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MEDITATION

's Hemels Geopende Deur

“Na dezen zag ik, en zie, eene deur was geopend in den hemel; en de eerste stem, die ik gehoord had als eener bazuin met mij sprekende, zeide: Kom hier op, en Ik zal u toonen hetgeen na dezen geschieden moet.” Openb. 4:1.

Een deur in den hemel!

De geheele Bijbel gewaagt van die deur, direkt of indirekt.

Zelfs in het vroege begin der historie hooren we van die deur bij implicatie. We hoorden van het vlamig lemmen eens zwaards, in de handen van Cherubim die den weg bewaren van den boom des levens. Een deur waar Adam en Eva niet door mochten gaan. Honderde jaren later hebben we gehuiverd bij het lezen van een deur die door den Heere toegesloten werd. Daar achter die deur was Noach veilig. Doch de goddeloozen hebben tevergeefs op die deur geklopt. Zou het daarom zijn, dat er zoo met nadruk staat: “En de Heere sloot achter hem toe”?

Nog later werd den tabernakel vervaardigd, en er moest een deur in die tent. En van zelf ook een deur in den lateren tempel Gods.

En als de geïnspireerde zanger Israels den overwinnenden Koning der eere naar den hemel ziet gaan, doet hij de Engelen Gods roepen: Heft uwe hoofden op gij poorten, en verheft u gij eeuwige deuren, opdat de Koning der eere inga!

O ja, de hemel heeft een deur, deuren genoemd soms, en ook: poorten.

Er zit een vreeselijke sprake in de idee van de deur. Maar ook een liefelijke rede. We zullen daar van moeten spreken.

Elke deur hier op aarde is een preek. Dat is waar

van alle aardsche dingen, relatiën, toestanden. Jezus zeide, dat de dingen van het eeuwige Koninkrijk *geschieden* door gelijkenissen. Dat is ook waar van de deur. Men kan het zien in het feit, dat Hij Zichzelf “de Deur der schapen” noemt.

Johannes zag in het tweede visioen een deur die openstond, en we moesten daar eigenlijk alle dagen van zingen, doch ik wil U iets zeggen van die deur als gesloten, voor eeuwig gesloten. Denkt er toch aan, dat een deur in den hemel die geopend is, zoodat menschen er door zouden gaan tot in de hoogste hemelen toe, een groot mirakel is.

Want die deur moest eigenlijk met een dubbel, eeuwig nachtslot vast zitten en nooit meer opengaan. Zoo is de toestand voor een natuurlijk mensch, den zondaar, het geheele geslacht van Adam en Eva.

Het eerste nachtslot is de gerechtigheid Gods. Die onkreukbare gerechtigheid gedooft het niet dat schuldige menschen in den hemel komen. De poorten der gerechtigheid sluiten ons buiten voor eeuwig. Later zal Johannes in verdere visioenen gezegd worden, dat in het hemelsche Jeruzalem niets inkomen zal dat ontreinigt en gruwelijkheid doet en leugen spreekt! Dat ontreinigende iets, hetwelk gruwelijkheid doet, wordt uit den hemel gebannen vanwege Gods gerechtigheid.

En het tweede nachtslot op den hemel is het harde hart van den mensch. Hij wil niet naar den hemel. Hij is in het diepste hart gebonden, en slaaf van Satan en van zonde. De hemel is afschuwelijk voor den verkeerde. Als hij iets van God hoort, smaakt, ziet, dan roept hij het van harte uit: Wijk van mij, O God! want ik heb geen lust aan Uwe wegen!

Maar Johannes ziet de hemel open staan.

Dat is juist het tegenovergestelde van wat we mochten verwachten. Weet ge wat bij onzen toestand past van nature? (Het is dit: een geopend graf! En dat is het voorportaal van de hel. Als men een geloovige is, en bij een geopend graf staat, dan werkt de geheiligde verbeeldingskracht soms zóó, dat we, als 't ware, de jammerklachten der goddeloozen hooren, opstijgende tot in alle eeuwigheid. En dat past bij ons.

Een geopende hemel? Een toegang tot de zalen van puur geluk, onuitsprekelijke zaligheid, aanliggen aan de rivier Gods die vol waters is? 't Is om tot in alle eeuwigheid van te zingen. En dat zullen we doen.

Hoe is die hemel opengescheurd? Wie heeft de sleutel gevonden? Hoe is het gekomen, dat die gerechtigheid die buitensloot, genoeg gedaan is? Ik zou er gaarne een antwoord op hebben. En vóór mij, eeuwen geleden, hebben vrome menschen geklaagd over een hemel die dicht zat. Denkt slechts aan dien eenen kreet van Jesaja: Och, dat Gij de hemelen scheurdet! Dat Gij nederkwaamt! Of denkt aan den weenenden profeet die klaagde: Gij hebt U met eene wolk bedekt, zoodat er geen gebed doorkwam.

O, als we beseffen wat eischen Gods heiligheid en Gods gerechtigheid doen, dan kunnen we er niet bij, dat die hemel geopend is geworden. Hoe is dat toch geschied?

En dat die hemel nu open is, is wel duidelijk, want zelfs onder het Oude Verbond hoor ik een van verrukking zingende profeet jubelen: Doet mij de poorten der gerechtigheid open, ik zal daardoor ingaan, ik zal den Heere loven! Eerst had hij gezongen: Ik zal niet sterven maar leven! Dus is er hier eene die door het geopende graf heenging en toch niet in de hel aandalde. Wonderen Gods!

O, gij allen weet het antwoord: die geopende deur is eigenlijk Jezus, de Heere.

Ik ben de Deur der schapen; indien iemand door Mij ingaat, die zal behouden worden, en hij zal ingaan en uitgaan, en weide vinden.

Daar zit een eeuwigheid van gedachten achter. Ik kan er natuurlijk niet tot doordringen. Ik kan er iets van zien, en hoe meer ik ervan zie, hoe meer ik zing, ja, opspring van vreugde.

Jezus is de geopende deur.

Ik wil U attent maken op een ander beeld: de armen van Jezus uitgebreid om Zijn schaapjes te omarmen die tot Hem komen. Gij kunt het aanvoelen, dat dit dezelfde idee is als de deur, vooral als ge dan denkt aan de poorten, een tweetal deuren die of openslaan en U inviteeren binnen te komen, of toeslaan en U een vreeselijke weigering toeroepen.

Armen van Jezus, uitgebreid om U te ontvangen, te omarmen, zoodat ge kunt zingen: Veilig in Jezus' armen! Een echo, Nieuw-Testamentisch, van de woorden van Mozes, bijna zijn laatste woorden: "en van onderen eeuwige armen!" Ook daar armen van God. Het oogpunt een weinigje anders, want die armen zijn daar *onder* ons. Het Volk wordt daar gezien, als het kleine wicht, dat veilig is in de armen van Moeder die onder haar zijn. Toch wezenlijk hetzelfde als de deur, de poorten, de armen van Jezus: **INGANG IN DEN HEMEL DER ZALIGHEDEN.**

Want dat was het visioen dat volgt. Johannes heeft het voltooid Koninkrijk gezien, daar boven bij God!

Ziet ge, geliefde lezer, Jezus heeft het verdiend om dien hemel voor ons te ontsluiten. Dat zal Johannes zoo aanstonds onder een ander beeld getoond worden. Als er niemand was die de zegelen kon verbreken, dan gaat Johannes bitterlijk weenen. Doch dan wordt hij vertroost door een ouderling, die hem het heuglijke feit van Gods historie meldt: De Leeuw van Juda's stam heeft overwonnen: het boek zal genomen, en de zegelen verbroken. En die symbolische taal komt toch immers hier op neer: het Koninkrijk komt!

Ja, Jezus heeft den hemel geopend.

Hij heeft de sleutel Davids: Hij sluit en niemand opent: dat is tegen de verworpenen.

En Hij opent en niemand sluit: dat geldt den uitverkoornen.

Evenwel, denkt er aan: het opendoen van den hemel der zaligheden voor de gekenden, beteekende voor Hem om door het voorportaal der hel binnen te treden en de eeuwige smart van den dood te lijden. De Smarten van Messias spellen de geopende Deur des hemels voor U, mijn broeder!

Moet ik dat aanschouwelijk voorstellen?

Zooeven zeide ik, dat de geopende deuren en de uitgebreide armen van God wezenlijk hetzelfde zijn.

Welnu, gaat met mij naar Hoofdschedelplaats!

Let op dien Man die in het midden hangt: Zijn armen zijn uitgebreid, ik verzeker U, dat zij uitgebreid zijn. Ze kunnen ook niet terug: er zitten lange, sterke spijkers door die handpalmen.

Zuivere Gereformeerde theologie eischt, dat we klein en groot inprenten, dat de mensch niets tot zijn zaligheid kan toedoen. Ik heb er niets op tegen, maar ik wilde U toch wijzen op een soort van meehelpen met God: wij hebben die armen op het kruis uitgebreid. Ik denk hier aan een versje, dat lieflijk en waar is: Ik dacht er niet aan, dat ik zelf door mijn schuld Zijn kroon had gevlochten, Zijn beker gevuld.

O, ja, we gaan zeker ten hemel in, maar het gaat door het Bloed, dat o zoo goede dingen spreekt, beter dan het bloed van Abel.

Zoo zijn de poorten der gerechtigheid opengedaan. En mag die arme, en toch zoo rijke Oud-Testamentische zanger gerust zingen: Ontsluit, ontsluit voor mijne schreden de poorten der gerechtigheid! Door deze zal ik binnen treden! En loven 's Heeren majesteit!

Ziet ge die geopende poorten?

Johannes zag ze.

En na dezen zag ik en zie: een deur was geopend in den hemel!

Er zijn er niet veel die zien wat Johannes zag. De natuurlijke mensch is blind en hard en goddeloos. Spreekt ge toch tot hem over die geopende deur, dan moet ge oppassen. Hij haat God en alles wat van God en Zijn hemel spreekt.

Luistert naar Jezus: Voorwaar, voorwaar, zeg Ik U: Tenzij dat iemand wederomgeboren worde, hij kan het koninkrijk Gods niet zien!

Vreeselijke waarheid! De natuurlijke mensch is blind voor de dingen van het geestelijke Koninkrijk.

Daarom ziet hij de geopende deur ook niet.

Het neemt de Almachtige kracht van den Heiligen Geest om U dat gezicht op die Deur te geven.

En Hij geeft dien Geest alleen aan Zijn van voor den grondslag der wereld gekenden.

Johannes was er één van.

En hun totaliteit is als het zand der zee.

Kom hier op!

Ziet ge den geopenen hemel? Dan hoort ge ook het Woord van God. Die twee gaan samen.

Daarom hoorde ook Johannes de stem die eerst tot hem gesproken had, de stem van Hem wiens verschijning ons gegeven wordt in het eerste hoofdstuk. De stem van Jezus.

De stem weerklinkt als eener bazuin.

De stem van God door Jezus Christus den Heere, is sterk, doordringend, helder en klaar. Want zij weerklinkt als eener bazuin.

Zoo is het met de eigendommelijke stem van God. Men streed zóó lang en zóó heftig over de roeping die ook het deel is van vele verworpenen. Sommige arme menschen dwaalden in dezen. Eigenlijk maakten zij nooit de onderscheiding tusschen inwendige en uitwendige roeping. Ze waakten(?) voor een te groote vernedering van den mensch.

Maar de stem als die eener bazuin hier, is de stem van Jezus die altijd gehoord en gehoorzaamd wordt. Zonder ook maar één uitzondering door de eeuwen heen. Jezus zegt eenvoudig van die roeping: Mijne schapen hooren Mijne stem en zij volgen Mij!

Die roeping hebben we ook hier. Johannes dacht er niet aan om te weigeren hooger op te komen.

Kom hier op! En hij ging, in den geest. Anders kan het niet. Het koninkrijk is geestelijk van aard en wezen.

Ik zal U toonen!

Jezus zal Johannes laten zien de dingen van het voltooide Koninkrijk. Dat zijn de dingen die haast geschieden moeten.

Het zijn dezelfde dingen die in het Boekske staan, het Boekske dat op de hand van Hem lag die op den troon zat.

Straks neemt Jezus dat boek uit de hand van God, omdat Hij recht heeft en macht om de dingen van het komende Koninkrijk te doen gebeuren. Hij zal zegelen verscheuren, bazuinen doen weerklinken en fiolen van toorn Gods doen uitstorten over de hoofden der goddeloozen.

En met en door alle die dingen komt het Koninkrijk!

En het voltooide Koninkrijk wordt in dit gezicht door Jezus aan Johannes getoond. Hoofdstukken 4 en

5 zijn de hemel der zaligheden Gods, zij zijn een nieuwe hemel en een nieuwe aarde. Daarom zingt en jubelt daar alles.

En nu?

Die dingen, getoond aan Johannes, zijn aan 't komen gegaan. En zij komen nog. Doch het tempo wordt al sneller. Het gaat zoo snel het kan. Naar het glorieuze einde. Onze ziel smacht naar het einde van die dingen.

Wat wondere troost is in dit visioen!

Met aangezichten die stralen van blijdschap sterven we. Zelfs de gedachte aan dat geopende graf, morgen of overmorgen, kan die kalme, blijde glimlach niet wegvagen. Ik behoef niet meer te vreezen voor dat geopende graf, waar de hel achter ligt.

Waarom niet?

De hemel is geopend. De poorten der gerechtigheid staan wijd open. De armen van Jezus zijn uitgebreid en Zijn lieflijke stem weerklinkt tot Zijn schapen: Komt allen tot Mij en Ik zal U ruste geven!

En als ge de editie van Mozes bemint, dan antwoordt ge: Zelfs nu, te midden van de wilde beesten ben ik veilig: van anderen zijn de eeuwige armen van mijn God. Ik ben altijd veilig. Wat er ook geschiedt met mij, alle dingen werken mij ten goede, want ik vindt de liefde Gods in mijn hart uitgestort door den Heilige Geest die mij is gegeven. Met andere woorden, ik ben eigenlijk al in den hemel, want mijn Hoofd is daar, en waar het Hoofd is zal ook het lichaam zijn. Elke schrede brengt mij nader tot het Huis van mijn Vader.

En wij zien de heerlijkheden.

Paulus zal ons hier onderwijzen: Maar wij zien Jezus met eer en heerlijkheid gekroond!

En elken Sabbat komen Zijn dienaren en roepen ons toe: Troost U! Troost U! Want Uw strijd is volstreden! Komt hier op! We zullen U toonen de dingen van het voltooide Koninkrijk waarnaar ge verlangt. En we zullen verhalen van Uw deel met God!

En zij zijn gekomen met hoopen om te luisteren, te zingen, te jubelen.

Hier op aarde reeds: en ze begonnen vroolijk te zijn.

Daarom hebben we vrede, zelfs te midden van wereld oorlogen en wanneer de vreeselijke dingen geschieden. Al de verschrikkelijke dingen die geschieden en nog geschieden zullen zijn immers niet anders dan hetgene ons al voor eeuwen getoond is door Jezus?

Let er op: al de ellende, smart, en groote lijden dat kwam, nu is en komen zal, zit onlosmakelijk vast aan de voltooiing van het heerlijke Koninkrijk. En als ons bloed, tranen en ons lijden, zijn dierbaar in Zijn oog.

En alle deze dingen zijn uit God! De open deuren, Jezus aan 't kruis, de komende zaligheden, de lof des Heeren: ze zijn allen de openbaring van Zijn van liefde kloppend hart!

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EDITORIALS

A Substitution

Most of our readers have heard the sad news that our editor, the Rev. H. Hoeksema, suffered a heart attack on Tuesday, June 17th, at Sioux Falls, South Dakota, while en route to California where he intended to spend his vacation. We realize that this notice comes to you at a rather late date. The reason is that the editor had prepared all the material for his three departments in our paper for three months ahead, prior to his vacation in June.

It is a cause for profound gratitude to hear how our beloved brother is recuperating at a fast rate. However, the doctors advise that he take a complete rest from all his labors for an indefinite length of time.

In consequence of this state of affairs, our editor called a meeting of the editorial staff so that we might be able to make arrangements toward the filling of the three rubrics: Meditations, Editorials and Our Doctrine.

This staff meeting was held July 24th and the following decisions were taken: 1. The undersigned was appointed for the rubric Meditations; 2. The Rev. H. Veldman was appointed to fill the rubric Our Doctrine; 3. The undersigned was appointed to write the Editorials, it being understood, however, that the Doekes' controversy shall be held in abeyance until the hoped for recovery of our editor-in-chief; and that, meanwhile, the Rev. Doekes' articles shall be published in the Standard Bearer, together with their translation in English (will the Rev. Doekes kindly take note of this?); 4. It was further decided to retain this year's schedule for all other rubrics, both as to the material and the contributors, for the following year. The list appears on page 495, Vol. 22 of the Standard Bearer; and 5. It is further understood that, according to the editor's wishes, when he again feels capable of taking up any of his rubrics, he may do so at any time simply by informing the substitute for any department.

Allow me to assure our readers that I have accepted this position with mingled feelings of trepidation and trust in God. However, to explain this state of mind and heart is neither edifying nor necessary. This state of affairs is thrust upon us by the hand of God Himself, and therefore, we will carry on. After all, it is His business which we are attending to in our Standard Bearer.

I would close this introductory editorial with the expressed wish and prayer that I may soon receive word from him who is still our Editor: You may be excused from this task! I am able to resume my labors!

And: may the Lord deal kindly with him and give him grace to bear his cross! This visitation is nothing but adorable wisdom!

G. V.

P.S. From the very nature of the case, the article appearing in the Christian Labor Herald of July, 1947, directed to the Rev. H. H., must also wait until the Lord will graciously restore him.

Intolerance

The following announcement appeared in *The Banner* of August 8th:

CONSISTORIES, ATTENTION!

Reliable sources of information state that Prof. Dr. K. Schilder and Rev. D. Van Dyk expect to arrive in our country some time in the month of August to engage in preaching and in speaking engagements to provide information as to the schism which occurred in the "Gereformeerde Kerken of the Netherlands" and led to the organization of a new denomination known as the "Gereformeerde Kerken maintaining Article 31." We beg to inform our consistories and churches that we do not maintain church correspondence with the denomination to which Prof. Dr. K. Schilder and Rev. D. Van Dyk are affiliated, and therefore do not recognize this new denomination as one of our sister churches, and *consequently cannot invite their ministers to speak or preach in our pulpits.*

By order of the Synodical Committee,

R. J. DANHOF, Sec'y.

The italics are Dr. Danhof's.

I do not think it necessary to say much anent this obnoxious bit of intolerance on the part of the Synodical Committee. The thing speaks for itself.

Just this: 1. I wonder where this Synodical Committee obtained its mandate for acts like these. It certainly is not according to sound Reformed Church Polity. Unless the constitution of this Synodical Committee is changed since 1915, they have usurped an authority which is not found in their adopted Constitution. Although we should also understand that acts like these are the natural outgrowth of the hierarchical principles which ever since 1924 and 1925 have characterized the life in the Christian Reformed Churches. Note the closing line: By order of the Synodical Committee! It has the style of an order of the day of a commanding general. The *cannot* in the sentence that appears in italics bears the same stamp. The end is Roman Catholicism. 2. I can understand that the con-

sistories in the Christian Reformed Churches will not ask the brethren to preach for them, seeing there is no sisterly connection between their churches. But they are even forbidden to speak! And that is rank intolerance. The Christian Reformed Churches ought to hear the other side too. 3. The visiting brethren are dogmatically closer to the majority in the Christian Reformed Churches than the other side. It is a matter of common knowledge that the great majority of the leaders of the liberated churches are Heynsian in their conception of the covenant and related matters. Well, that is the view which is prevalent in the Christian Reformed circles today. By far the majority of the officiating ministry in those churches were trained by Prof. Heyns, and the late Professor's views were never condemned, officially or otherwise. This action by the Synodical Committee, therefore, is a grave injustice to the late Professor's memory and work. 4. We will be glad to give the brethren a hearing, and that in spite of the fact that we are opposed to their views on the covenant and related matters. First, because we are really interested in them and their struggle. We would learn firsthand the history and arguments from their side. Second, because we realize that no covenant conception is officially accepted or rejected. The matter is extra-confessional. Third, because the brethren are leaders in a church denomination which is based on the same confessions we have for a basis of unity. We would greet them as brethren in the Lord. 5. We hazard a guess as to what might be the reason for their official rejection, and, remember, it is merely a guess. The Christian Reformed Churches have repudiated Reformed Church Polity such as the liberated churches hold dear; and, they are afraid that the voices of these brethren might inaugurate a possible schism among their churches. Yet, if this guess is true, the Synodical Committee need not be afraid. If they can "get away" with the high-handed and hierarchical way of the above notice, they need fear no schism in such circles! There must be vitality for such action.

But the notice in *The Banner* is a sign of doctrinal, church political and ethical deterioration. I earnestly bewail its appearance.

G. V.

IN MEMORIAM

We hereby express our sympathy to our fellow office-bearer P. Visser, in the loss of his sister,

MRS. CH. AARDEMA

who passed away recently at Doon, Iowa.

May the God of all grace comfort the bereaved.

The Consistory of the Creston Prot. Ref. Church,

John D. De Jong, Pres.

Paul Vanden Engel, Clerk.

Correspondence With The Netherlands

The second article of the Rev. Doekes appeared in *De Reformatie* of July 5, 1947, which article our editor wants me to publish, together with my translation.

The article reads as follows:

WIE GELDT DE BELOFTE?

(Antwoord aan Ds. Hoeksema)

Al eeuwenlang zijn Gods beloften aanleiding tot veel strijd. Een belangrijke oorzaak daarvan moet worden gezocht in de spraakverwarring, die daarbij telkens weer aan 't licht komt. De gevolgen van Babel zijn door den Pinkstergeest wel "in beginsel" overwonnen, maar nog lang niet definitief uitgeroeid. Alleen in den weg van gespannen hooren naar het Woord van dien Geest komen wij door Zijn genade die moeiten te boven.

Dat moet hier allereerst aan de orde komen, nu we gaan spreken over de tweede vraag van ds. Hoeksema. Hij stelt drie mogelijkheden: a) dat de belofte "voor alle gedoopten onvoorwaardelijk geldt"; b) dat zij "voor alle gedoopten is, maar dan voorwaardelijk"; en c) dat zij "voor de kinderen der belofte is", volgens de door ds. Hoeksema en anderen gevolgde exegese van Rom. 9.

Hier komt het aan op een zuiver afwegen van elk woord. Natuurlijk begrijpt ieder, die den verbondsstrijd van de laatste jaren heeft gevolgd, wat de verschillende omschrijvingen van Ds. Hoeksema ongeveer bedoelen. Maar juist in die probleemstelling zit al te vaak het groote gevaar. We hebben de ellende beleefd met een Toelichting en Praeadvies, die voortdurend werkten met onzuivere dilemma's (b.v. de bekende tegenstelling: algemeen aanbod aan alle hoorders óf speciale heilsbelofte aan de uitverkorenen). Aan zulke onzuivere dilemma's is de kerk vaak bijna te gronde gegaan. En daarom is het een weldaad van den Heiligen Geest, als wij ze in waarheid te boven komen. En daarom moeten we elkaar wel vragen: Wat verstaat u daaronder, dat Gods belofte "voor" de gedoopten is? Ja, zeker, die vraag is hier in geding! Het is werkelijk geen haarkloverij, daarover te spreken. Want de strijd is juist ontstaan, doordat men aan zulke woorden een beteekenis ging geven van eigen vinding, los van het concrete spraakgebruik, dat ons in het dagelijksch leven onmiddellijk verstaanbaar is.

Nu geloof ik ds. Hoeksema zuiver te verstaan, wanneer ik zijn gedachte zóó weergeef: als de belofte "voor" iemand is, dan wil dat zeggen, dat hij er een zeker recht op heeft—maar méér nog, dat hij het be-

loofde goed absoluut in bezit krijgt, zoo zeker als twee maal twee vier is, of (om een zuiverder vergelijking te noemen) zoo zeker als eenmaal het einde der wereld komen zal.

In dien gedachtengang past dan de opvatting, dat de belofte alleen "voor" de uitverkorenen is, voor de kinderen der belofte (zocals ds. Hoeksema ze typeert). En van daaruit wordt de conclusie spoedig getrokken, waaraan de synodale theologen ons hier trachtten op te hangen; deze conclusie: de belofte is alléén "voor" de uitverkorenen, en dus (!) mag ik tot den gedoopte en den avondmaalsganger niet met volle rust zeggen: "dit is Christus, Die ook voor u Zijn lichaam liet breken en Zijn bloed vergoten heeft", maar ik moet zeggen of althans er bij denken: ik houd het er voor, dat het zoo is (het oordeel der liefde), maar ik weet niet of u wel uitverkoren zijt, en daarom kunnen we elkaar en onze kinderen hoogstens "houden voor" erfgenamen van het rijk Gods en van Zijn verbond!

Op dit punt begint telkens de tweespalt in de discussie. Voor wie is de belofte? Wat ligt in dat woord "voor"?

Nu geloof ik, dat we goed zullen doen met hier aanstonds datgene vast te stellen, waarover wij het van harte eens zijn, of althans mogen verwachten eens te zijn. Ik bedoel de waarheid, die b.v. in Rom. 11:7 staat uitgedrukt: "de uitverkorenen hebben het verkregen", de overigen niet (vgl. 1 Petr. 2:8, Openb. 17:14 enz.). Met andere woorden: de volkomen heilsvervulling van Gods beloften valt alleen ten deel aan die menschen, die van eeuwigheid daartoe door God zijn uitverkoren naar het welbehagen van zijn wil.

Maar de groote vraag wordt nu deze: is het voldoende, de zoo even beleden waarheid van de vervulling der beloften uit te drukken met dat schijnbaar zoo simpele woordje "voor"? Spreekt de Schrift in dien-zelfden geest, en met diezelfde terminologie? Waarbij dan nog te bedenken is, dat de Schrift een levende, concrete taal spreekt, waaruit wij pas door nauwkeurige vergelijking van den eenen tekst met den anderen een zuiver afgewogen oordeel kunnen vastleggen in één of meer samenvattende termen.

Ik denk hierbij aan een opmerking van ds. Hoeksema zelf, waarop onze hoofdredacteur gewezen heeft in "De Reformatie" van 23 Nov. 1946. Het was ds. Hoeksema opgevallen, dat in de vervangingsformule gezegd wordt: de kinderen der geloovigen zijn in Christus geheiligd, "zoodat zij deel hebben aan de belofte en gesteld zijn onder den eisch des verbonds"; en hij merkte daarbij terecht op: het komt er maar op aan, hoe men die woorden verder uitlegt! Terwijl prof. Schilder er aan toevoegde, dat er groot verschil bestaat tusschen "deelen in de belofte der werking" en "deelen in de beloofde werking". Een dergelijke mogelijkheid van misverstand en onzekerheid moet in onze mondelinge en schriftelijke uiteenzettingen zooveel mogelijk worden uitgebannen. En daarom is de

vraag op haar plaats, of het woord "voor" in dit geval wel afdoende is. Datzelfde moet gezegd worden van ds. Hoeksema's vraag, of de belofte voor alle gedoopten "geldt" of "is", en dan nog nader: "onvoorwaardelijk" of "voorwaardelijk". De ontoereikendheid van de termen speelt hier een groote rol, nu het er op aan komt, de gedachten van de Schrift in onze taal zuiver weer te geven.

Ik kan daarom instemmen met een goed deel van wat J. L. Struik Lzn schreef in "De vrije Kerk" van 25 April 1946 en vervolgens. Ook hij merkt op, "dat het verschil van opvatting over de belofte vastzit op het verschil van gezicht dat men heeft op de bijbeltaal". Om zijn bedoeling te verduidelijken geeft hij het volgende voorbeeld uit de praktijk van het leven:

"Daar zit 's middags een vader aan tafel en belooft zijn kinderen, die met hem zitten te eten: "Vanavond mogen jullie een paar uur langer opblijven, dan hebben we een feestje". Nu is er om 5 uur één jongen erg ongehoorzaam en vader stuurt hem om zes uur, als hij thuiskomende er van hoort, naar bed voor straf. Het genot van het beloofde feest ontgaat hem. De belofte van zijn vader doet hem geen nut, want zij (—de belofte) was in hem (—den jongen) niet met gehoorzaamheid gemengd. Zegt nu die jongen brutaal: "Maar u hebt toch beloofd dat ik op mocht blijven", dan zegt zoo'n vader: "Ja, maar, ik heb het zoo'n ongehoorzaam jongen niet beloofd. Neen hoor, jij bent geen kind. . . !"

Nu is de groote vraag natuurlijk deze: spreekt Gods Woord óók alzo?

Daarop zal ons volgend artikel hebben in te gaan.

L. DOEKES.

Here follows the translation:

UNTO WHOM IS THE PROMISE?

(Reply to the Rev. Hoeksema)

The promises of God have been the occasion for much strife, already for ages. An important cause of this must be sought in the "confusion of tongues" which time and again is brought to light in such struggles. The results of Babel are, indeed, conquered "in principle" by the Spirit of Pentecost, but are not yet definitely eradicated by any means. Only in the way of intense listening to the Word of that Spirit are we able to surmount those difficulties by His grace.

This must be, first of all, brought up for discussion here, since we are going to speak concerning the second question of the Rev. Hoeksema. He posits three possibilities: a. That the promise "is for all that are baptized unconditionally"; b. That (the promise) "is for all that are baptized, but then conditionally"; and c. That (the promise) "is for the children of the

promise' ", according to the exegesis of Rom. 9 which is held by the Rev. Hoeksema and others.

It depends here upon the careful weighing of every word. Every one who has followed the covenant-struggle of recent years will grasp, of course, the approximate meaning of the several definitions of the Rev. Hoeksema. But exactly in this "statement of the problem" do we find, altogether too often, the greatest danger. We have experienced all the misery with an "Elucidation" (Toelichting) and "Pre-Advice" (prae-advies), which continually labored with unsound dilemma's (f.i. the wellknown antithesis: general offer to all that hear or a special promise of salvation to the elect). The Church was often almost brought to ruin with such unsound dilemma's. It is therefore a boon of the Holy Ghost when we may surmount them in truth. For that reason we must ask one another: what do you *understand* when you say: that God's promises are "for" all that are baptized? Yes, indeed, that question is the issue here! It is really no hair-splitting to speak about that. Because the controversy has originated exactly in this that they would give unto such words a significance of their own invention, detached from concrete common parlance, which is immediately intelligible to us in our daily life.

Now then, I believe that I clearly understand the Rev. Hoeksema when I render his idea as follows: when the promise is "for" someone, it means that he has a certain right to it—yea, even more, that he will absolutely obtain possession of the promised good, as surely as two times two are four, or (to use a sounder comparison) as surely as that the end of the world shall ultimately come.

In that line of thought, then, fits the conception that the promise is only "for" the elect, for the children of the promise (such as the Rev. Hoeksema typifies them). And on that standpoint the conclusion is speedily drawn, on which the Synodical theologians would try to hang us, namely, this conclusion: the promise is only "for" the elect, and, therefore(!), I may not in conscience say to the baptized and the communicant: "this is Christ Who allowed His body to be broken and Who shed His blood *also for you*", but I must say, or, at least, harbor the mental reservation: I *take* it that it is so (the judgment of love), but I do not know whether you are elect indeed, and, therefore, at the most we can mutually *take it* that we and our children are heirs of the kingdom of God and of His covenant!

The discord in the discussion originates again and again exactly at this point. For whom is the promise? What is contained in that word "for"?

Now, I believe, that we will do well to establish at once that which we heartily agree on or which we may, at the least, expect to agree on. I have in mind the truth which, f.i., is expressed in Rom. 11:7: "the election hath obtained it", not the others (compare I Pet. 2:8, Rev. 17:14, etc.). In other words: the complete

fulfillment of salvation (heilsvervulling) of God's promises falls to the lot of only that people who are chosen thereunto by God according to the good pleasure of His will.

But the important question at this juncture is this: is it sufficient to express the truth which we confessed above of the fulfillment of the promises, by means of that so seemingly simple little word "for"? Does Scripture speak in that same spirit, and with the same terminology? Whereby we ought to keep in mind that Scripture speaks a living, concrete language, out of which we can fix a soundly weighed judgment in one or more summarizing terms, only by accurate and painstaking comparison of the one text with the other.

I am reminded here of an observation by the Rev. Hoeksema himself, which our editor-in-chief pointed out in "De Reformatie" of Nov. 23, 1946. It struck the Rev. Hoeksema that the substitution-formula read: the children of the believers are sanctified in Christ, "so that they are participants of the promise and are placed under the requirement (eisch) of the covenant"; and he made the correct observation in that connection: it all depends how you further interpret those words! While Prof. Schilder added, that there is a marked difference between "sharing in the *promise* of the operation" and "sharing in the promised operation". A like possibility of misunderstanding and uncertainty must be banned as much as possible from our oral and written expositions. And for that reason the question is in place, whether the word "for" in this connection settles the matter. The same must be said of the Rev. Hoeksema's question, whether the promise "is" for all that are baptized, and then still further: "unconditionally" or "conditionally". The inadequateness of the terms plays here an important part, since it pertains to this, namely, to give a sound rendition of the ideas of Scripture in our language.

For that reason I can concur to a great extent in what J. L. Struik Lzn wrote in "De Vrije Kerk" of April 25, 1946, and also later. He, too, observes, "that the difference of opinion relative the promise depends on the difference of view one has of the *language of the Bible*." In order to clarify his meaning he gives the following example taken from life:

"At noon a father sits at table and *promises* his children who sit with him at dinner: 'tonight you may stay up a few hours longer, and then we shall have a party'. Now at five o'clock one boy is very disobedient and father, coming home at six o'clock and hearing of this, sends him to bed for punishment. He misses the *joy* of the promised party. The promise of the father does *not profit* him, because it (i.e. the promise) was in him (i.e. the boy) not *mixed* with obedience. And if the boy rudely says: 'But you *have promised* that I might stay up', then such a father says: 'Yes, but I did not promise it to such a disobedient boy. Oh no, *you are no child!*'"

The important question is, of course, this: Does the Word of God also speak thus?

Our next article will have to enter into that question.
L. DOEKES.

The words and phrases which the Rev. Doekes placed in spaced type, I have placed in italics.

G. V.

OUR DOCTRINE

Introduction.

The undersigned has been requested to fill the rubric, Our Doctrine, in our Standard Bearer during the present illness of the Editor, the Rev. H. Hoeksema. We accept this appointment because we cannot refuse it, and with the personal desire that our services may not long be necessary. The reader will understand that we venture forth on our new assignment with considerable fear and trepidation. This writer is strongly conscious of the fact that the articles which will appear under the heading, Our Doctrine, cannot begin to approach the material which until now has been presented to our readers. Besides, we believe that this assignment should have been offered to a minister other than the undersigned. We say this not because we would shirk our duty, but because it is our conviction that others are more capable to fill this rubric than we. However, we accept the appointment. We have no other alternative. It is our duty to do what we can during the present illness of our editor. It is our prayer that the Lord, in harmony with His will and eternal wisdom, may continue to restore Rev. Hoeksema to health and strength. And we also pray that our readers may constantly bear in mind that the undersigned is merely attempting to "fill in" and that they may derive some spiritual benefit from these articles.

A word of introduction may be considered in order. It is not the purpose of the undersigned to try to follow painstakingly in the footsteps of him who until now has filled this rubric. We will attempt to present unto *our* readers our treatment of this subject, although we will, of course, avail ourselves of the material which the Lord has given us through the Reverend Hoeksema. We will endeavor to treat our subject practically.

To be sure, doctrine is the crown of life. We understand, I am sure, that doctrine and life are inseparably connected. Without life, spiritual life, no maintaining of sound doctrine is possible. This axiom is verified throughout the history of the church. All departures from the objective testimony of the Holy Scriptures are rooted in man's refusal to serve the Lord as He is.

Carnal man would conform the Lord and His Word unto his own carnal desires. "Every wind of doctrine", writes the apostle, Paul, in Ephesians 4:14, "born in the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." We must not present the matter as if man, ignorant of the truth, is nevertheless groping toward the light and therefore making a serious effort to serve the living God. The very opposite is true. Man rejects the living God and the truth of His Word because he is carnal. And he changes the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like unto corruptible man because that is more in harmony with his own sinful wishes and desires. It is for this reason that the modern church of today proclaims the universal fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man, denies the Incarnation and the atonement, the physical resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, His ascension, and His personal, visible return upon the clouds of heaven. The natural man has no need of such a Savior and consequently distorts and changes the Christ even as they would have Him be. And therefore the people of God must be continually on their guard against their own carnal flesh which always opposes the strictly Divine Word of God. From this we may conclude that no maintaining of sound doctrine is possible without true, spiritual life. The church that becomes carnal will always distort and corrupt the truth of the Word of God.

If, however, it be true that no maintaining of sound doctrine is possible without spiritual life, it is equally true that no life is possible without sound doctrine. God's Word must be a lamp before our feet, and a light upon our path—Ps. 119:105. We cannot entrust the guidance of our footsteps to our own heart and mind. Invariably we would be led astray. The Word of God is the only Divine medium of the revelation of Himself as the God of our salvation. It alone throws light upon our pathway. It alone enables us to fight the good fight of faith against the powers of sin and darkness within us and round about us. Many and skillful are the forces of darkness which are encamped against the church of God in the midst of the world. The only sword which can enable us to ward off every attack and dart of the enemy is the sword of the Spirit and the Word of God. God's Word enlightens our night of sin and guilt and proclaims unto us the righteousness of Jesus Christ, our Lord. God's Word alone enlightens our spiritual night of sin and darkness and guides us in the constant putting off of our old man of sin and the putting on of the new man. And God's Word alone speaks to us of the hope of everlasting life. Without the Word of God we would be hopelessly at sea, wholly incapable of fighting against the forces of sin within and without. We understand, therefore, that, if sound doctrine without life be impossible, life without doctrine is equally impossible.

Besides, we must emphasize in these articles *our*

doctrine. We will emphasize the glorious truth of the Word of God as confessed by our Protestant Reformed Churches. This we will do, the Lord willing, not because we regard the truth of our churches as a pet theory, a sort of hobby-horse which we love to ride. But it is our conviction that the truth of our churches is indispensable to a true, spiritual walk. Sound doctrine and spiritual life are inseparable. And this surely applies to the glorious truth of our churches. "Common Grace", because it proclaims what we and the world have in common, necessarily places the Church of God in the very midst of the world. It is indispensable to know that God is God alone, that He is the Sole Origin of our salvation, that He alone does all things for His own Name's sake, and that He calls us out of darkness into His marvellous light that we may be unto the praise of the glory of His grace and the proclamation of His virtues. How glorious it is for our spiritual life and comfort in the midst of the sin and darkness and the guilt of this world to know that the work of atonement was finished by Jesus Christ, our Lord, and that "the work which He has once begun shall by His grace be fully done." What is our only comfort if not that we belong to our faithful Savior, Jesus Christ, body and soul, and that the God of our salvation has known us in Him even from before the foundation of the world. If that be a pet theory or a hobby-horse, let it be,—we care not. It is the anchor of our salvation, the only sure basis of the Christian's comfort in the midst of the world.

Hence, a practical treatment of our Doctrine does not necessarily imply an ignoring of its theoretic aspect. Fact is, we shall attempt to emphasize our *doctrine*. This lies in the very nature of the case. In the first place, the rubric which the undersigned is expected to fill is entitled "Our Doctrine". This presupposes that these articles will therefore necessarily be doctrinal in content. And, in the second place, how can the church practice the truth except she know that truth?! The truth has made us free. Only in the light do we see the light. In fact, this emphasis upon sound doctrine is all the more urgent in our present day and age which is not characterized by a profound seeking and enquiring after the glorious mysteries of the infallible Word of our God.

Nevertheless, we will attempt to present "Our Doctrine" in a practical and popular style. As stated above, the Word of God is a lamp before our feet and a light upon our path. The Holy Scriptures have been given that the man of God may be perfect and thoroughly furnished unto every good work—2 Tim. 3:16-17. It is, therefore, the very purpose of the Scriptures to lead the people of God upon the way of life, to guide their feet through the midst of the world, to enable them to fight the good fight of faith, and occupy their name and place in this world unto the glory of the living God Who called them out of darkness into His

marvellous light. Life is the purpose and fruit of doctrine. May these articles contribute a little to a richer understanding of the Word of God and of the glorious truths once delivered to our Protestant Reformed Churches. And may we understand that, inasmuch as they have once been delivered unto us, it is our responsibility to know them and to live them.

* * * *

Let us, as a Protestant Reformed people, ask ourselves the question, "Do we love our Confessions?" Are we acquainted with their contents? This, dear reader, is a very pertinent question. It is simply an undeniable fact that a truth-loving church is also a confession-loving church. The history of the church throughout the ages abundantly verifies this. All we need do is look round about us today. Is it not a fact that in the measure that a church has departed from the truth of the Word of God that church has also become less confession-minded? Has it not become the hue and the cry of many churches today, "No creed but Christ." And is it not true of those churches who shout this from the house-tops that they have trampled under foot the most precious truths of the Holy Scriptures? Why is this? And what is our reaction, particularly as Protestant Reformed young people, towards our Confessions, commonly known among us as The Three Forms of Unity?

The objection which is most commonly raised against our having confessions may be considered strange indeed. We are, I am sure, all acquainted with it, more or less. Confessions, it is alleged, are the work of man. And they would be satisfied with nothing less than the Word of God. I call this a very strange and most incongruous objection. What are the facts? Is it not true that the very people who object to the confessions because they are the work of man do not hesitate to humanize the very Word of God? Let us grant this objection for the sake of argument. What, then, do we find? On the one hand, anyone who is somewhat acquainted with our Reformed Confessions will readily admit that they do not extol the work of man but the work of God. They emphasize Divine predestination, man's utter depravity, the particular and efficacious character of Christ's atonement, the need of conversion, the irresistible character of Divine grace, and the certain perseverance of the saints. And, on the other hand, they who object to our confessions, deny these Scriptural truths. They humanize the work of salvation. Man, according to them, decided whether he shall be saved. Divine predestination is either silenced or denied, Christ's death is presented as having occurred for all men, man is not utterly depraved, salvation is offered instead of sovereignly bestowed, and the question whether there is a perseverance of the saints, is left unanswered—see the Five Points of the Remonstrants. Is it not strange to deny on the one hand our confessions because they

are the work of man, and on the other hand to deny the Divine character of the work of salvation? How must we account for this obvious contradiction?

Of course, we do not subscribe to the assertion that our Confessions are the work of man. To be sure, we grant that they were written by men. And we also understand that they are not to be placed on a par with the Word of God. Confessions are binding only insofar as they are based upon the Word of God. And they must also be continuously tested in the light of the Scriptures. A church that loves the truth and recognizes the infallible character of the Holy Scriptures will not blindly accept the Confessions without interpreting them in the light of the Word of God. This does not mean, however, that they are therefore the work of men. For, what are our Confessions? Our Confessions, or Reformed Symbols, are not the work of men but the product of the Church of God even as that Church is led by the Spirit of Christ Jesus into all the truth. This, I believe, is evident from the Confessions themselves. It is only in this light that we can understand their language. Were it not for the fact that our fathers were prompted by the Spirit of God one can never explain why these Reformed Symbols should speak the language they do, a language which glorifies the living God and proclaims the Divine character of the work of salvation. Also the Scriptures teach us, however, that our Confessions must be regarded, not as the work of men, but as the product of the Church as that Church is led by the Spirit of Christ Jesus. Did not the Savior, upon His ascension to the right hand of His Father and His reception of all power and glory and wisdom and honor, comfort His disciples with the promise that he would send the Spirit Who would lead them into all the truth?

Hence, what are our Confessions? And we answer without hesitation that they are the product of the Church as that Church is led by the Spirit into all the truths of the Word of God. Mind you, they are the products of *the Church*. It is of the utmost importance that we see this point. They are not the work of an individual. They are the work of the Church, the Body of Christ Jesus in whom the Spirit of all truth dwells. They are not even the work of children of God, however noble and pure their motives and intentions may be. They are brought forth by the Church, the organic body of our Lord Jesus Christ. This implies that the Church gathers as the Church of God, not individualistically, but organically, and that that Church convene under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in prayerful subjection unto His will, with the earnest desire and longing in her heart and soul that that Spirit may lead them into all the truth.

To understand this procedure we must bear in mind the position of the Church of God in the midst of the world. That Church of God loves the truth of the Word of God. That Church proclaims that truth.

However, we are as yet in the midst of this world. And that wicked world hates the truth of the Scriptures. They attack the truths which God's people confess and profess here below. They proclaim heresies. They hurl at the Church of God every wind of doctrine which are born in the sleight of men, who use cunning craftiness to deceive the Church of the living God. We cannot at this time trace these attacks of evil men throughout the ages. And now the Church convenes under prayerful subjection to the Holy Spirit to answer these evil attacks upon the Word of God. And the Spirit leads her into the truth of the Scriptures and enables her to refute these heresies with the Word of God which is the sword of the Spirit. Thus are brought forth the confessions which the people of God so dearly cherish and for which they have been willing in ages past to shed their life-blood.

We now also understand why a truth-loving church is also a confession-loving church. These confessions are the product of the Church of God as she was led by the Spirit of Christ Jesus. Does it not border on conceit for anyone to ignore or despise these symbols of the Church of God? Does it not leave a strange impression upon us when any individual or group of individuals ignores this work of the Spirit of God in His Church throughout the ages? And is it not somewhat repulsive, yea, should it not be repulsive to us when so little regard is shown for all the blood of martyrs which has been shed in the past whereby the people of God have sealed their confession of the truth of the Word of God. To love God and the Spirit of God in Christ Jesus surely implies that we will also love the work of that Spirit in His Church in the past.

These confessions are of great importance to the Church of God. Firstly, they are the means by which the Church as a whole can express her faith over against the world, or by means of which a group of churches can express their faith over against other churches. It is, of course, the Divine calling of the Church to be a living testimony of the grace of God, to let her light shine everywhere, and to give constant expression of what she believes to be the truth revealed in the Word of God. Our Confessions are a wonderful means for our churches to be such a testimony over against the world and also other churches who have deviated from the clear teachings of the Holy Scriptures.

Secondly, they are the means to preserve the truth as it is delivered down the line of generations and through all the ages. God develops His covenant throughout the ages from generation to generation. His Church is gathered organically. And, as these truths are handed down within the Church from generation to generation, our Confessions are a wonderful means unto this development and preservation of the truth.

Thirdly, they can serve as a bond of union, upon

the basis of which churches of one belief can unite. This, for example, is also true of our Protestant Reformed Churches, united, as we are, upon the Three Forms of Unity: the Heidelberg Catechism, the 37 Articles of Faith, and the Canons of Dordrecht. And, as such, they also serve to preserve unity within the fellowship of those churches who have thus united.

And, fourthly, they are wonderful means of instruction. This hardly needs any elucidation. Instruction in our various classes in our Confessions is surely admirably suited unto our mutual increase in all the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ and in the grace of our God.

* * * *

We shall attempt, in this series of articles under the heading, "Our Doctrine", to discuss the fundamental truths of Holy Writ as they have been systematically arranged in the various loci of our dogmatics and which loci generally follow the line as given us in our Confession of Faith, the 37 Articles. We shall attempt to be as practical and as popular as we possibly can. Much is in favor of this procedure. First of all, the undersigned will then have a rich source from which to draw. Years ago, the Reverend Hoeksema wrote along these lines in the Holland language. These articles will, of course, furnish the present writer with valuable information. Secondly, we believe that there is a crying need in our churches for articles of this nature in the language of the land. Much of the Standard Bearer in the past has been written in the Holland language. A systematic discussion of our doctrine in the English language will, undoubtedly, fill a need in our churches, especially for our Protestant Reformed young people.

Thirdly, the undersigned is fully aware of the task unto which he has set himself, and the severe limitations of his ability to fulfill this task. He welcomes any suggestion which will serve the interests of this rubric. May our God bless the efforts put forth by him and may they be used by Him unto the glory of His name and our mutual increase in the knowledge of the grace of Him Who is the God of our salvation in Christ Jesus, our Lord. And we humbly trust that our young people will avail themselves also of this opportunity to become founded in the blessed truths of the Word of God, to read not only these articles but the entire Standard Bearer, in order that our paper may continue to be a blessing in the midst of our Protestant Reformed Churches.

H. V.

IMPORTANT NOTICE!

Will all those who plan to attend the coming conference at Sutton, Nebr., send their names to the Rev. U. Zogg, Sutton, Nebraska, so that he can arrange for their lodging?

THE DAY OF SHADOWS

The Lord Saves Israel

So has Saul not kept the commandment of his God. He chose the way of disobedience, thus of death and ultimate destruction. In punishment of his sin, his kingdom will not be established. No son of his will succeed him on the throne. As to Samuel, having pronounced over the king the sentence of God, he was silent though he had come to the king with divine instructions for the war with the Philistines that is pending. What these instructions were is not revealed; but it is certain that the execution had called for implicit faith in God in that terrible crisis. This, doubtless, explains the seer's reticence, his having refrained from telling the king what he should do. The king could not have heard, as he is devoid of faith. He believes not in wonders. And as it is only by the hand of one who believes in wonders that Israel can be saved from this dreadful hour, Samuel, having pronounced sentence, arose and gat him up from Gilgal and so out of Saul's presence unto Gibeah of Benjamin, here to pray for the people. For that, according to his own words, he may not cease to do. And the Lord answers his intercessions. He sends deliverance.

As to Saul, left to himself to determine what he should do, he chose to do nothing at all. He can make no other choice. For the plight of Israel is hopeless and the king, though a brave man, has no faith. So, in company with Jonathan and with the men that are still with him—he has counted them and found their number to be about six hundred—Saul takes up his position in Gibeah, Benjamin, the place where Jonathan broke up that Philistine garrison a short while ago. And there in the uttermost parts of Gibeah under a pomegranate tree in Migron (14:12) Saul again sits still, afraid to bestir himself, while the Philistines, operating from their base in Michmash, every day are overrunning the land and plundering the people of Israel. So the narrative tells us at chapter 13:16-18. The spoilers went out in three companies, it is related. "One company turned to the way that leadeth to Ophrah, unto the land of Shual; and another company turned to the way of Bethhoron; and another company turned toward the way of the border that looked to the valley of Zeboim toward the wilderness." As all these places lie in the territory of Benjamin and Judah, it is the allotments of these tribes that form the theatre of the marauding expeditions of the enemy. So are the Philistines doing much as they please in God's house, their purpose being also to demonstrate to the world how they have God's people at their mercy with God standing by unable to come to the rescue of His own devotees. Such are their vain imaginings. And Saul

does nothing about it, not because he is a coward but because he has no faith; he believes not in wonders. He makes not God his expectation, but trusts in the arm of flesh. And that arm has now failed him. The people have deserted him almost to a man. And there is neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people that are with him. And the military might of the Philistines is terrific. So what can Saul do but sit still? His army numbers but six hundred unarmed men. Yet, this only means that it still is double the size of that Gideon band, also unarmed, by which the Midianite hordes had been routed. But that was a wonder of God's grace; and Saul believes not in wonders.

And the people, too, have no faith. For they seek safety in flight; and the rest of them—the six hundred—follow Saul tremblingly, the text tells us. Yet, it must not be overlooked that they do not flee as did the others but hold their ground, despite the fact that Israel's plight is hopeless. The conjecture is warranted, therefore, that they belong to the faithful in Israel, are men who, despite their trembling—and who would not tremble in this dreadful hour—stand firm in the faith that for His name's sake, the Lord will deliver His people, however ill-deserving that people may be. And the expectation of these faithful ones is not put to shame. The Lord again works through Jonathan his chosen instrument and workmanship. For, as was said, what Saul lacks, Jonathan possesses as a gift of God—he possesses a living faith in Christ and is thus meet for the Master's use. Jonathan believes in wonders.

So on a day Jonathan proposes to the young man that bears his armour that the two of them pass over to the detachment of enemy troops that forms the outpost of the Philistine camp in Michmash and whose task it is to protect against surprise attacks of the Hebrews. The young man is ready for anything that Jonathan may be planning, as is plain from his reply. "Do all that thy heart turn thee; behold, I am with thee, according to thy heart," said he to Jonathan. This young man is the only one in whom Jonathan confides. He tells no one else, not even Saul, his own father. Doubtless he fears that the unbelieving Saul will forbid the venture. Jonathan has smitten a Philistine garrison once before, the one stationed in Gibeah, the place of Saul's present encampment. That, indeed, was a remarkable accomplishment. But what good came out of it? No good whatever, only evil. The incensed Philistines came upon the land in their full military might and, in retaliation of that blow, are now spoiling the Lord's heritage as they choose. And now Jonathan wants to attack that enemy outpost in Michmash. Should that be allowed? All that Jonathan can hope to accomplish is the slaying of another handful of Philistines. And that will be suicidal for Israel. The Philistines will arouse themselves to the practic-

ing of even greater atrocities on God's country and people. This time their wrath will know no bounds. Let Jonathan then forbear. The crisis will pass. Those Philistines are family men, aren't they? Sooner or later they will want to return, each to his own hearth, with the understanding, of course, that the people of Israel desist from any further attempt to throw off their yoke. Life in Canaan will again at least be bearable.

Such, Jonathan knows, will be Saul's reasoning. And therefore he tells not his father. For Jonathan is differently disposed, as is evident even from his characterization of the Philistines. In communicating his plan of action to his armor-bearer, he calls them uncircumcised, meaning to say that in his mind they stand out as a wicked race of God-defying men, who will to imagine that they can harass God's people to their heart's content with the Lord unable to do anything about it. Indeed, such are their evil imaginings; and therefore as spoilers of God's people, they are consciously blaspheming God. On this account alone the presence of the Philistines in Canaan is intolerable to Jonathan and to every true Israelite. Jonathan is grieved in his soul. "Come," said he to the young man, "and let us go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised. . . ." And he does not first seek the consent of Saul for his venture. For he knows that Saul will forbid it. And that will only oblige him openly to disobey his father and king. For Jonathan's calling is clear to him. He must unsheath his sword against those uncircumcised. For the Philistines are defying the Lord God of Israel, and killing His people all the day long.

But there are only the two of them, Jonathan and his armor-bearer, two against thousands. But Jonathan is unafraid; for he has convictions. "It may be," says he to the young man, "that the Lord will work for us: for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few." There is nothing that can hinder the Lord from choosing to do either." Such is the obvious meaning of the second of the two clauses. And the thought underlying it is, that the Lord, being what He is—God—is His own horses and chariots; that His people fight the good fight as His workmanship, created unto good works that they should walk in them, thus fight this fight as the sheep of His pasture, raised up and prepared by Him for His warfare; that therefore the victory can be solely His, and, as such, His gift to His people; that, on this account, numbers can mean nothing to Him, and that likewise it should mean nothing to Jonathan and his armor-bearer, so far as the success of their venture is concerned, that they are but the two of them. The victory will be theirs as truly as it would be, were they many.

"And it may be," says Jonathan, "that the Lord will work for us", for Jonathan and his armor-bearer and the Israel to whom they belong. "It may be. . . ."

These words, as Jonathan's own, form not an expression of doubt but of the humbleness of spirit and the contrition of heart of a true Israelite. They are words by which Jonathan is saying that he is a man unclean and that the people to whom he belongs and in whose midst he dwells is a sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, least deserving of salvation and life and most deserving of the bondage and death in which they are now being held. Only recently they asked for a king because they did not want the Lord to reign over them; and they had to be terrified by the Lord's thunderings into confessing that great sin. And the king that was set over them is an unbeliever, who already has indicated that he is determined to rule without God and His directing word. Such is the people for whom the Lord will now again work. For He is God and that people He possesses in Christ.

Jonathan's withdrawal from the camp goes unnoticed by Saul. For "Saul tarried in the uttermost parts of Gibeah," that is, at some distance from the place of encampment of Jonathan, so the narrator means to explain. The people, too, are ignorant of Jonathan's leaving. So he wants it. His reliance on God for the success of his undertaking does not make him careless. He is taking no unnecessary risks.

Mention is also made of two rocks that go by the name of Bozez and Senah respectively. As the narrative contains a detailed description of their position, they must be important, though what this importance may be the text does not reveal. They lie between the passages that lead to Michmash. The former of the two has a tooth-like projection situated northward over against Michmash and the latter fronts Gibeah. In all likelihood the rock Senah is occupied by the enemy garrison to be attacked by Jonathan, while the other, Bozez, is the outlook of Saul's watchmen; and herein perhaps lies their significance. As the enemy outpost is surrounded by forest (14:25), which stretch all the way towards Bethel (II Kings 2:23, 24), Jonathan and his armor-bearer can pursue their way without being observed by the men of the garrison; and therefore the tactic that Jonathan fixes upon is to surprise the men of the enemy outpost by the both of them suddenly disclosing themselves to them at the base of their stronghold.

How Jonathan leans on the Lord for the success of an undertaking that from the point of view of nature can end only in disaster for the Hebrews, is also plain from his fixing upon the sign of the Lord's willingness to work for them. Arriving at the base of the enemy outpost, the both of them, Jonathan and his armor-bearer, will discover themselves to the men of the garrison. If the enemy say to them, "Be still till we come to you," they will stand still in their place and will not go to them. On the other hand, should the answer of the enemy be, "Come up unto us," then, in this case," said Jonathan to his armor-bearer, "we will

go up: for the Lord hath delivered them into our hand; and this shall be a sign unto us," this, the reply of the enemy, "come up unto us."

As Jonathan has planned, so it is done. Catching sight of them, the Philistines, the men of the garrison, say, "Behold, the Hebrews come out of the holes where they had hid themselves." This is the speech of men that mock and jeer; and apparently with reason. For they are the many, and a couple of Hebrews defy them. But though they mock, they are surprised and and troubled nevertheless. For they dare not leave their position to venture into the wooded regions below, fearing that Jonathan and his armor-bearer are not alone. Say they not, "the Hebrews come out of their holes. . .," as though there were many of them? So, when Jonathan presents to those mockers the opportunity for choosing between the two courses that he previously fixed upon, they reply, "Come up unto us," 'come, the two of thee and all that may be with thee,' "and we will show thee a thing." Verily, they are afraid. Yet, how they do boast! But Jonathan is persuaded. "Come up after me," says he to his armor-bearer, "for the Lord hath delivered them into the hands of Israel,"—delivered them: the entire Philistine host as including all its horses and chariots, and thus not merely that small detachment of mocking, jeering, but sorely troubled Philistines directly overhead—delivered them into the hands of Israel, of Christ—Israel is Christ—and of the people in Christ. The Lord *hath delivered* them into the hands of Israel, so that the victory is already theirs in Christ in whom they are more than conquerors. For this is the sign. And Jonathan climbs up on his hands and on his feet and his armor-bearer after him. There is not the trace of a doubt in his soul that the challenge of the enemy is the sign that they have been delivered into Israel's hands.

But how does he know? There is but one answer: The Lord tells him in his heart so that he is assured—tells him, however, by what the challenge reveals of the men that uttered it, which is that they are afraid. Hence that sign—the challenge—is not by itself a meaningless thing, so that Jonathan could just as well have said to his armor-bearer, "If they say unto us, tarry until ye come unto you, then we will go up. . . ." The sign, that challenge, has meaning indeed. As a sign, it is the Word of God, beseaking the fear of the Philistines and on this account the readiness of God to deliver His people for Christ's sake. And with this word in his heart, as put there by the Lord, Jonathan is assured; the sign pledges him God's help and salvation.

In the final instance, then, the sign is the fear of the adversary as reflected in their challenge. The Philistines already are in the grip of the terror of God; and beholding, Israel knows, as taught by the Lord, that the salvation of the Lord is pending. So it

always had been in the past. Joshua told the people, who murmured at the hearing of the evil report of the spies, that they must not rebel against the Lord in their fear of the people of the land: "for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them (on account of the Lord's laying His terror upon their hearts. Such is the implication): for the Lord is with us: fear them not." And the testimony of Rahab the harlot was to the same effect. Said she to the two spies whom she was concealing in her house, "I know that the Lord hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you." That fainting of the Canaanites—a fainting worked by the Lord—was to Rahab the sign, the certain indication, that the Lord had given the land of her people to Israel. And the crafty Gibeonites, who beguiled Joshua into making a league with them, were of an identical conviction. Said they to Joshua, "Because it was certainly told thy servants, how the Lord God had commanded His servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land before you, therefore we were sore afraid of our lives because of you, and have done this thing."

And so, too, the Philistines of our narrative. They are afraid. The terror of God is upon them. The very tactic that Jonathan employs—his suddenly appearing with his companion at the base of the Philistine outpost—has been fixed upon by him in the confidence that the Lord would use it to terrify the enemy. And the Lord does so. He works for His servants. Jonathan and his armor-bearer disclose themselves and the men of the garrison conclude that the Hebrews come out of their holes; while the sad fact is that the Hebrews are still in their holes. The men of the garrison are afraid; that is their trouble. But they mock and jeer and boast nevertheless, little realizing that the words they utter form the very sign of their being in Israel's hands. This, too, is the Lord's doing. He worketh for His servants. It is He who moved the Philistines to utter just those words. As encouraged by the sign, Jonathan goes up, he and his armor-bearer, as unobserved by the men of the garrison overhead, who have no idea that their challenge has been accepted. As unobserved by these men, the Lord's servants go up. For the narrative states that they climb upon their hands and their feet. Thus also their appearance on the top of the elevation is again sudden and unexpected.

And the men of the garrison are gripped by a paralyzing fear. Jonathan falls upon the foremost of his opponents and his armor-bearer slays after him; and presently there lie dead on the ground twenty men of the garrison in "as it were an half acre of land, which a yoke of oxen might plow." The tidings of this first killing spread with lightning rapidity. At the same time, the Lord sends an earthquake; and the

terror of the Philistines multiplies a thousand fold and spreads throughout the enemy camp. For by the quaking of the earth, they are made to perceive that the Lord is present amongst them in His great wrath and power and that He fighteth for His people. To quote the text, "There was trembling in the host in the field, and among the people: the garrison and the spoilers, they also trembled, and the earth quaked: thus it was a great trembling."

The entire host of the Philistines is now seized by a wild tumult. For the fear of the Philistines translates itself into action. The Philistines flee at top speed, as driven by one purpose, which is that they save themselves out of the hands of God and His people. And as they go, each beats down the other in his mad effort to clear the way for himself. "Every man's sword was against his fellow," reads the text. Verily, the Philistine camp has become a veritable house of slaughter and death with the Philistines both the slayers and the victims. To the watchmen of Saul, who look, the entire enemy host takes on the appearance of a mass of humans that literally melts away. And the clash of arms, the sound of chariots that crash, the shouts and yells of the fleeing, and the shrieks and groans of wounded and dying men and beasts fill the air and blend so as to make a great noise that rises from the camp and can be heard for miles around. It is all the Lord's doing. He worketh for His people. The prayers of all saints has again been answered, "Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God. But let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God; yea, let them exceedingly rejoice." Ps. 68:1-3.

G. M. O.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

The Lord willing, on the 2nd of September, our dear parents

BEN VELDKAMP

and

MRS. BEN VELDKAMP (nee Kok)

hope to celebrate their 30th wedding anniversary.

Our hope and prayer is that they may be spared for each other and for us, for many years to come.

Their grateful children: Mr. and Mrs. Peter D. Swieter
William
Mr. and Mrs. Engbert Veldkamp
Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Veldkamp
Harry
Bena
Fanny
Bernard Robert
Arnold Henry
Gerald Walter
and 3 grandchildren.

Grand Rapids, Mich.

SION'S ZANGEN

Den Heere Dienen Met Blijdschap

(Psalm 100)

Toen we dezen psalm bestudeerden, dachten we onwillekeurig aan een schoonen tekst uit Jesaja. Ik heb het oog op hoofdstuk 64, vers 5. Daar staat: "Gij ontmoet den vroolijke en die gerechtigheid doet, degenen die Uwer gedenken op Uwe wegen; zie, Gij waart verbolgen omdat wij gezondigd hebben; in dezelfde is de eeuwigheid, opdat wij behouden wierden."

Ja, we hebben hier dezelfde zaak als in dat vers van Jesaja. Ook daar wordt den mensch Gods beschreven, die al jubelende gerechtigheid pleegt. Ze loven God op Zijn wegen. Dat is ook de ware godsdienst.

Deze psalm is een lofpsalm. Het is goed dat er zulke psalmen zijn. De Heere heeft er voor gezorgd, dat er woorden en jubelende klanken zijn in Zijn Woord, zoodat we ze op onze lippen mogen nemen, vertolkende wat in het diepe hart popelt.

Hebt ge er wel eens op gelet, dat er voor elke toestand uwer ziel een psalm is? Daarom ben ik er van overtuigd, dat de Kerk van Christus geen wezenlijke behoefte heeft aan gezangen.

Er zit een profetische klank in dit gezang.

De Heilige Geest roept de gansche aarde op om den Heere te loven.

Dat leek er niet veel op toen de zanger in Israel dit lied inzette. Het licht dat van Zijn aangezicht straalde verlichtte Israel, het heilige land, de Joden, de Oud-Testamentische kerk, doch het heidendom, de rest der aarde, lag nog in de boeien der duisternis gekluisterd. De gansche aarde bevuilde zich in onuitsprekelijke zonden. Wel verre van de Heere te loven, bogen zij zich voor de stomme afgoden.

Maar de zanger van dit lied stond in het licht der profetie, en hij zag in de verten der tijden de zoekende, vindende en trekkende armen van Jehovah-God! Gij gansche aarde, looft den Heere! Die klank is overgenomen door de zendelingen. Zij kwamen eindelijk óók bij de Batavieren aan: Gij heidenen, looft den Heere! En Uwe en mijne vaders hebben het gehoord. Het goddelijk wonder is aan hen geschied: zij bogen zich in aanbidding voor den Heere neder in het stof. Langzamerhand kwamen er heiden-vaders en heiden-moeders die tot hunne kleine lievelingen zeiden: Buigt nu jullie kleine knieën en zegt het ons na: 'k Leg mij neder om te slapen, Goede God! die altijd waakt! Wil mij in Uw gunst bewaren, als het kwade mij genaakt! Ach, vergeef toch al mijn zonden! Zoo leg ik mijn hoofdje neer, opdat morgen bij 't ontwaken *U de lof zij toegebracht!* Amen! O ja, ze zijn begonnen te loven *over de gansche aarde.*

En het loven is juichen geworden.

Men juicht om te kennen te geven, dat men vol is van geluk en zaligheid. Om het den mensch, en meer nog, God te kennen te geven, dat wij zóó heel blijde zijn. We juichen en zingen om het den Heere te vertellen, dat wij in Hem al ons vermaak vonden.

En dat juichen is nu gehoord over de gansche aarde. De aarde heeft de gebiedende stem van den Heiligen Geest gehoord en gehoorzaamd. Want die Stem klonk eigendommelijk, d.w.z., onwederstaanbaar. Dat dit zóó is, en niet anders kunt ge leeren uit het derde vers, een vers, dat gehaat wordt in de Pelagiaansche kringen. We zullen er straks bij stil staan.

Nu zullen we eerst luisteren naar de verklaring van het juichen.

Dient den Heere met blijdschap, komt voor Zijn Aangezicht met vroolijk gezang!

Hier hebt ge het geheim van den waren Godsdienst.

Wilt ge God ontmoeten? Wilt ge het heerlijkste dat maar denkbaar is op aarde genieten, namelijk, dat God U ontmoet? Dan moet ge vroolijk zijn in het doen van gerechtigheid. Dan moet ge den Heere dienen met blijdschap.

Gaat ge graag naar de kerk? Is het U een genot om het geklank van het Evangelie te hooren? Is er een hunkering in U naar de voorhoven waar het volk vergadert? Moogt ge met innige blijdschap verkeerren op die eigenaardige plaats op aarde, waar alles U aan God herinnert? Ik heb het oog op het kerkgebouw. Kom aan, laat ons eens zien. Het is de dag van God, het Huis van God, het volk van God, het Woord van God, de Geest van God, het lied van God, het werk van God, de Wet van God, het Evangelie van God, de Christus Gods, de zaligheid van God: in één woord, het is de dienst van God! O, ik kan er in komen, dat David verre van Gods Huis zuchtte, en smachtte, en verlangde en treurde: Wanneer zal ik ingaan en voor Uw aangezicht verschijnen. Wat denkt ge, dat de hemel is, anders dan wat we U hierboven opsomden? Mijn onvergetelijke moeder was zeer eenvoudig. Ik vroeg haar eens, nu vele jaren geleden: Moeder, hoe ziet het er in den hemel uit? En zij zeide: In den hemel, mijn kind, zitten duizenden en duizenden van kinderen Gods in lange reien op stoelen, en zij doen niet anders dan psalm 42 zingen! Als klein kind heeft dat antwoord mij bevredigd. Op lateren leeftijd, toen ik er over nadacht, heb ik in mijn meerdere wijsheid (?) er om geglimlacht. En nu, nu ik ouder ben, heb ik vaak gedacht: Moeder was niet ver mis toen zij haar eenvoudige definitie van den hemel gaf.

De hemel is Psalm 42 zingen? Ja, maar dan de hemelsche editie van dien psalm. Ik mocht ook zeggen: het centrale thema van dat lied. En wat is het wezen, de centrale gedachte van dat onvergelykelyke lied? Dit: Ik heb U hartstochtelyk lief, o God mijn God! Ik vind al mijn vermaak in de opsomming Uwer deugden, mitsgaders het mogen smaken van die deugden. Het

volk, dat het gegeven is om die deugden te zien, ze lief te hebben en te ervaren, dat volk is vroolijk in den Heere, en dient Hem met groote vroolijkheid.

En de spoorslag, de aanmoediging tot die vroolijkheid zit in den Naam. Dat is het volgende vers. "Weet, dat de Heere God is!"

De Heere is de Verbonds-Jehovah. Als zoodanig is Hij de Rots, die van geen wankelen weet. De Heere is de eeuwig Getrouwe, die altijd zijn gelofte gestand doet. Hij bewees dat op Golgotha. Tusschen Hem en het ingaan in Gods Huis in den hemel van de van eeuwigheid gekenden lag de schuld der zonde. Zijn gelofte was: Mijn volk zal tot in alle eeuwigheid zijn tot prijs Mijner heerlijkheid! Maar er was het vreeselijke feit der zonde en der schuld. Maar Hij is de Heere! Welnu, Hij bewees dat.

Hij komt neder in de gestalte van een slaaf: en dat is Jezus van Nazareth. In den naam van Jezus zit de naam van Jehovah. En de Heere openbaart Zich in Zijn onbegrijpelijke Bondstrouw: Hij gaat aan het vervloekte hout hangen voor U en mij, mijn broeder!

En die Heere is God!

Daar zit een verder element in om van te zingen met groote vroolijkheid.

De Heere is God, wil zeggen, dat Hij de goedheid en de kracht heeft om het Heere-zijn uit te werken. Hij kan maken! En Zijn maken is een mirakel. Luistert maar naar het verdere lied: Hij heeft ons gemaakt (en niet wij), Zijn volk en de schapen Zijner weide! Geliefden, ik jubel inwendig bij het lezen van dit vers. Daar kunnen alle Pelagianen hun tanden stomp op bijten!

De Heere is de vreeselijke, almachtige God die *kan* wat Hij wil. Het groote *kunnen* zit in God. En dat kunnen is ook goed. Het is een goede almacht en een almachtige goedheid die de eeuwen gezien hebben.

Hij is aan 't maken gegaan. En het resultaat van dat maken is een volk, een kudde schapen Zijner weide.

Hebt ge gelet op wat er tusschen twee haakjes staat in dit vers? Midden in het relaas van het almachtige werk Gods, zegt de Heilige Geest: Gods kind heeft zichzelf niet tot kind Gods gemaakt. God heeft dat gedaan. Indien dat goed gezien werd door millioenen van belijders van Zijn naam, dan werden vele kerken gesloten, vele leeraars afgezet, vele belijdenissen verbrand, en vele liederen zouden verstommen. Dan werd ook Kalamazoo herroepen. Schoone, aanbiddelijke, lieflijke gedachte. We moeten nog wat wachten. Want het gebeurt zekerlijk. God heeft de notulen van Kalamazoo niet aangenomen. Zijn veto, vreeselijker dan dat van Molotov, staat er tegen: Psalm 14:2, 3; en veel erger, tegen het puntje van het eerste punt: Marcus 4:12. En positief: Rom. 1:16, vooral die heerlijke phrase: "eene kracht Gods tot zaligheid". O, waarom wil men al het werk van dien vreeselijken Heere en God niet erkennen? Waarom moet er iets, hoe klein dan ook, van dat werk Gods aan den mensch

geschonken? EN NIET WIJ! In genen deele, in het geheel niet, niet met al, doen we tot onze making tot volk er bij. Het is al Zijn werk alleen.

Ge zegt: er zijn goede werken, als daar zijn: geloof, zuchten tot God, het uitstorten van ons volle hart in smeeken om vergiffenis of de aanbidding vanwege Zijn lieflijkheid. Het is wel: die goede werken zijn door Hem *voorbereid*, opdat wij in dezelve zouden wandelen.

O, beken het: Hij heeft ons gemaakt tot Zijn volk, tot de schapen Zijner weide. Zoo, en zoo alleen, ontvangt Hij nu en straks alle lof, eer en aanbidding! Met minder kunt ge niet toe. Ik denk in liefde, dat sommigen die het minder maakten ook naar den hemel gegaan zijn. Maar in den hemel zijn ze gewasschen van al die Pelagiaansche vuilheid. Want vuil is het om het werk van God te kleineeren. Waarom maakt ge Hem niet liever groot? En dat kunnen we zelfs niet ten volle doen. Als we straks in den hemel zijn en het waas der zonde ons niet langer parten speelt in de malle, vuile en leelijke verkleining van Gods werken, dan zullen we eeuwiglijk het Hem vertellen: Heere, luister naar mij! NIET WIJ! EN NIET WIJ! GIJ WAART HET EEUWIGLIJK EN ALTOOS!

Ik verheug mij er in, dat die paar kleine woordjes er staan. Tusschen twee haakjes!

O, dat we ze schreven "tot een teeken op onze hand, en tot voorhoofdspannels tusschen onze oogen", want —en leest dan het verdere van het vers in Exodus 13:16: "WANT DE HEERE HEEFT DOOR EEN STERKE HAND ONS UIT EGYPTES UITGEVOERD!"

Zoo staat er een volk voor Zijn aangezicht, de schapen Zijner weide.

De weide van God!

[Het begin van die weide is in der eeuwigheid.

Daar hoor ik het ruischen van een lied der liefde. Daar waren ze Hem troetelkinderen. Daar waren we Zijn vermaking, spelende voor Zijn aangezicht. Daar waren we de voorwerpen van Zijn verbondsmin.

En toen de historie kwam heeft Hij Zijn eeuwige liefde bewezen door voor hen te zorgen, te zorgen! Die zorg is zóó wonderlijk, zóó ongeëvenaard, dat we er van zingen: we zien het maar doorgronden 't niet. Stelt het U voor: we waren verongelukt, zoodat we hel en verdoemenis verdienden; doch Zijn lieflijke zorg heeft ons verschoond: Hij nam onzen druk op Zich, en in alle onze benauwdheden is Hij benauwd geweest.

In de historie heeft Hij ons tot Zich geroepen en ons aan Hem verbonden, steeds hechter, steeds wonderlijker. Adam en Eva riep Hij tot Zich vanuit het kreupelhout, alwaar zij zich verscholen hadden. Abram riep Hij uit der Chaldeen land. Zijn zoon heeft Hij uit Egypte gered. En toen zij zwart waren van dienstbaarheid zijn ze door een sterke rechterhand uitgegaan, om te rusten in Kanaän. Door die bange eeuwen heen is Hij gekomen tot de Zijnen, steeds dichter, totdat Hij voor ons kwam te staan en te midden

van ons wandelde in den Zoon van Zijn rechterhand. Hij kwam zóó dicht bij ons, dat Hij onze smarten overnam en Zijn naam werd Man van Smarten. Zeer dicht en zeer hecht is Hij tot ons gekomen, want na Pinkster woont Hij in ons diepe hart.

En Hij zal blijven komen tot we allen met den Zoon in den boezem des Vaders verkeerden, om nooit weer te dwalen.

De weide Gods? Het is dit: dat Hij Zichzelven aan ons geeft.

En daarbij is onze grootste nooddrift vervuld.

Zullen we dan ook de poorten, Zijne poorten, ingaan? Het volgende vers zegt dat.

Wat die poorten zijn? Ik zal het U zeggen: het zijn de armen van Uw Vader in den hemel, die zich uitbreiden om U te ontvangen en te omvatten. Jezus zeide: Ik ben de Deur der schapen. Gaat die poorten binnen, en gij wordt onthaald. Daar vindt ge het water des levens om niet, en honig uit den Rotssteen.

Gaat die poorten in al zingende. Ge vindt er een flauw beeld van als ge het lieve kind, al lachende, zich tot Moeder ziet spoeden, om door haar armen opgevangen te worden. Zooiets wordt eenigzins vervuld in de kerk. Wij zijn Zijn poorten ingegaan met lof, met lofzang in Zijn heilig hof.

Wat we daar zullen doen? In die Kerk daarboven?

Een klein weinigje geleden heb ik er van gestamd. Ik zal U antwoorden door onze vaderen die het antwoord op rijm gezet hebben.

In de kerk hier en in de Kerk daarboven, in de armen van God, zult ge opblikken in het Aangezicht en jubelen:

"Want goedertieren is de Heer;
Zijn goedheid eindigt nimmermeer;
Zijn trouw en waarheid houdt haar kracht
Tot in het laatste nageslacht!"

Als de Engelen Gods dat zagen en hoorden, hebben zij zich grootelijks verblijd. Lang wilden zij inzien in die dingen van de Trouw Gods. En nu die Trouw bezongen wordt in den hemel, is het hun deel om de refreinen te zingen. Zij verblijden zich immers over de zielen die bekeerd werden?

Slechts noode verlaten we dit lieflijke en bekoorlijke tafereel.

Maar het moet: de woorden van den zanger hebben een einde.

En het einde is de lof des Heeren!

G. V.

— BOUND COPIES —

At present consistories or societies of our churches have the opportunity to purchase a complete set of bound Standard Bearers.

Literature, books, and back issues of the R.F.P.A. will now be loaned out to our readers with the permission of our librarian, Mr. M. Woudenberg.

New Psalters

To those consistories interested in purchasing new Psalters for their congregations, we pass on the following information. The Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company expects the new reprint of the Psalter to be ready for delivery the first of September.

These Psalter reprints are exactly the same as the present Psalters with no changes at all in the music, wording of the songs or to the Liturgy. However, after Psalter number 413 there will be a choral section consisting of 20 of the better known Holland Psalm tunes with English words and two musical arrangements of the Lord's Prayer which can be used in connection with our Heidelberg Catechism sermons on this prayer.

Since the first 413 numbers are exactly as in the present Psalter, consistories can order this book and use it in connection with the old books and experience no confusion in the numbering of the songs. Consistories which order a complete set for their entire auditorium, naturally, will be in a much better position to use these English versions of the Holland Psalms and the arrangements of the Lord's Prayer in their congregational singing.

Mr. Eerdmans is printing 3000 of these Psalters for our denomination, and those churches which have sent in their tentative orders can feel safe in increasing the number if they see fit. The revised edition of the Psalter upon which a Committee of Synod is working will not appear at least for another four or five years, and consistories ought to take this into consideration in ordering this reprint of the present Psalter.

Information in regard to placing orders for these Psalters should be sent to the Psalter Revision Committee in care of Rev. John A. Heys, 1551 Wilson Ave., S. W., R. 5, Grand Rapids, Mich. Will all the consistories who have given tentative orders in the past verify these orders so that the new Psalters may be sent out as soon as they are ready for delivery? No Psalters will be sent out without this verification since the former notice sent out to our consistories was only a survey of the needs and willingness to buy and not an attempt to get orders.

Individuals who desire such Psalters for their home use or societies which desire to purchase them, feel free to do so. The supply is adequate now. We would urge all our people to purchase one for their home use. It is a valuable book to be found in every one of our homes.

Congregations ordering 100 or more can have their names stamped on the front cover. The price quoted for this stamping is \$16 for 200 and \$30 for 400. No price is quoted for 100 but it will be approximately \$12.

To stamp less than 100 would be too expensive. Congregations ordering 100 and desiring to have their names stamped on the cover can contact the committee and we will find out the price of 100. The price of these Psalters is \$1.75 each.

To the organists of those churches using the Holland Psalm arrangements, we would suggest that they follow the foot note at the bottom of the page and play all the melody notes as half notes, disregarding the present arrangement of whole, half and quarter notes. We believe that this retains the solemn dignity and beauty of these tunes.

J. A. H.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Dr. K. Schilder, theological professor at the seminary of the Gereformeerde Kerken (Art. 31) at Kampen, The Netherlands has arrived in the United States.

He has requested an opportunity to discuss the doctrinal and ecclesiastical questions of differences that exist in The Netherlands. Dr. Schilder is commencing



PROFESSOR DR. K. SCHILDER

his lecture tour of the United States by giving his first lecture, Thursday, Sept. 4, in the First Prot. Ref. Church in Grand Rapids. He intends to lecture and preach in Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, South Dakota, Minnesota, Montana, and California. Dr. Schilder intends to remain in this country until about the middle of November.

We welcome Dr. Schilder to our shores and trust he will receive ample opportunity to present his views.

IN HIS FEAR

Living In His Fear

With and Through Our Children.

Did you ever pray, "Thy Kingdom Come"?

Of course you did, for it is the second petition of the prayer Christ taught us to pray.

According to the new principle of life within us, we mean that prayer too. The new man in Christ longs eagerly for the perfection of that kingdom wherein he, by God's grace, is a citizen and which is his inheritance. The prayer, "Thy kingdom come", springs forth from that life which we receive out of heaven. Those living in His fear utter this prayer and mean every word of it.

The time of the year has again arrived when we ought to be reminded that it is an act of living in His fear when for the sake of the coming of that kingdom we send our children where they may be trained as citizens of God's kingdom. When we pray "Thy kingdom come", we must also act according to that prayer. Living in His fear is much more than simply saying that we fear Him. Likewise praying "Thy kingdom come", is much more than simply causing these words to be formed by our lips or to arise in our thoughts.

In principle according to the new life we surely mean our prayer, but in practice when we follow our sinful flesh we are not concerned with the coming of God's kingdom.

The easiest way is to deny our children the training that they as citizens of God's kingdom require. It costs far less. It is much more convenient for the parents and children alike. Transportation is provided without cost and the hours away from home are cut to a minimum.

But is this the safest way? Is it the proper way? Is it the way of the fear of the Lord? When we do this, are we living in His fear with and through our children? Can we on the one hand pray, "Thy kingdom come" and then on the other hand entrust our children who are citizens in that kingdom to those who know not God's kingdom and even hate that kingdom? Can we send them to the educators in the kingdom of darkness and expect them to be shining lights in the kingdom of God?

Perhaps you never looked at it in the light of this second petition of the Lord's Prayer. Perhaps you never considered it either in the light of the first gospel message God spoke to man. Consider then these things with us as we look at our life of living in His fear as it ought to be conducted by all covenant parents with and through their children.

It is noteworthy that with the entrance of sin into

this world God in His grace spoke of the unreconcilable chasm between His church and the world. He promised to His church that He would make such a complete distinction and that in the struggle which would follow because of it, He would give His church the complete victory.

Of course, we have reference to Genesis 3:15. After man had allied himself with the devil and became a citizen of his God-hating kingdom, God in His grace began to gather His elect church and to form this kingdom for which we pray in the second petition of the Lord's prayer. There is according to this word of God an undeniable enmity between the church and the world. The church hates all the works of the world and all that for which this world stands. And the world hates the church with all that is within her and even strives to crush her to the ground. The church has the promise of complete victory and that the world shall never do any more than bruise her heel. Christ, the head of the church on the other hand, shall crush and give the death blow to the world.

Shall we for convenience' sake or for material wealth's sake ignore this fact that the world hates our children because they are citizens of this coming kingdom of God? Dare you deny this hatred of the world for our children? Dare we on the one hand pray, "Thy kingdom come", and on the other act as though we are more concerned with what is convenient and least expensive, which things belong to the kingdom of the world? You cannot pray, "Thy kingdom come", and at the same time ask God to make an exception for you and let you nevertheless give over your children who belong to that kingdom into the hands of the enemies of that kingdom for their education and instruction.

That enmity of the world for the church, and thus for you and your children, is not to be denied. Deny it, and you make God a liar. He declared that this enmity does exist. Be careful! And be careful too so that, by sending your children into the camp of the enemy for daily instruction, you are not in practice denying this enmity of which the Almighty God spoke in Gen. 3:15.

It does not change things at all to maintain that Gen. 3:15 simply speaks of the enmity God will put in the hearts of His church toward all that which is of the world. It does no good to argue that it makes God the author of sin to say that He puts enmity in the hearts of the world toward His church. God is not the author of sin, and if you are afraid that it makes God the author of sin to say that the text means that God puts that enmity also in the heart of the world we can pass that by at this time and not take one side or the other. But you cannot deny that this enmity does exist in the heart of the world toward the church. The text surely implies that such is the case. And the whole of Scripture makes that very plain.

Did not godless Cain slay righteous Abel just because he revealed himself to be a citizen of this coming kingdom of God? And here you have brothers revealing this enmity of Gen. 3:15. Had you been living in that day would you have rather sent your children to Cain for instruction or to Abel? To which one would it have been your duty to send them? Cain could have taught them many wonderful things in the realm of the natural, but you may be sure that he would not have taught them salvation through the blood of Christ. He could only have taught them that God ought to be very pleased with the wonderful (?) things the natural man is doing for Him. He surely would not teach them that we must love the Lord our God with all our heart and with all our soul, mind and strength. His own hatred toward God would have prevented this. So one may go down the line with Pharaoh, Herod, Judas, Pilate and many lesser known characters who showed this enmity toward God's kingdom to a very great degree. That same hatred for God and His kingdom is in every man as he is by nature. Cain received it by virtue of the fact that he was born of fallen Adam. And every man since has been born from the seed of that corrupt tree. That enmity is in the heart of every man as he is by nature.

In His grace and by the Spirit of Christ God implants a new life in His people. This causes them to hate all these works of darkness and to pray that His kingdom may come. But because we still have that old nature with us till death, we find that we also have room in our hearts for the world. We can feel quite at home with the world and even send our children to the world for instruction as though its instructors were really doing us a favor and were our most trusted friends. Sometimes we even dare to say that there still is some good in the world even though the Almighty and All-Wise God declares that there is none that doeth good, no not one. We, because of the weakness and sinfulness of our flesh, are inclined to love the world and the things in the world. The enmity on our side toward what is of darkness is not always the motive for what we do. But with the world that evil, God-hating motive is always present in all its works. And therefore in all it does the world hates the church and the children of God's kingdom.

That enmity does not always flare up in violent persecution. But never for one moment does the world desire or seek to teach its children or those of the church the things of God's kingdom. Never does it have any use for the cross of Christ and salvation through His blood. Never does it have any love for instruction that has for its end the glory of God.

And although that enmity of the world for you and your children does not always flare up into violent persecution, the enmity is not diminishing at all. No amount of philosophy can talk away the reality of Gen. 3:15, and no work of man can prevent this

enmity from flaring up in the last days into that tremendous flame of opposition and tribulation of which God's Word speaks. The brutal tribulations of unheard proportions which will come upon the church in those days through the works of the antichrist will not be something unusual. The degree of intensity may be new, but the enmity which causes it has been in the world ever since God spoke those memorable words, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise its heel." The climax of this enmity will have been reached in the days of the antichrist, but it is ever in the hearts of the unbelievers.

Are your children safe then in the hands of those who cannot love God's kingdom? Can you send them to the world and expect them to be trained to be children of the church? Is such activity consistent with your prayer, "Thy kingdom come"? We surely may not pray, "Thy kingdom come if it does not cost me too much and if it does not make it too inconvenient for me and my children".

An oft heard excuse today is the fact that this one or that one never had an education in a christian school, and look! he turned out to be a pretty good christian too. Here is an elder, a deacon or even a minister of the Word of God who was brought up in the schools of the world. We always went to such schools and our children did, and are we really any worse than those who went to Christian schools for their training?

We would like to say a few things about this in our next instalment in this department. But let it be stated here that it is not a question of what God can and does do in spite of our deeds. It is a question of what our calling is before God as those who belong to His kingdom and in whose hearts He has wrought that new life which hates the world and the things in the world (I John 2:15). God was able to save the murderer on the cross who lived in terrible darkness until almost the last moment of his life, but this does not excuse the life that he lived. We must not point to what God has accomplished in spite of our deeds and use this as an excuse to refuse to recognize our calling. There is more that we would like to say about this matter, but it will have to wait until later.

(To be continued).

J. A. H.

CLASSIS WEST

of the Protestant Reformed Churches will meet, D.V., on Wednesday, September 3, 1947, at 9 o'clock A.M. at Doon, Iowa. Delegates desiring lodging should contact Rev. J. Blankespoor, Doon, Iowa.

C. Hanko, Stated Clerk.

FROM HOLY WRIT

O. T. Quotations in the N. T.

(Exodus 34:34 in II Cor. 3:16)

In our former articles in this present series of Scripture studies we have called attention to some New Testament passages from the pen of the apostle Paul, in which he quotes from the Old Testament Scriptures and places them in a New Testament context.

In these studies there were three elements that always and again became evident as necessary to the correct understanding of the Word of God.

Firstly, it became very clear that the Old Testament and the New Testament are really one. The former is the promise of things to come, the latter is the reality of God's covenant brought nigh to both Jew and Gentile in Christ's blood. Secondly, it became clear that the focus point of the unity of the two Covenants is none else but the Son of God in our flesh, as He suffers and dies, is buried and rises again from the dead on the third day. Thirdly, it also is very evident that there is a *progressiveness* of the New Testament over the Old Testament. The New Testament Scriptures reveal to us the Mysteries of salvation as "God did not make these known to the former generations of the sons of men".

These same threefold elements also lie at the very surface of the Scripture passages of which we intend to make a comparative study in this essay. We refer to the passages written above this article, namely, Ex. 34:34 and II Cor. 3:16.

The exact wording of these respective passages is as follows: In Ex. 34:34 we read: "*Bu when Moses went in before the Lord to speak with Him, he took off the vail. . .*" The passage in II Cor. 3:16, where Paul evidently quotes and certainly alludes to this passage, we read: "*Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be (is) taken away*".

When we compare these two passages, at the very surface it becomes evident, that Paul, evidently, in this quotation in II Cor. 3:16 constructs the text from Ex. 34:34 to fit with his purpose of bringing home a most important point to the Corinthian believers.

It is to the following points of similarity and yet points of difference that we would call your attention.

1. In Exodus 34:34 as well as the entire context of that passage the term, the name "LORD" refers to the Triune God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and of Jacob, who keepeth covenant truth forever. Yet, the careful reader will immediately notice, that in II Cor. 3:16 this name "Lord" refers to the Lord Jesus Christ in His

state of exaltation, having received the promise of the Spirit at God's right hand. In the one case *Lord* is *Jehovah*, in the other *Lord* is the *Christ*.

2. In Exodus 34:34 is spoken of Moses *going into* the tabernacle to speak face to face with the Lord, while in II Cor. 3:16 this turning unto the Lord is tantamount to: repentance, to actual conversion rooted in sorrow for sin. While in the former passage Moses is presented as going into the Tent, here it is a turning unto God from dead works to the service of the living God.

3. In II Cor. 3:16 the subject is *Israel* who was formerly unbelieving, whose mind and heart were blinded morally and spiritually, in that Old Testament passage *Moses* is the subject. Not Israel turns to the Lord in Exodus 34:34 but Moses. Here in II Cor. 3:16 it is Israel that turns to the Lord.

4. In close connection with the foregoing, finally, in the Old Testament reference we read of a *literal vail* and that, too, on Moses' face; here in Paul's writing there is not a vail on Moses' face, but the vail is most emphatically on the heart of Israel in their reading the Scriptures, their inability to see the glory of the risen Christ.

Four points of seeming difference in the text. And we may add, points of difference, which are not merely interesting for the sake of a theological study, but differences having a great practical value. For the marvel of it is, that the more one thinks into these seeming differences the more one is convinced that Paul correctly grasped the sense of the Old Testament passage. Paul's passage is the key, which is indispensable to the correct understanding of the Old Testament reference here in question.

That the latter is, indeed, true, we trust will be evident from the following considerations, which we here admit. Our first observation is that the name LORD i.e., Jehovah in the Old Testament, is very really, if correctly understood, the Lord, Jesus Christ in the New Testament. In both we come face to face with God as the God of our salvation.

Let us never forget that, in the Old Testament, God is our Savior. He has given His sure and immutable Promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. It was as God Almighty that He appears to Abraham. And, in the birth of Isaac, Abraham has the clearest demonstration of this Word of Promise. Now God appears to Moses as Jehovah, as the "I shall be who I shall be". And, centrally, God is this in the Son of His good pleasure whom He will send into the world. In Him God will make His abode among, will tabernacle amongst His people.

Such is the ever-recurring theme in the Bible. All the prophets testify of the Christ and of the forgiveness, the redemption in Him. Firstly, we would call attention to the Word of God to Moses as recorded

in Ex. 25:40 (compare Heb. 8:5): "And see that thou make them after the pattern, which hath been showed thee in the mount". What was this pattern? It was none other than the heavenly tabernacle that Moses might see. And this heavenly, future reality of the tabernacle was to be the model of the earthly typical. In that heavenly and better tabernacle would be the Priest after the order of Melchizedek, the Son of God, a Priest forever. Of this the earthly tabernacle with its Levitical priesthood, its sacrifices and feastdays, its temple architecture and temple furniture, the blood of goats and bullocks was an earthly picture. It was really a picture, earthly symbolism of the heavenly. Hence, the entire law that Moses gives is concerned with this temple, this tabernacle. When God, therefore, comes to Israel as Jehovah, He comes to dwell in their midst. And the tabernacle is an earthly picture of God's tabernacle with man, in Jesus Christ. It is *Jehovah* who removes the sin and guilt of His people, takes their sicknesses and diseases from them and most wonderfully saves them. And this Jehovah, in the Priesthood and sacrifices dwelling in the midst of Israel, is the same as God in Christ Jesus in the New Testament.

Secondly, we should notice, that this merciful redemptive work of God is *testified of by all the prophets*. Thus it is stated in Acts 10:43, where, Peter speaking to Cornelius and those present with him in his house in Caesarea, says: "To him bear all the prophets witness, that through his name every one that believeth on him shall receive remission of sins." And Paul also states it thus in that passage in Rom. 3:21, which is as well known as it is important, saying: "But now apart from the law, a righteousness of God has been manifested, *being witnessed by the law and the prophets*. . . ." Then there is also that most beautiful passage in Is. 33:24 where the prophet, speaking of our redemption, pens down the following: "For the Lord (Jehovah) is our Judge, the Lord is our Law-Giver, the Lord is our King; he will save us. . . and the inhabitant shall not say: I am sick: the people that dwell there shall be forgiven their iniquity". What is this latter passage but the glad tidings of the gospel in Old Testament language. We cannot refrain from also quoting yet Jer. 31:34 where we read again the beautiful words: "And they shall teach no more his neighbor and every man his brother; saying: know the Lord, for they shall all know me from the least to the greatest of them, *saieth the Lord*; for I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sin no more."

Could it be stated in clearer and more endearing language that the Lord, Jehovah is indeed our Savior? And is, therefore, the conclusion not wholly warranted and entirely Scriptural to say: Jehovah in the Old Testament is the Lord, Jesus in the New Testament?!

Thirdly, it should be noticed that the New Testament Scriptures emphasize that God has come to dwell

in our midst, that He has visited this people in these last days as this was not at all possible in the time prior to Christ's coming in the flesh. It is "God in Christ" (II Cor. 5:19) who reconciled the world unto Himself, not imputing their iniquity to them. He who is in the bosom of the Father hath dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. And it is this Son of God in our flesh, in the likeness of sinful flesh, who condemns sin in the flesh, and obtains for us righteousness, sanctification and complete redemption. And because He has so exceedingly humbled Himself even to the death of the cross, therefore God hath so highly exalted Him and given Him a name above every name, that all should confess that He is Lord, unto the glory of God the Father. And in this capacity as Lord, as the Glorified One, He receives the Spirit. Of Him Paul says: The Lord is the Spirit and where the Spirit is there is liberty.

Forsoothe, therefore, in this mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace we meet the Lord, our Jehovah. God who called the light out of darkness, hath shined in the glorious gospel in our hearts in the face of Jesus Christ.

Turning to Jehovah is, therefore, turning to the Lord Christ of the gospel; and he who turns to the Christ in the gospel he turns to the Lord in Him! And thus it is here meant by Paul.

Our second observation touches the question of the seeming change of the subject by Paul in this quotation. The text in Exodus makes *Moses* the subject who turns to the Lord; here in II Cor. 3 it is Israel who turns unto the Lord, and that, too, with a turning unto Him in the sense of genuine and heartfelt repentance.

We believe that Paul here has such repentance in mind. First of all because this is the only sense that fits with the thought of the apostle in the context. Israel is represented here as being disobedient, having her mind, her heart hardened. In this state, although she reads and has the Old Testament Scriptures read to her; yes, even since Paul had preached the resurrection, the hope of Israel to her from the Scriptures, yet she is not able to see the glory of God in this Christ. There is a vail over her heart. Turning to the Lord, from the very nature of Israel's hardness is tantamount to: Conversion. Secondly, we believe such to be the usage of the term "to turn" in the Scriptures. Thus we read in Acts 26:20: "And I proclaimed unto the Gentiles to repent and to *turn unto God*, performing works worthy of repentance." Here the term "to turn" is synonymous with "to repent". The latter, evidently, emphasizes the inward change of the mind, of the "nous", while the former gives expression to the outward deed, the manifestation of the inward change that had been affected in repentance.

G. L.

PERISCOPE

Contribution. . . .

The following article was prepared and sent in to us by a very good friend of ours, the Rev. J. Howerzyl, pastor of the Protestant Reformed Church of Oskaloosa, Iowa. We welcome this "guest-writer" to our column, for this issue. At the same time we invite any others among our ministers or lay-men who desire to do so, to write on any subject of interest to the Church in general. Even suggestions for articles will be welcomed and treated by us if at all possible. Let's hear from our readers.

WEIGHED AND FOUND WANTING!!

From the "Banner" of July 11 we quote the following: "Inasmuch as the Ecumenical Synod decided that the delicate question which other denominations should be invited to send delegates was left to the decisions of each member-Church with respect to the denominations in its own land, our Synod had to decide which Churches in America should receive the invitation. It was decided to invite the following: Orthodox Presbyterian Church; Free Magyar Reformed Church; Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, in America; The Reformed Presbyterian Church, General Synod; The Associate Presbyterian Church."

Whether or not the name of the Protestant Reformed Churches was mentioned as a possible recipient of an invitation to the next Reformed Ecumenical Synod is not mentioned in this article. (Although I have it from a delegate that we were mentioned). Neither do I mean to imply, although this is undoubtedly true, that the Protestant Reformed Churches were judged by the Synod of the Christian Ref. Churches and found wanting. Rather do I mean that by this action the Second Reformed Ecumenical Synod, as acting through her official invitation committee (The Synod of the Christian Reformed Churches) has been weighed and found wanting! She will not be a Reformed *Ecumenical* Synod!!

This I say advisedly. For the Protestant Reformed Churches are Reformed. They stand on the basis of Scripture as interpreted in the Three Forms of Unity, without addition or corruption. Besides, it must be evident that, in as far as preaching, teaching, church polity and discipline are concerned, this Reformed confession is vigorously maintained. This is so evidently true that in the absence of objections I shall not take time to prove it. And yet there is no room for our Churches at the "Second Reformed Ecumenical Synod". Therefore, I repeat, she is weighed and found wanting because reasons other than Reformed confession and walk motivated the issuing of invitations to this "Second Reformed Ecumenical Synod."

All the more striking is this decision in view of the fact that in the same issue of the Banner we have a brief report of the decision of the Synod to remain affiliated with the National Association of Evangelicals, an admittedly Arminian group. We quote the report: "For the first time the delegates of Synod to the national convention of this Association failed to present a unanimous report. Two of the members (in a Minority report—J.H.) could not see their way clear to recommend that we continue our affiliation with the organization, the principal reason being that in certain localities this organization is sponsoring evangelistic campaigns and that since the messages usually are Arminian our Church becomes co-responsible for this type of gospel preaching. . . . The Advisory Committee favored the recommendation of the Majority Report. It admitted that a large majority of the members of the N. A. E. are Arminian but called attention to the acceptable character of the seven-point creed of this organization as a basis for cooperation among evangelicals. Synod decided to continue our membership in the N. A. E."

When we thought of these two decisions we were reminded of the text from Amos 3:3: "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" and I mused: "No Reformed fellowship possible with the Protestant Reformed Churches, yet well able to work together with an admittedly Arminian N. A. E." What other conclusion can you draw?

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." Gal. 6:1.

To this text which applies to churches as well as individuals our mind turned when we read a third matter which was treated by the Synod of the Christian Reformed Churches, that of Inter-church correspondence. We quote, "First, it adopted a form-letter which will be sent to all churches of Reformed persuasion inviting them to enter upon or resume fraternal relations with our Church. This letter proposes that the "correspondence" shall consist of the following activities: 1. The appointment of delegates to each other's supreme judicatories. (Supreme judicatories in Reformed Churches?—J.H.) 2. Keeping each other duly informed of their ecclesiastical decisions through the exchange of the Acts of Synod or Assembly. 3. Bringing to each other's attention "our spiritual and ecclesiastical problems together with our attempts at their Scriptural solution. . . . 4. Warning each other in respect of spiritual dangers that arise and spread and imperil the Church of Christ. 5. Correcting each other in love in the event of unfaithfulness whether by commission or omission on the score of profession and/or practice. 6. Consulting each other regarding the eventual revision of our respective

ecclesiastical standards. After approving this letter, Synod decided to which Churches to send it. The following will receive it: The Orthodox Presbyterian Church; the Reformed Church of America; the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in America; Reformed Presbyterian Church, General Synod; Associate Presbyterian Church; Free Magyar Church in America; Christian Reformed Church in the Netherlands; Die Nederduitsch Gereformeerde Kerk in South Africa; The Christian Reformed Church in Japan; and the Free Presbyterian Church of Australia. . . . Synod also decided to send a copy of the letter to the United Presbyterian Church. . . ."

That there are commendable features in the above, in articles 3 and 4 and especially in article 5 is evident. Once more however the commendable features are overshadowed by the fact that the Protestant Reformed Churches are here even excluded from the group "all Churches of Reformed persuasion". May I kindly request the Christian Reformed Churches to apply, in the spirit of the love of Christ, article 5 to us?

J. H.

— NOTICE —

Itinerary for the lecture tour of Dr. Schilder in the Middle West, Montana and California, during Sept. 12 to Oct. 12, 1947.

WHERE	WHAT?	DAY	DATE
Pella	Lecture	Friday P.M.	Sept. 12
Oskaloosa	Sermon	Sunday A.M.	Sept. 14
Pella	Sermon	Sunday P.M.	Sept. 14
Hull	Lecture	Wed. P.M.	Sept. 17
Orange City	Lecture	Thurs. P.M.	Sept. 18
Sioux Center	Lecture	Friday P.M.	Sept. 19
Orange City	Sermon	Sunday A.M.	Sept. 21
Sioux Center	Sermon	Sunday P.M.	Sept. 21
Hull	Sermon	Sunday eve.	Sept. 21
Doon	Lecture	Tuesday P.M.	Sept. 23
Edgerton	Lecture	Thurs. P.M.	Sept. 25
Menno, S. Dak.	Sermon	Friday P.M.	Sept. 26
Edgerton	Sermon	Sunday A.M.	Sept. 28
Doon	Sermon	Sunday P.M.	Sept. 28
Rock Valley	Sermon	Sunday eve.	Sept. 28
Redlands	Lecture	Thurs. P.M.	Oct. 2
Bellflower	Lecture	Friday P.M.	Oct. 3
Bellflower	Sermon	Sunday A.M.	Oct. 5
Redlands	Sermon	Sunday eve.	Oct. 5
Manhattan	Lecture	Tuesday P.M.	Oct. 7
Manhattan	Sermon	Wed. P.M.	Oct. 8

Committee for the Schilder Lecture Tour for the Middle West and West.

Rev. G. Vos.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

1922 — 1947

On September 14, 1947, the Lord willing, our beloved parents

STEPHEN BOUMA

and

ISABELLE BOUMA—Feenstra

hope to celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary.

We are indeed thankful to our Covenant God for sparing them these many years for each other and us, and it is our sincere prayer that the Lord may continue to bless them in His great love and mercy.

The words of the Psalmist are appropriate at all times, but especially at this time:

"Many, O Jehovah our God, are the wonderful works which Thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to usward: they cannot be set in order unto thee; if we would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered."

Their thankful children:

Kathleen Mae

Earl Stephen

Dale Clifford

Doris June

Grand Rapids, Mich.

IN MEMORIAM

Waar het den Heere in Zijne Goddelijke wijsheid behaagde onzen geliefden leeraar en dezijsen in rouw te dompelen op den tweede Aug. 1947 hunne geliefde moeder,

MRS. JOHN PETTER

door den dood werd weg genomen, wenscht de kerkeraad bij dezen zijne hartelijke deelneming te betuigen aan Ds. Petter en gezin en bidt dat de Heere balsem moge gieten in de wonde geslagen en dat Hij hen trooste door Zijn Woord en Geest.

Namens de Kerkeraad van

De Protestantsche Gereformeerde Kerk

Orange City, Iowa

M. De Jager, Scriba.

THE CONFERENCE OF SEPT. 9-11

The Conference between the ministers and students of both the Protestant Reformed Churches and the Reformed Church in the U. S. will be held at Sutton, Nebraska at the time specified above.

The Rev. A. Petter will substitute for the Rev. H. Hoeksema in giving the keynote speech on THE IDEA OF THE LAW, Tuesday evening, Sept. 9.

Prof. Dr. K. Schilder will attend the conference, and the Rev. Wm. Korn has requested him to take his subject: CHRIST UNDER THE LAW, and lecture to the conference on same in the German language.

See you at Sutton! D. V.

The Conference Committee.