beteekenis ervan zullen vatten. Of kunt ge het mij vertellen, *hoe* de hemelen en de aarde en de zee zich zullen verblijden, verheugen en bruisen van vroolijkheid?

Misschien bedoelt de Heilige Geest met hemel, de engelen en de volmaakt rechtvaardigen; met de aarde, Zijn volk, dat nog in den strijd is, terwijl de zee dezelfde gedachte geeft als de aarde, dat ze, namelijk, staat voor de bewuste schepselen die op hare baren varen. Ik zeg, misschien. De meeste commentaren gaan die kant uit. Ook denk ik, dat die gedachte natuurlijk niet buitengesloten is. En toch voelt het mij aan, dat er hier meer inzit. Let er op, dat vers 12 van de boomen spreekt die juichen.

Ik denk dat, omdat ik zooveel malen dezelfde idee in Gods Woord ontmoet. En onder de plaatsen, waar Gods Woord de anorganische dingen toespreekt, alsof ze bewustheid hebben, denk ik vooral aan Prediker 1:5-8. Daar wordt zelfs gezegd door den Heiligen Geest, dat die dingen (de zon, de wind, de beken en de zee) "zóó moede worden, dat niemand het zoude kunnen uitspreken", vers 8.

In die plaats hebt ge juist het tegenovergestelde van wat ge hier hebt in Psalm 96. Dáár zijn de dingen der ijdelheid onderworpen, en daarom worden ze zeer moede. Ze komen maar niet uit die eentonige rondgang! Doch hier worden de dingen opgewekt om blijde te zijn, want God regeert!

Denkt nu ook eens aan die wonderen tekst in Romeinen 8:19. Daar zien we het stomme schepsel, met opgestoken hoofde, verwachtende de openbaring der kinderen Gods!

En herinnert U hoe vaak God niet de aarde en de hemelen opriep om getuigen te zijn bij den twist met Zijn volk.

Ik kan er niet veel van zeggen. Dit slechts: als ik de aarde zie in schoonen tooi van groen en prachtkleuren, als ik de hemelen zie in diepen nacht met al dat geflonker van duizenden en duizenden sterren, dan is het alsof ik ze allen hoor juichen vanwege God, de Heere, dat groote en vreeselijke Wezen, die de eeuwigheid bewoont en Zijn stoel op starren sticht. Het mag onwillekeurig en onbewust zijn, er schijnt een onge-

kende vroolijkheid en blijdschap te zijn in de dingen die ons omringen. Ik hoorde het zelfs in het loeien van de stormen en die stem van vele wateren toen we in een Atlantischen storm op en neer geworpen werden.

Ik denk, dat God zich vreugde en blijdschap bereidt uit wat wij de stomme en brute schepping noemen, op welke wijze dan ook.

Er is een lied der schepping!

En het houdt zelfs verband met Jezus van Nazareth!

Want elders worden de dingen opgewekt te zingen, "omdat Zijn goedertierenheid tot in der eeuwigheid is!"

En dezelfde gedachte wordt verder in dezen psalm verzaard, waar we lezen: "Dat het veld huppele van vreugde *met al wat er in is*, dat dan alle de boomen des wouds juichen voor het aangezicht des Heeren, want Hij komt. . . ."

Met al wat er in het veld is; dat zijn de boomen en planten en het groene gras, de dieren en alles wat er wriemelt. Dat ze allen opspringen van vreugde in God. O, het is het vooruitgrijpen naar de nieuwen hemel en de nieuwe aarde, waarin pure gerechtigheid wonen zal.

En dat zal alles geschieden voor Zijn aangezicht.

Gods aangezicht is ten finale Jezus Christus, de Heere. Want het aangezicht is de openbaring Gods. En de Heere heeft Zich nooit schooner en heerlijker geopenbaard, dan in Zijn Zoon Jezus Christus, onzen Heere en Verlosser.

Want Hij komt. . . .

O ja, Hij komt. Alle dingen beginnen meer en meer daar van te getuigen. Hij is gekomen in den beginne, en door alle eeuwen heen is dat komen duidelijker geworden. Hij kwam eindelijk in Jezus van Nazareth. En even later op den Pinksterdag in den Geest van den verheerlijkten Christus.

Maar hier gaat het over Zijn komst aan het einde der eeuwen.

En dan zal Hij openbaren, dat Hij allen tijd geregeerd heeft in recht en gerechtigheid. Dan zullen alle volken der aarde weenen en rouw bedrijven. Ze zullen Hem zien Wien ze doorstoken hebben.

En Zijn volk zal met de geheele nieuwe aarde en nieuwen hemel huppelen van zielsverrukking. "Daar zij hun wensch verkrijgen!"

Want Hij zal openbaren Zijn gericht in waarheid. Met Zijne waarheid zal Hij de volken richten.

Ziet ge, dat geschiedde onder de menschen bijna nooit. Als het al geschiedde, was het door Zijn volk in wiens midden Hij woonde door het Woord Zijner waarheid en door den Geest, de getrouwe Getuige. Doch slechts in beginsel.

Maar dan zal Hij alles en allen richten met Zijne waarheid.

Het zal een heerlijke dag zijn. Een dag waar alle eeuwen om roepen en geroepen hebben. Het bloed van

den rechtvaardigen Abel ligt daar nog, en daarna hebben de stroomen van onschuldig bloed gevloeid. Het alles wacht op dien dag.

Dan zal ook het dierbaar bloed van Jezus gewroken worden.

En zal de oogst van dat beter bloed binnengehaald worden in een volk dat zal wonen in een nieuw land en nieuwe stad, om tot in alle eeuwigheid een nieuw lied den Heere te zingen.

Het zijn de hallels der verlostten tot eeuwigen prijs van Hem die op den troon zit en het Lam!

G. V.

## IN HIS FEAR

### The Gospel in Social Life

In His fear.

That excludes no part of life. We know that God is ONE and we have ONE Lord, therefore the life of the saint must also be ONE in fearing and serving God, not only here and there, now and then, but everywhere, always.

That includes also what we call social life, our life in the married state, labor, industry, business, economics, politics, etc.

We intend to apply this idea of the fear of God to this aspect of life, and thus attempt to bring to the surface somewhat the Sociology of Scripture.

#### *Social Gospel?*

Is that what we want?

By all means, no.

There is a clamor today for such a social gospel.

"Foundering civilization" has tried most everything, from the brilliant orations of eloquent statesmen and the detonation of the A-bomb; it seems now to have turned its eyes to the church, and saying to her, If there is any Christian message for a foundering civilization, it had better be proclaimed now".

We find the present situation challenging the clergy with such words, "Should a clergyman stick to the Psalms and keep his nose out of such mundane things as wages and hours. . . .?" And as proof that the clergy is revolting against "this theory which limits the ministry to a narrow Sunday morning orbit", a National Conference was recently staged in Pittsburgh, sponsored by the Federal Council of Churches, representing some 25 Protestant Churches and some

27 million members. The theme of the Conference was: "The Church and Economic Life".

Flattering themselves with the honor so generously bestowed upon them, and they themselves also eager to find a way out of the present confusion, the Churches have begun as never before to develop some kind of Sociology which will meet the demands of the hour. Misquoting the passage in Esther, many clergymen are eager to come to the kingdom "for such a time as this" and prepare some scheme for bringing order out of chaos.

If one read the Saturday night paper, at least in our larger cities, and one turns to the church page, one sees how energetically many churches accept the challenge and offer a "christian sociology". The advertisements remind one of Maxwell St.

There is a clamor today for a type of preaching which fixes its attention primarily upon man, upon a new world-order, and, if possible, to bring peace and prosperity to this world. Some try it along one way, others try it along another way, but all agree on this thing, that the cause of man is the important thing.

#### *Time To Speak.*

We have been challenged: If there is a christian message it had better be proclaimed now.

It is time to speak.

The christian message has been proclaimed as long as there has been a true church in this world. The Bible carries the message and has carried it for all these hundreds and thousands of years, and the church which has been in His service has proclaimed this message all along.

It is not because there has been no message, that men challenge us today to give a message if we have one. . . .no, but the clamor is for some other message, some other sociology than that which Scripture produces.

But it is time to speak, indeed. Not to speak some new message, but the old, old message.

Today's social gospel?

It is no longer a gospel.

It has ceased to be the Gospel of God, of Christ, of glory, of the Promise. It has been cheapened into a philosophy about a god, whose world has fallen into confusion and eagerly desires the help of man to restore it to normalcy.

We reject today's social gospel as a figment of man's imagination, calculated only to deceive the christians and to wean them away from Christ and His kingdom to something else.

#### *We Have a Message.*

Although we reject the idea of a social gospel, we by no means infer that the Gospel has nothing to say

about social spheres, as e.g. wedlock, labor, industry, politics, economics, etc. It surely has. As child of God you are part of a social unit, you cannot but be in contact with your unit, and we may not exclude any phase of life from the calling to walk in the fear of God.

We know of no antithesis between nature and grace, between grace and things mundane. We are in the world and must live in the world. There is an antithesis between sin and grace, indeed, wherefore our conduct in things mundane must be regulated, not by sin and lie, but by grace and truth. And in order that the lives of the saints might be regulated by grace and truth, God has given them in His Holy revelation an expression of His will in re things mundane and our conduct in the midst of them. Therefore there is a message, a gospel message concerning the things that are under the sun.

Scripture does not treat wedlock, economics, politics, labor etc., as various branches under some sort of social science, but the Scripture does declare and exhort the manner of life which becomes them who are regenerated.

Then it touches on all these matters.

Let me illustrate this:

#### MARRIAGE:

Rom. 7:2 For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he liveth.

Matt. 19:6 What God hath therefore joined together let not man put asunder.

Eph. 5:22, 25 Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord; Husbands, love your wives.

#### LABOR AND INDUSTRY:

II Thess. 3:10, 11 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

Eph. 4:28 Let him that stole, steal no more but rather let him labour.

Coll. 3:22 and 4:1 Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh. . . . masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.

I Pet. 2:18 Servants be subject to your masters in all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.

#### ECONOMICS:

I Tim. 6:6-10 Godliness with contentment is great gain, having food and raiment let us therewith be

content, but they that will be rich fall into temptation, for the love of money is a root of all evil.

Eph. 4:28 . . . working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

I Tim. 5:8 But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith and is worse than an infidel.

#### CAPITAL AND LABOR:

Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

Phil. 2:4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

Rom. 12:9 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place to wrath, for it is written, vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.

Matt. 5:39 Resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

James 5:7 Be patient therefore brethren, unto the coming of the Lord.

#### POLITICS:

Rom. 12:1 Let every soul be subject to the higher powers, for there is no power but of God.

Rom. 14:6, 7 For, for this cause pay ye tribute also, for they are God's ministers, . . . . render therefore to all their dues.

Rom. 13:8 Owe no man anything than to love one-another.

#### *Observations.*

First of all we notice that these exhortations are addressed, not to the Town Council of Colosse, nor to the Mayor of Ephesus, or the Clerk of the City of Rome, but to the Church, to the beloved in the Lord, the called saints. If various present ministers had lived at that time they would very likely have written to the City Aldermen of Ephesus, to the Board of Economics at Thessalonica or the Rotary Club of Athens instead of to the called saints congregated sometimes in houses.

From which, in the second place, it is evident that the purpose of the Gospel is not merely social, nor general, nor national, but spiritual. Scripture is not interested in a mere social science but Scripture exhorts the redeemed to reveal themselves in this world as the Peculiar people which they are, to rise up in this world as the Party of the living God and show themselves as Servants of God, upholding, defending, and representing the Cause of the Son of God in the midst of a world which lies in darkness and enmity.

The issue of social and economic well-being is not important, what IS important is that the saints shall live out of regeneration and walk in sanctification and

thus be in the midst of this world representatives of the Cause of the Son of God.

There IS a social Gospel, but it is so highly spiritual that it is foolishness to all but the saints, and so "other-worldly" that when the saints begin to live according to the sociology of Scripture they appear to the world as fools.

(To be continued).

M. G.

## FROM HOLY WRIT

### O. T. Quotations in the N. T.

The Lord willing, the undersigned will be the contributor to this rubric for the next six months. May the little that is here contributed be of blessing to both writer and readers. The rich treasure of God's Gospel is contained in an *earthen* vessel and not the least in this column. Of this truth the writer is painfully aware. Still, it is exactly in this acknowledgement that there is also a great measure of comfort. Now the exceeding greatness of the power may be and is not of us but of God. And no labor spent is vain in the Lord.

A few remarks as to the nature of this rubric, as understood by the undersigned, as well as to the material that we hope to offer in these columns, may not be counted out of place. This rubric is captioned: "From Holy Writ". This offers the writer a broad field. In a sense possibly too wide a field. However, we hope to limit ourselves. It certainly is not the intention that this department write meditations, although that would be from Holy Writ. That would be infringing on the territory of the Editor. Nor must these articles be on the Psalms. That also would be from Holy Writ. Of this the writer of "Sion's Zangen" offers excellent contributions. Neither must these articles treat of what falls under the caption "The Day Of Shadows", for this is the rightful domain of that department. And, again, even though one may not write on Holy Writ in the abstract, as though all Scripture were not also "for correction", yet this department must not intrude on the field of the contributor to "In His Fear". And finally, these articles should not be doctrine in the limited sense of the term, for that is offered us by and large in "The Triple Knowledge."

Since all these departments also fall under "From Holy Writ" in a general sense, it would seem that there should be a sense in which this department treats

this subject in distinction from the others. We believe, that, first of all, this department should have a subject not treated by the others. This may be a Bible-book, or some aspect of the Word of God. Secondly, this column should be of an exegetical, an expository nature. And lastly, but not least, it should be as much as possible of a popular nature. We repeat: as much as possible. This latter is no little task. We are conscious of our limitations on this score.

The material that we wish to offer the reader during the next six months is that which falls under the heading "O. T. Quotations In The N. T."

Just a word of explanation about these quotations.

Biblical scholars, who have made the count, inform us, that there are not less than 300 direct quotations in the New Testament writings from the Old Testament Scriptures.

That these quotations are so numerous should not surprise us. Upon a little reflection on the relationship of the Old Dispensation to the New Dispensation, we discover that we would exactly expect this situation. For is not Christ the end of the law? And does this not mean that the Old Testament has come to its termination in His appearance in the fulness of times, in His death, resurrection and glorification at the right hand of the Father? He it is Who has sent His Spirit into the Church, Who leads her through this selfsame Spirit into all truth. And because of His being the fulfilment of the Promise of God He died according to the Scriptures and rose again on the third day according to the Scriptures. In Him the Old and the New Testaments are one. And, therefore, it is nothing strange, but wholly natural that the number of quotations should be legion.

And thus our first observation is that the possibility and necessity of quotations in the New Testament Scriptures from the Old Testament writings must be sought in the *unity of the two in the person of Christ*. It is of paramount importance that this be remembered.

Another element in these quotations, that strikes our attention, is the fact that the writers of the New Testament Scriptures all proceed from the fundamental principle, that the Old Testament Scriptures are the Word of God. They are authoritative. They are the last Word in any dispute concerning faith and life of God's people in this world. And, being authoritative, they are the clinching argument in the New Testament. Thus it was with Jesus. Often He says: It is written. Or again: Have ye never read in the Scriptures. Over against unbelief He says: Ye are not knowing the Scriptures, neither the power of God. Thus the Scriptures are for Christ Himself. And as they are for Him so they are also for the Apostles and prophets, Evangelists, Shepherds and Teachers. Legion are the points on which reference is made in



the New Testament to the Old Testament. And the circumstances in which this becomes necessary is nearly time without number. Small wonder that there are as many as 300 direct quotations, not counting indirect allusions to Scripture passages, in the New Testament

Finally, it may not pass unnoticed, that there is still the element of what may be called the *progressiveness* of the New Testament over the Old Testament.

And what may this progressiveness be?

To us the implication of progressiveness in this connection must mean that the New Testament gives us a more clear and a richer revelation of the salvation of God in Jesus Christ than does the Old Testament.

The truth of what we have just stated is so evident to the student of Holy Writ as to hardly need any proof.

We have but to refer our attention to the fact that in the fulness of time the Son of God came into the flesh; that His glory was seen as the glory of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth and at once we also see that this implies a richer revelation. The Old Testament revelation has very little glory when compared with the glory of the New Testament.

It is very evident, that Jesus had this in mind when He told the people that the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than John the Baptist. Now John was, indeed, the greatest of all the prophets. All the prophets prophesied until John. But John exceeds them all. He stands on the shoulders of all the prophets. Is his not the privilege to point out the Christ to the people and to say: "Behold, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world!" And, again, does not Jesus tell His disciples upon occasion of the speaking of parables to the multitude, that their eyes are blessed indeed, as are also their ears. Had not many prophets desired to see the things that they see, but it had not been granted them in the Old Testament revelation? And did not the very dimness of the Old Testament revelation forbid prophets to hear the things that the ears of the disciples might hear? And were not these very prophets conscious of the fact that in their intense searching out of what time, and the manner of the time of the suffering that should come upon Jesus and the glory that would follow, that they were not going to enter into the fruit of these labors themselves, but that they were performing these labors for us, the children of the New Covenant?

To ask these questions is to answer them.

But, what does this latter imply when viewed in relation to the problem of the quotation of various Old Testament passages in the New Testament?

Or, to state the question somewhat differently, is it evident in some of these direct quotations from the O. T. in the N. T. that the sense they had in their

Old Testament setting is superceded in the New Testament setting?

If so, then there should be various texts in the New Testament, which, as quotations from the Old Testament, may seem to have acquired a different meaning.

Of course, these passages cannot have acquired an altogether different meaning. The sense of the Author in the Old Testament is no different from that of the Author in the New Testament. What seems to be a different meaning is but the same truth of the Word of God in the Old Testament now within the light of its fulfilment in the death, resurrection and glorification of Christ.

The implication of this just enunciated principle is that, had we only the Old Testament, had Christ not come as yet, the sense of a given passage in the Old Testament as intended by the Holy Spirit, the Primary Author, would very really be that given in the New context in the New Testament writings. But the point is, that *we* would not be able to grasp this enriched meaning. Fact is, were it told us, we would not be able to understand it.

But enough of this. This introduction has become a bit longer than we anticipated. However, I am certain, the reader will understand that an explicit statement of the principles that will govern us in these studies is necessary for both the writer of these lines and for those who follow them.

Finally, just a word about the material that we hope to offer in this rubric.

Since there are 300 quotations of the Old Testament in the New Testament, we will have to choose a group of quotations which have a common characteristic. Choosing such a group will enable us to study the quotations from a single viewpoint. Thus there should be unity in the discussion and also continuity.

Tentatively our plan is to discuss the following passages in the New Testament which are quotations from the Old Testament. Rom. 10:5-8; 10:18; II Cor. 3:16; Eph. 4:8; Hebrews 1:7 and 2:6-8.

What is peculiar about all of these quotations is that there seems to be a different sense given to these passages in the New Testament than in the Old Testament.

Another matter worthy of consideration here is that in these passages a great deal of light is shed on the practical application of the threefold principles earlier delineated upon in this essay, to wit: 1. The unity of the two dispensations; 2. The authoritative nature of the Old Testament Scriptures; 3. The progressive character of the New Testament Scriptures.

D. V. we will begin our discussion in the next issue.

G. L.

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## PERISCOPE

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### *Commendation. . . .*

We wish to begin our column in a slightly different manner this time. Under the caption above we will quote several comments and add a few personal remarks at the close. The statements quoted are certainly worthy of repetition as they contain valuable lessons for us all, as well as an encouraging and heartening note of truth.

The first is written by a Mr. Henry Sikkema, in the department, "Voices in the Church" of the *Banner* of Feb. 28. Most of our readers are aware of the fact that Mr. Sikkema took issue with the Rev. E. J. Tanis concerning the latter's favorable attitude towards the A.F.L. Mr. Sikkema was not satisfied with the answer and explanation of the Reverend and so replies to him. We quote but a small part of Mr. Sikkema's splendid exposé of the A.F.L. and refutation of the Rev. Tanis.

"Rev. E. J. Tanis seems to imply that I am being presumptuous in thinking I have solved the intricate problem of the closed shop by denouncing it as anti-Christian, un-American, and vicious. I am convinced that the closed shop is anti-Christian. . . .

The editor of "The World Today" reminds me that "consistency" might demand that we do something more than assume a negative attitude, I agree. I believe we should heed the admonition, "Come ye out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord," that is positive. I am of the conviction that our failure to sound and to heed that admonition has created not an intricate, but a very serious problem, and that the continued evasion of the issues involved will only increase its seriousness.

Frankly, I see nothing in this situation to be happy about, and I would repeat that our leadership would manifest greater wisdom if they would warn the people against the organizations guilty of such anti-Christian practices, than they do when they call them to be glad because of their propaganda."

When we first read this it so gladdened our heart that we were inclined to write the brother personally. We take this means, however, to publicly congratulate him and encourage him to "hold fast that which thou hast, that no one take thy crown".

In respect to it all the Rev. Tanis has nothing to say. He writes rather lamely: "I intended to favor this correspondent with a lengthy reply but came to the conclusion that this is hopeless." And again: "I owe a great deal to the works of Dr. Abraham Kuiper and Dr. Hendrik Colyn of the Netherlands, genuine Calvinists, and have no intention of abandoning their position

in regard to social and economic problems, . . . ." It is not too striking that over against the Word of God the Reverend has no answer. It is sad, however, that he should elevate the teaching of mere men, notable and gifted though they may be, above the clear expression of Scripture.

Our second quotation is from the same department of the *Banner* of March 7. A Mr. John Buteyn asks the question: "Are we Hiding the Truth More or Less?", Among other things he writes: "I am afraid there are many right in our own Christian Reformed Church who believe exactly what Arminians believe." A bit later: "Should we not, old and young, know that God has here upon earth a Church chosen from before the foundations of the world? Or are we hiding the truth somewhat? On the other hand, it looks to me that we, old or young, never or seldom read a book on Christian doctrine." And again: "Tell the young people that Jesus does not stand at the door and say, 'Please, sinner, O please, open to me.' Not at all. Jesus is never taken by surprise. God does not depend on our will. Christ does not stand in a corner to wait and see if there are some sinners who are ready to accept him." And he closes with this fine observation: (the italics are his own, W.H.). *No, a man by nature has no free will to do good, only a free will to do evil.* Surely, we must accept Christ, but let us remember the words: 'We love him because he first loved us.' We love the song: 'It was not I that found, O Saviour true; no I was found of Thee'."

Again, truly commendable. But our joy is tempered by the fact that in the same issue appears a most atrocious "Meditation" under the title: "The Betrayal". In it the writer expresses gross error and untruth (we were going to write Arminianism and heresy) especially when he declares of Jesus (The Son of God! W.H.) in relation to Judas: "Jesus knew it all the time, from the very beginning, but in love continued to warn him, and sought to save his soul!" And again in the same article: "Jesus wishes to issue one more kind and gracious warning, but this time a plain one, lest Judas mighty carry out his plot to the bitter end." This defies all explanation; so glaring that it needs no rebuttal. If this be the bread what are the crumbs like? As commendable as was the laymen's expression so lamentable, and more so, is this from the clergyman!

Our next two quotations are from the *Banner* of March 14. They both contain sound instruction and valuable advice for all who love the Reformed faith and would seek to perpetuate it. The first is by the editor, the Rev. H. J. Kuiper, and appears in an editorial regarding catechism. He writes under the caption: "More Parental Cooperation":

"First Things First, means, for example, that our spiritual needs are to be considered more pressing

than our physical needs, that catechism must take precedence over baseball games, basketball practice, family errands, music lessons, paper routes, an after-school job, and whatever else may clamor for the interest of our boys and girls at that particular hour. Do you agree, boys and girls, fathers and mothers? You are bound to assent if you really believe in the principle: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God" (Matt. 6:33).

Parents who profess Christ as their Lord have solemnly assumed the obligation to teach their children this fundamental principle of the kingdom that **first things must have first place in their life**, and to insist that it shall be the rule of their life as long as they are under the parental roof.

Alas, how often Christian Fathers and mothers permit the violation of this principle! They made exceptions when the children were still small. Mary's tears and Johnny's tantrums were more compelling than the majesty of their Lord's edict: "First the Kingdom of God!" When that principle has once been compromised, either because the children were more determined than the parents or because the parents were more deeply interested in material than in spiritual things, the foundation has been laid for the **habit** of making the things of the Kingdom secondary and the things of self, of the body, of the earth, primary.

Parental cooperation, then, in regard to catechetical instruction consists first of all in this that our fathers and mothers send their children to catechism **regularly**. Irregular attendance invariably means poor recitations, these in turn breed disinterest, if not antagonism. Irregular attendance is almost as fruitless as non-attendance."

The editor goes on to point out that attendance is but the first requisite of parental cooperation. It also is demanded that they supervise the preparation of the lesson and assure themselves that their children are prepared. He quotes Deut. 6:6-7: "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thy heart; and thou (father, mother) shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." He adds in conclusion: "We have frequently heard the complaint that many of our young people, in spite of catechism, Sunday School, and Christian School, seem to know but little about the Word of God. One of the reasons is that too many Christian parents look to these agencies as substitutes instead of aids for the inculcation of divine truth and wisdom in the hearts of their children."

In the same issue under "Voices" we find a letter simply signed "S". This writer also presents the case for catechism and writes as follows:

"We have to have more interesting services, they are "too dry", we are not "friendly enough to strangers". Our messages must be made so soft that we hardly ever hear about election and reprobation any more; I realize that some may say, What does this have to do with catechism? Just this, our children after having studied our Heidelberg Catechism in their early years will be able to distinguish the truths of our Reformed fathers. The sovereignty of God, election, reprobation, etc., are the fundamental truths we all were taught in catechism and if we are to remain truly Reformed and different from most, if not all, American churches, we should insist on the old way in starting our children in this training as soon as they start school."

Both of these quotations declare much needed lessons in our day. Commendable!

We promised the addition of some personal comment. Here it is:

1. In the first place, what we wrote above by no means attempts to be an apology or expiation for anything we may have written in the past or shall write in the future. The truth needs no apology! Nor is it our intention primarily to congratulate the individuals who wrote. Our felicitations mean nothing to them and, perhaps, they would as soon we had not published their names and quoted them in the *Standard Bearer*. Our purpose is rather, to rejoice that the Spirit of God still operates and that truth crushed to earth must invariably rise—and that on the same spot where it was crushed.

2. In the second place, we as Churches, and individuals, have often been denounced as purely negative, schismatic, defamatory, derogative, etc., etc. The above is written, therefore, to once again give the lie to such aspersion and point out that we recognize the *truly* "good and beautiful" and are happy to commend it.

3. Finally, we, too, heed the injunction of Scripture to bind and build and unite "till we all attain unto the unity of the faith". But this can never be accomplished on basis of error or in the way of compromise; "but speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into him, who is the head, even Christ." And upon that basis we commend and call to these "voices" to remove the lie of separation they have wedged and seek that which they expelled.

TIME: *The Present!!* PLACE: *Close To Home!!*

A most startling revelation of Catholic hostility to Protestantism was revealed in an article in the *Moody Monthly* of March. The information is reprinted from *The Mexican Indian* and is written by John T. Dale. Its title: "Rebirth of the Dark Ages in an Age of Light" aptly describes its content. It is an eye-witness account of what took place at the 1946 Annual Convention of Evangelical Churches in Mexico. This convention was held in the city of Toluca, which is but a short distance from Mexico City.

Agitation on the part of the Catholics, against holding the convention began many months before it was held. They had petitioned the mayor to prohibit the meeting but were disappointed when it was made clear that the Protestants had a legal right to meet. This did not stop the Catholics, for as the writer states:

"Balked here, they made plans to hold a series of meetings (holy hours, as they call them) each day of the convention in the Catholic Church directly across the street from the Presbyterian Church which was to be the host to the convention.

Thus it was that each day, at the same time that the convention was in session, Catholic priests with loud-speakers launched a tirade against the Protestants. Obscene statements were made regarding the Protestants which cannot be repeated. It was stated as a fact that every Protestant church and home was a center of prostitution. After each holy hour, with church bells ringing incessantly, the Catholic mobs paraded up and down the street shouting insults and threats to the Protestants and, with the same breath, cheers to the holy Virgin and the Pope. Each day especially printed leaflets were distributed over the city notifying the faithful of the threats and curse of the Protestant invasion of their city. Catholics were asked not to come near the convention nor receive any tracts, which they consider Protestant propaganda.

This, however, was neither the end nor the worst. Though warned by the police to cease disturbing the Protestant meetings the agitation continued and increased until, as a precautionary measure, police protection was provided the Protestants. Even this did not dampen the ardor of the Catholics and on Sunday, the closing day of the Convention, they attempted actual violence:

"During the course of the day rumors spread throughout the city that the Protestants would bring about at that time the closing of the Catholic churches in the city. The previous night, we learned later, the priest had endeavored to arouse the spirits of his people into storming the convention hall. However, the people had not responded wholeheartedly and so the plan was apparently postponed.

Sunday afternoon messengers went through the neighboring Indian villages asking them for help, as their Catholic duty, to drive the Protestants out of the city, falsely declaring that they had dared to burn the image of the holy Virgin. Naturally, by nightfall the Catholic church directly across from the convention was packed with people. About the middle of the evening service of the convention, approximately two thousand enraged Catholics armed with sticks, knives, stones and pistols stormed the one entrance of the church. Fortunately the large door was closed just in time as the mob surged against it. The few policemen tried to disperse the crowd, but in vain. Firemen

came and with water tried to drive the mob away, but they only broke up into smaller groups in order to make repeated drives upon the firemen and policemen who had taken their stand with their backs to the door. As the situation became more critical, federal troops were finally called. Pistols were fired and I was told that the chief of police, among others, was wounded. From the towers of the Catholic church fanatics armed with pistols shot down upon the policemen, firemen and troops."

The affair was finally ended as follows:

"About eleven o'clock order was restored, preventing the possible massacre of over one thousand Protestants. With troops stationed on either side of the street, the delegates of the convention in small groups were allowed to leave the church. It was indeed good to get out into the open air and again find quietness. However, underneath that stillness of the late night there was still the uncanny feeling of unrest. We made our way to the hotel with thanksgiving in our hearts to God for this deliverance."

Truly, shades of the "Dark Ages" and "Inquisition"! The leopard has not changed its spots nor Catholicism its cloak!  
W. H.

#### ANNIVERSARY

On the 19th day of April, 1947, our beloved parents, MR. and MRS. GILBERT VAN BAREN celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary.

We are thankful that the Lord has spared them in the past and hope that He will spare them for each other and for us and bless them in the future.

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Zandstra  
Bertha  
Willametta  
Agnes  
Gertrude  
Joan  
Gisebert  
Sylvia  
Gilbert Jr.  
Frank  
Anna Mae  
and 1 grandchild.

South Holland, Ill.

#### — ATTENTION —

Ministers of Classis East.

The Ministers' Conference will meet on Tuesday, April 8, at 9:30 A.M., in Fuller Ave. Church.

PROGRAM: —

"Faith and Reason" — G. Lubbers.

"The Presence of Christ and the Sacramental Action in the Lord's Supper" — G. M. Ophoff.

W. Hofman, Sec'y.

## Report of Classis West – Convened March 5, 1947 at Rock Valley, Iowa

Classis West convened at Rock Valley, Iowa, on March 5, 1947.

The meeting was opened with the usual devotions, conducted by the Rev. P. Vis.

All the churches of the Classis were represented by their respective delegates. A word of welcome was extended to Rev. J. Howerzyl, representing Oskaloosa for the first time at our Classis, as also two other delegates who attended our Classis for the first time. They were given an opportunity to sign the formula of subscription.

After the meeting was declared constituted, Rev. G. Vos took up the presidency for the day, and Rev. P. Vis officiated as clerk.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

The sermon committee reported that they have compiled another set of sermon books, containing sermons to be read in our churches. Classis decided to offer these books for sale at three dollars per set. Those desiring a set can obtain them from Rev. J. Blankespoor, Doon, Iowa.

The church visitors for Bellflower and Redlands reported that both the congregations visited are prospering under the blessings of God. The visitors for the churches of Iowa and Minnesota reported that "conditions prevailing in our churches are satisfactory and indicative of spiritual growth and the blessings of God. Peace and unity seem to prevail in them."

The committee appointed to visit our Manhattan congregation reported that it had not carried out its work, because one of the members was unable to make the necessary arrangements for the visit. This committee is continued, in order that it may carry out its work at a later date, and Rev. P. De Boer is appointed as alternate for Rev. L. Doezeema.

Classis decided to instruct the church visitors, that henceforth their work should be carried out before the end of the calendar year in which they are appointed, so that the retiring elders will still be present at the church visitation.

Two consistories presented overtures to Classis, requesting that the date of the Fall meeting be changed back to the first week of September, because the present arrangement of meeting in the last week of September interferes too much with the Catechism classes, particularly for those ministers who must be absent from the congregation for about a week, in order to attend Classis. It was decided to comply with this request.

The chairman appointed a committee consisting of Rev. A. Petter, and elders E. Dykstra of Hull, and G. Ryken of Oskaloosa, to consider the requests for subsidies sent in by the needy churches.

In the afternoon session this committee reported on its work and advised Classis in regard to the requests for subsidy given for their consideration. Classis decided to adopt the advice of the committee, with but one exception. Classis decided to present this matter to our next Synod for its final approval.

Classis received a communication from Mr. H. H. Kuiper, who requested to be reinstated as minister of the Word in our churches, on the grounds that he has now complied with a former decision of Classis, that he must return within the pale of our churches. It was decided to inform him, that Classis cannot accept the grounds he offers for reinstatement, since his former status as minister in our churches automatically ceased when he left our churches to affiliate himself with another denomination.

The consistory of Edgerton presented an overture to Classis, to be forwarded to Synod, advising Synod to retract its former decision to refer the matter of Psalter revision back to the various Classes for further study, on the basis that this procedure is contrary to correct Reformed ecclesiastical procedure.

In regard to the matter of Psalters, Classis decided to overture Synod to contact the Netherlands Reformed Church, which is considering the publication of a new edition of our present Psalter, and to

assure them that we are ready to purchase a sufficient number of Psalters to tide us over the period in which our proposed Psalter is in the making.

Rev. B. Kok, who attended our afternoon session, was given permission to address the Classis in behalf of the Mission Committee.

The following were chosen as delegates to our next Synod:

### MINISTERS:

Primi:	Secundi:
G. Vos	J. Blankespoor
C. Hanko	L. Doezeema
A. Cammenga	A. Petter
L. Vermeer	P. De Boer

### ELDERS:

Primi:	Secundi:
C. Vander Molen	W. De Vries
M. Flikkema	E. Vander Werff
W. Huiskens	G. Rijken
T. Kooima	J. Broek

Classis decided to accept the invitation of Doon, Iowa, to hold our Fall meeting in their church.

The questions according to article 41 of the Church Order were satisfactorily answered.

The minutes of the day were adopted.

After a few fitting closing remarks by the president, Rev. L. Vermeer led the assembly in thanksgiving to God for the christian fellowship we might experience and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

REV. C. HANKO, Stated Clerk.