

THE STANDARD

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MEDITATION

De Troon Des Hemels

“En terstond werd ik in den geest; en zie, daar was een troon gezet in den hemel, en er zat Een op den troon. En die daarop zat, was in 't aanzien den steen jaspis en sardius gelijk; en een regenboog was rondom den troon, in het aanzien den steen smaragd gelijk.

Openb. 4:2, 3.

De Deur des hemels was geopend voor Johannes: het was hem vergund om hemelsche tafereelen te zien.

De onwederstandelijke roeping Gods kwam tot hem: hij mocht hooren de lieflijke stemme van Jezus Christus.

En die roeping had tot inhoud om hooger op te klimmen tot in den hemel der hemelen: Kom hier op, en Ik zal u toonen hetgeen na dezen geschieden moet!

En terstond werd Johannes in den geest!

Hoe anders zou hij hemelsche tafereelen kunnen zien en hemelsche klanken hooren? Terstond werd hij in dien toestand gezet, waar hij met den Godsspraak raad kon plegen.

En zie!

Een hemelsche heerlijkheid zag hij: de troon Gods.

Hoe hemelsch juist. Het eerste wat hij in den hemel ziet is den troon van God.

Hoe zou het anders? Alles, letterlijk alles, is er om Godswil. God alleen is de spil waar alles om draait. Ik ben er van verzekerd, dat dit de zwaarste les is die we moeten leeren. De goddelooze is juist goddeloos, omdat hij die fundamenteele waarheid altijd loochent. Goddeloosheid is dit, dat de mensch op den troon zit. En zijn goddeloosheid wordt ten top gevoerd, als hij zelfs God in dienst wil stellen van zijn verziekt brein. En dit zal dan ook den Antichrist onder-

kennen: de mensch der zonde op den troon in den tempel Gods, steeds zeggende en roepende, dat hij God is! Vreeselijke vrucht van de Paradijs-zonde aan den morgen van de historie.

Maar, gelukkig, het is niet waar.

Het eerste, let daar op, het eerste wat Johannes ziet is den troon Gods.

O, daar zit zooveel in.

Ik stel mij voor, dat Johannes dien troon nooit meer uit zijn gezicht verloor.

De heerlijkste les die we er uit kunnen leeren is dit: alles moet bezien vanuit dien troon Gods. Alleen dan, wanneer we de dingen zien vanuit het oogpunt Gods, zien we de dingen in hun juiste verhoudingen. Dat bedoelden we, wanneer we in het verleden gezegd hebben, keer op keer, dat we *theologisch moeten leven!*

En zie daar was een troon gezet in den hemel!

Wat toch de gedachte van den troon mag zijn?

De troon, geliefden, is symbool van Koninklijke majesteit en souvereiniteit. De troon spreekt het eerste en ook het laatste woord. De woorden van Hem die op den troon zit zijn zwaar als lood. Zijn woord houdt alles in: het is Alpha en Omega, maar ook alle letteren tusschen die eerste en die laatste letters. De troon is ook het inbegrip van het eerste en het laatste: dat is, oorsprong en doel van alles. Hij dacht alles uit, en Hij stuwt alles tot het doeleinde. De troon is symbool van absolute souvereiniteit. Er is geen bestuur, autoriteit of gezag ergens anders in het Heelal. Alle gezag is in dien troon vervat. Zoo komt het, dat wanneer straks die troon het laatste woord spreekt, alle mond gestopt wordt en de geheele wereld stemmelooz is voor Hem die op dien troon zit.

Maar de troon is ook symbool van gericht.

Openbaring 20 zal daar van spreken. Die troon is wit en groot. Wit, want rein en zuiver. Het is een troon van onkreukbare gerechtigheid. Groot, want er zal een tijd komen, die zal openbaren hoe alle ding dat geschied is vanaf dezen troon geoordeeld zal worden. O ja, het wordt een zeer groot gericht, en een gericht dat rechtvaardig zal zijn.

Die troon is gezet in den hemel.

Als klein jongetje heb ik er al van gehoord.

In mijn prilste jeugd heb ik vaak ouderlingen hooren bidden en oude mannen. En, o zoo vaak, hoorde ik hen bidden: O Heere! die den hemel hebt *tot Uwen troon*, en deze lage aarde tot een voetbank Uwer heilige voeten . . .

O ja, die troon past in den hemel.

De hemel is veel schooner dan de aarde. En het is juist, dat in den hemel de troon van God zou staan. Het is reden, dat we opblikken naar omhoog. We heffen onze zielen op tot Hem die in den hemel zit (op Zijn troon).

Dat wordt straks anders, en toch ook weer niet. Straks daalt het nieuwe Jeruzalem van God neder op de aarde, en zodoende komt ook de troon van God op de aarde. Maar toch ook weer niet, want als dat gebeurt, dan komt eigenlijk de hemel mee met dat nieuwe Jeruzalem, en wordt de aarde hemelsch.

Maar Johannes zag een troon gezet in den hemel.

"En er zat EEN op den troon!"

Hier zou ik tot in alle eeuwigheid bij verwijlen.

En dat doet een ieder die den Heere vreest. Hier is de wijsheid van Gods volk. Hier is het hoogste goed. Er is niets heerlijker dan God te zien op den troon. Vele eeuwen geleden heeft Jezus het ons gezegd: Zalig zijn de reinen van hart, want ze zullen God zien.

Ge stemt toch toe, dat Johannes God op het oog had toen hij zeide: er zat EEN op den troon?

Merkt ge het, hoe hij, als 't ware, aarzelt, als hij toegekomen is aan de beschrijving van Dien die op den troon zit? Het klinkt zoo aarzelend, zoo wifkelend. We hebben in de taal *onbepaalde* voornaamwoorden, enz. Ik dacht daaraan toen ik Johannes' woorden las. Er zat EEN op den troon.

Hoe kan het anders? Die EENE is GOD! En Hij-zelf heeft ons gezegd, dat niemand God kan zien, en . . . leven!

Hij is de geheel Andere!

Als ik serieus aan God denk, dan moet ik altijd duizelen en terugkeeren van mijn denken. Hij is zoo groot, zoo ongeëvenaard groot. Denkt slechts aan dit ééne: Hij is er altijd geweest! En Hij is altijd even rijk en zalig en heerlijk geweest als Hij nu is. De nooit Gemaakte, de nooit Gewordene, de eeuwig Zijnde! God is Zijn Naam! Ga terug met Uw gedachten, en ge ziet den Almachtigen, DrieEenigen, Alwijzen, Beminnlijken en Lieflijken God!

O, we kunnen er bij, dat Johannes zeide: Ik zag en zie, er zat EEN op den troon. Johannes is minder dan een stofje aan de weegschaal.

En Johannes zag niets dan een openbaring van God in het creatuurlijke. Hij zag het Wezen niet. Want dat kan niet. In een oogwenk zou Johannes vergaan bij het zien van het Wezen.

Luistert verder naar het heerlijk gezicht: "En die

daarop zat, was in 't aanzien den steen jaspis en sardius gelijk!"

Hij zag in den troon en rondom den troon een wondere schittering van onuitsprekelijke heerlijkheid. Onuitsprekelijk, want hij moet aan 't vergelijken gaan.

Vergelijken, want het gaat over hemelsche dingen, en die zijn zoo geheel anders dan de dingen van de aarde.

Het eenigste wat hij doen kan is aardsche dingen, zaken en omstandigheden benutten om U en mij iets van de hemelsche dingen te zeggen.

En zoo neemt Johannes het kostbaarste wat er is op aarde, om U te zeggen hoe het aanzien van God is.

Jaspis is de kleur, de kleurige steen van God. Jaspis is Gods kleur. Ik ben er van verzekerd, dat jaspis onze diamant is. Leest hoofdstuk 21. Daar staat: "En hij voerde mij weg in den geest op eenen grooten en hoogen berg, en hij toonde mij de groote stad, het heilige Jeruzalem, nederdalende uit den hemel van God; en zij had de heerlijkheid Gods, en haar licht was den allerkostelijksten steen gelijk, namelijk als de steen jaspis, *blinkende gelijk kristal*."

En ook in de verzen die de fundamenteën van de stad Gods beschrijven is het eerste fundament jaspis, "zuiver goud, zijnde *zuiver glas* gelijk."

O ja, jaspis is gelijk aan onzen fonkelenden diamant.

En vandaag kunt ge het nog zeggen: die steen is de allerkostelijkste van alle edelgesteenten.

En zoo is God!

Hij is de Allerkostelijkste!

En dan zóó, dat Hij het Inbegrip is van alles wat maar kostelijk geheeten mag. Er is geen kostelijkheid buiten Hem.

En Hij schittert!

Hij schittert voor elks oogen.

Ik ben er van verzekerd, dat God vergeleken wordt bij den allerkostelijksten steen jaspis, omdat Hij een Licht is. Neen, Hij is HET licht.

En dat is de afstraling van alle deugd. Hij is jaspis gelijk, want Hij is o zoo lieflijk en schoon. Hij is goed en dierbaar; Hij is wijs en aantrekkelijk; Hij is groot van vermogen.

Daarom zal het einde niet anders zijn, dan net maar het staren naar dien troon, om de uitstraling, de fonkeling van het aanbiddelijke Wezen te zien.

Het kan immers bewezen worden?

In ditzelfde boek der Openbaring is het einde van alles de stem als van vele wateren van een schare menschen en engelen die niemand tellen kan, die tot in alle eeuwigheid niet moede of mat worden om te zingen: Alleluja!

En Hij is ook als de sardius.

De sardius is vuurrood.

En dat vuurroode wordt hier bijgevoegd, omdat het grootste gedeelte van de dingen die haast geschieden

moeten te maken hebben met de openbaring van Gods toorn over de goddeloozen. Het vuurroode is symbool van wrake en jaloerschheid Gods. Denkt aan die glazen zee vlak voor den troon. Die zee was met vuur gemengd. En de schare die er bij staat te zingen, staarde ook op dat vuur en galmde van de gerechtigheid Gods die openbaar geworden was.

Die vuurroode sardius zal ter sprake komen als de zegelen gebroken, de bazuinen geblazen en de fiolen van den toorn Gods uitgestort worden op de hoofden van hen die gezegd hebben van dit aanbiddelijke Weten: "we hebben geen lust aan Uwe wegen!"

Het is het vuur van gramschap en groote grimmigheid.

Het is openbaring van de onkreukbare gerechtigheid Gods.

En dan die regenboog!

Boven den troon, rondom den troon zag hij zooiets als een boog, een regenboog!

Geliefden, dat is het Evangelie! Het eeuwig Evangelie!

Als kleine kinderen hebben we ervan gehoord. Toen we nog heel klein waren, zóó klein, dat we zelf den Bijbel nog niet konden lezen, toen hebben we het ontzaglijke van den regenboog in de wolken gezien. En toen hebben onze Godvreezende moeders en vaders ons dien regenboog verklaard. En ze spraken van God, Die een Licht is, een vriendelijk Licht is, voor Zijn volk! Ze verhaalden van de wateren van Noach, van een vreeselijken zondvloed. Maar ook van den boog. En van de trouwe Gods. Van Zijn belofte. Nooit weer een zondvloed.

Eigenlijk hebben we hier hetzelfde als in den jaspis. Met dit verschil, dat als de kleur van het witte licht gebroken wordt in de verschillende ruiten van den diamant, ge dan de schoonste combinaties van kleuren-pracht ziet; dan komt er een fonkeling en schittering die ongeëvenaard is in schoonheid en aantrekkelijkheid.

En dat is geschied.

Het witte licht van Gods deugdenbeeld is gebroken.

En het prisma dier breking is het Golgotha van den Verbonds-Jehova.

O, ik verzeker U, dat er een schoonheid van kleuren-pracht is in de openbaring van Gods eeuwig verbond.

De boog staat nog in de lucht.

Hij is een getuigenis van Gods eeuwige bondstrouwe.

Hebt ge er wel eens op gelet, dat die boog als twee armen zijn die U omvangen? "Van onderen eeuwige armen!"

De regenboog die Johannes zag is de sprake van de trouw Gods die in Jezus Christus is.

Van voor de grondlegging der wereld heeft God

gezegd: Ik heb U lief en zal U zijn tot een God en Vader in de hoogste hemelen!

Maar we zijn zondaars geworden en waard om tot in alle eeuwigheid verdoemd te worden.

Doch de Heere dacht aan Zijn verbond en Hij kwam. Hij kwam tot ons in Jezus Christus en Hij omhelsde ons, zoo innig en zoo liefderijk, dat Hij onze zonde-schuld van ons overnam en vernietigde aan Zijn kruis. Hij openbaarde Zich als de Verbonds-God die Zijn Woord gestand doet. Hij nam de zonde van Zijn geliefde wereld en bracht ze weg, vernietigde ze, wierp ze in een oceaen van Goddelijke vergetelijkheid.

Die regenboog is groen. Hij is als de steen smaragd gelijk. En die steen is groen.

Groen is de kleur der hope.

O, als het duister wordt en bang, als ik omringd word door tegenspoeden, als ik bedreigd wordt van allen kant;—dan zie ik op dit visioen van Johannes, en dan is die regenboog groen, als der hope.

Dan hoop ik op God.

En het hart der hope is dit: het is het verlangen der liefde, dat zich uitstrekt naar de erfenis in het licht. Dan smacht ik van verlangen naar God.

Daar zingt men het lied der liefde, der eeuwige liefde. Daar zingt men van 't hijgend hert, der jacht ontkomen! Daar eindigt men met het vragen naar de gewisse weldadigheden Davids. Daar eindigt men met een klagende vraag, die eigenlijk een overwinning inhoudt.

En die vrage is deze: Wanneer, O Mijn God, zal ik ingaan en voor Uw aangezicht verschijnen?

En de boog van Gods Trouw zal U het antwoord geven.

Dan zingt die boog van de heerlijkheid der kinderen Gods in het licht.

Golgotha in den donker heeft een licht gebaad.

Als ge recht voor het gevloekte hout staat, toovert de genade een schijn van lieflijk licht op Uw gelaat, in Uw ziel en hart, die U zal doen zingen van Gods goedertierenheid tot in alle eeuwigheden!

G. V.

ATTENTION!

(Ministers of Classis East)

In order that Dr. K. Schilder and also the Delegates from Classis West may meet with us the date of the Ministers' Conference has been changed from Tuesday, October 14, to Thursday October 16. Please arrange to attend Thursday. Plans are being made to spend the dinner hour together. Let's all make an effort to attend. Dr. Schilder will address this meeting.

The Board.

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EDITORIALS

Conferences

AT SUTTON, NEBRASKA

At this time of writing it has become rather clear that the Conferences Committee made a mistake in calling off the contemplated Conference between ministers and students of the Protestant Reformed Churches and the Reformed Church in the U. S., which conference was to be held at Sutton, Nebraska, September 9-11, 1947. We will not explain in detail how we arrived at our decision, except to say that we acted in good faith. Rumours were flying around that a rather large number of ministers were not going to attend. You might ask: why did you not take a poll? And the answer is: there was not sufficient time for it. So, the committee, being afraid that we would see a poorly attended conference, called it off and postponed it indefinitely. I am rather sure that we will have a conference next year: I have heard enough favorable comment to make a prediction like that.

In the mean time, the collections are called off, and the checks that came in were returned to the consistories. We take this opportunity to thank you kindly for your willingness to collect for the conference and thus show your hearty cooperation. We hope to call on you again at a later date when we will meet again.

There is a sizable balance in the treasury which has been placed on a certificate of deposit, drawing 1% interest from last year.

Let me assure you, brethren, that we are sorry that this has happened. We would have loved to meet with the brethren of both church groups, inasmuch as much benefit is gained from conferences such as we have had in years past. Isolation is stifling; exchange of ideas, friendly debate and personal contact is elevating, edifying and highly instructive.

Let us look forward to the next conference and determine to attend, one and all.

This brings me to the duty to report on the kind of conference that *was* held at Sutton, Nebraska.

In a circular letter, addressed to all the ministers and consistories of both groups, we acquainted our addressees of a decision our conference committee had made. When the news of the postponement of the first conference came to the ministers of the Reformed Church in the U. S. they voiced their disapproval in no uncertain terms to that member of the Conference Committee who is a minister in that church group, the Rev. W. E. Korn. And very soon the idea was launched to have a conference among themselves, together

with those ministers of the Protestant Reformed churches who lived nearby—and with Prof. Dr. K. Schilder! Especially the last named possible conferee they would like to meet and hear at a conference. They knew that the Professor conducted a lecture tour in these parts, and they wanted to enjoy the privilege to hear him.

We realized, of course, that we, that is, the undersigned and the Rev. W. E. Korn, had no authority, strictly speaking, to organize a conference of that nature. But I am sure that you will understand our position. The German brethren insisted on a conference to meet with Prof. Schilder, and there was no other representative body they could turn to. And so we decided to organize a conference of the kind they wished to have. You will realize that no harm was done since we did not touch the funds that are collected for conferences such as we have had in the past. All who went there paid their own expenses.

And so we met at Sutton, Nebraska.

About that conference the following:

First, we met and conferred in the neat church building of Pastor U. Zogg's congregation. The largest sessions just about filled the auditorium. Since the Mission Fest of the Reformed Church in the U.S. was to be held there anyhow and at the same dates, we saw several delegates of the churches of Eureka Classis. And the congregation at Sutton turned out in goodly numbers. Almost all of their ministers were present and took an active part in the discussions.

Second, I take great pleasure in reporting the wonderful hospitality that was shown the ministers of our group who attended. They certainly opened their hearts and their homes to us. We had a great time of Christian fellowship with them. There is a little annex to the church building at Sutton, and in that building we were catered to by the ladies of that church, which left nothing to be desired. We are apt to underestimate such little things (?), and we must not. The Gospels tell us of the women that ministered to Jesus. Let no one think that such ministry ceased with our Lord's ascension to heaven. They have continued to do so, and they certainly did at Sutton. I would take this opportunity to salute them in the name of all the conferees. Both in the giving of the earthly food and drink, as well as in the gift of their friendliness and love, they have ministered unto His servants. And inasmuch as such was done in faith, they will not lose their reward.

Of our men, I saw the Revs. Andrew Cammenga, John Blankespoor, James Howerzyl, L. Vermeer, James Van Weelden, and Cand. G. Vanden Berg. Also the brethren W. and C. De Vries of Pella. Also some brethren of Oskaloosa, relatives of Rev. Van Weelden.

Of the Reformed Church in the U. S. there were too many to mention.

And the Schilder Committee of the East had kindly consented to have Prof. Schilder there. It was good to meet him again after the six or more nightmare years of European horrors through which he passed. We were all surprised to note how well he looked.

Third, about the conference proper, I may say that it was a great success. A rather tight schedule was prepared, occupying us from morning till late evening. But there was no lagging interest at all. Up to the last afternoon, there was lively debate following the addresses that were given.

Tuesday evening, Dr. K. J. Stuebbe delivered a well worked out lecture on the theme THE LAW AND THE FIRST ADAM, which was well received and which elicited lively discussion. This lecture was given in English.

Wednesday morning Prof. K. Schilder spoke to us in German on CHRIST UNDER THE LAW. Because of the constituency of the conference, it proved to be a three language affair: German, English and Dutch. Most of our men do not understand the German, so Rev. Korn had to become our interpreter. Only in cases where the Doctor spoke about rather deep subjects did he give a synopsis in Dutch, since it was not easy for him to speak English fluently. However, his work at the conference was done largely in the German language, which he speaks fluently.

The lecture was well received and caused a lively discussion.

Thursday morning we enjoyed the main dish. Dr. Schilder spoke on the controversy in the Netherlands. I need not say that we listened with bated breath, so to speak. Especially so, when he spoke on the dogmatic questions involved. Some of us have followed the struggle in the Netherlands by reading the flood of brochures that found their way to our shores, as well as by reading De Reformatie of which Dr. Schilder is the Editor. But even those who were rather well informed had waited for this opportunity so that they might ask him personally about certain points which remained dark to us.

I will mention one point.

When we began reading about the controversy, it struck us that the liberated Reformed Churches seemed to hold to the Heynsian conception of the covenant. They employed the arguments and quoted the texts in support of their views with which we had become over familiar in the writings of the late Prof. Heyns. And the question was often asked among us: Wonder if they also follow Heyns to the extent of holding to his view of subjective covenant grace that is given (according to Heyns) to all covenant children, elect and reprobate, a grace that can be lost and is lost on the part of the reprobate children of the church?

That one point was cleared up at this conference, and confirmed at the Hull conference, of which we will

speak later. The Professor rejects this idea wholeheartedly.

Also on other points in the controversy, points of a dogmatical nature, sufficient light was shed by our brother from the other side, so that we are arriving at definite knowledge as to his stand on the covenant and related matters.

Part of his lecture was devoted to a report on the church political side of the controversy.

That was no news to us.

We are too well acquainted with the system of hierarchical church government which holds sway in the church groups, here and in the Netherlands, a system that is still called Reformed, but which is nothing but Roman Catholic in essence. The ruling power of Christ is shifted from the consistory to the so-called higher bodies, classes and synods, which they simply call larger churches, larger consistories. And so they have suspended and deposed faithful office bearers right and left with no regard to the principles of Reformed Church Polity, based on the Word of God, and handed down to us in concreto in the Church Order of Dordrecht.

The recital of the experiences of the brother who came to us from Holland together with those who shared like fate, is like listening to the complaints of our memories. The days of infamy, the days of 1923-1925, are not yet forgotten. In that struggle the liberated churches have our warm sympathy and support.

Hence, we are glad to have him in our midst. It is good to listen to him. In many respects we feel that he is one with us. And although we do not see eye to eye with him on the covenant issue and related matters, we are very willing to listen to him, to discuss these matters with him, and debate the questions involved.

And why not?

History, the history of the church of our Lord Jesus Christ has taught us that the truth shines the more brightly as it is discussed and debated. Discussion and debate on the controversial subjects cannot harm us. It is exactly when we shy away from honest debate that we reveal that all is not well with us.

Do you remember how our men pleaded with those who finally threw us out, to debate the issues, to come forth from their hiding places and discuss the matters at issue? But they would not.

The same treatment is accorded Dr. Schilder in these days.

That is, at the hands of the Christian Reformed Churches.

It is an old adage to "hear the other side"!

This opportunity is given them now. Who, among the liberated churches, is more able to shed light on what happened to such a large part of the brethren and churches who were affiliated with them in the past, than this man?

Look the matter squarely in the eye: All the churches and ministers that now call themselves THE REFORMED CHURCHES (maintaining Art. 31) *actually were at one time* sister churches and *ambtsbroeders*, respectively, of the Christian Reformed Churches, and the Christian Reformed ministry. Well, they are thrown out on supposedly dogmatic and other grounds. Question: It is not the duty of the latter to inquire into this and hear both sides?

But no, they will not. He shall not speak! *Papa dixit!*

Comforting thought: God has seen and heard, even before any man spoke or refused to hear.

And He shall speak! And His speech shall be equity, justice and righteousness.

Let us wait patiently.

AT HULL, IOWA

Yesterday, the ministers of Sioux and Lyon Counties and of Minnesota met with Prof. Dr. K. Schilder at Hull, Iowa.

Subject of discussion: The Covenant and related matters.

A splendid day was had by all concerned.

It is not only space that forbids me to report anent this conference in detail. I want to hear all the lectures the brother will give in these parts, and I wish to attend the eastern conference with him, which will be held the day before Classis East meets, before giving my views and criticism.

P.S. I forgot to mention that on the evening of Wednesday, Sept. 10, at Sutton, the Rev. A. Cammenga and Dr. K. Schilder preached for us, the first on I Peter 3:15 and the latter on Rev. 8:1.

G. V.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

We are thankful to God that our dear parents

HARRY ZWAK

and

LILLIAN ZWAK (nee Bos)

were privileged to commemorate their 25th Wedding Anniversary on September 9, 1947.

It is our prayer that the Lord may spare them for each other and for us, and continue to bless them on their pilgrimage.

Their grateful children:

Betty Jane Zwak

Charlotte Jane Zwak.

CLASSIS EAST

will meet in regular session at the Second Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan on Wednesday, October 15 at 9 o'clock A.M.

D. Jonker, S. C.

OUR DOCTRINE

God's Revelation In Nature

In our preceding article we discussed the Knowledge of God in general. We learned that this knowledge of God is based upon Divine Self-Revelation. Revelation is that act of God whereby He speaks of Himself to a creature in a language which that creature can understand. God, we know, has revealed Himself in nature and in grace or the Scriptures. We often hear the distinction between nature and grace, particularly in our prayers. God, then, has richly blessed us in nature and in grace. In this sense this distinction should not be made. Nature and Grace must not be viewed over against each other. The grace of God is also effective through and in connection with earthly things. However, we will tolerate the distinction "nature and grace" in connection with God's Self-revelation, if we only bear in mind that nature, apart from the Scriptures, viewed in and by itself, is not a revelation of grace but of the wrath of God. Nature, the works of the Lord round about us, apart from the Bible, will never speak to us of salvation and grace, but only of wrath and of death. In this article we purpose to speak of God's revelation in nature.

A proper understanding of the terms here is important. The distinction has been made, when speaking of God's revelation in nature and in the Scriptures, between natural and supernatural revelation. The former, then, is God's speaking of Himself through nature, its content is natural, and it can be acquired by human reason from the study of nature. The latter is God's Self-revelation communicated to man in a higher, supernatural manner, as when God speaks to him directly or through specially endowed messengers. An example of the former is the works of God's hands round about us. And an example of the latter is not only the Bible, but also the various messages which the Lord imparted to His people through Divinely appointed agents and messengers. The objection to this distinction is self-evident. It is ambiguous and confusing. Is not all revelation of God, also in nature, supernatural? The world was not only brought forth by the Lord's almighty power, but it is also continually sustained by that same almighty power. God not only spoke at the dawn of history, bringing into being the heavens and the earth, but His almighty voice continues to be heard throughout His vast creation. The sun does not ascend into the heavens of its own power, neither is her descent to be ascribed to her own strength. Every creature, according to the Word of God, waits continually upon the Lord. Nowhere, in all the vast universe, is there to be found any secluded spot where His voice is not heard. Because of this we

understand that the distinction "natural and supernatural" is confusing and ambiguous. All of life round about us is a direct, continuous speech of God.

A more common distinction, however, is that of *general* and *special* revelation. Dr. Warfield distinguishes the two as follows: "The one is addressed generally to all intelligent creatures, and is therefore accessible to all men; the other is addressed to a special class of sinners, to whom God would make known His salvation. The one has in view to meet and supply the natural need of creatures for knowledge of their God; the other to rescue broken and deformed sinners from their sin and its consequences." According to this distinction, therefore, General Revelation is rooted in creation, is addressed to man as man, and more particularly to human reason, and finds its purpose in the realization of the end of his creation, to know God and thus enjoy communion with Him. Special Revelation, on the other hand, is rooted in the redemptive plan of God, is addressed to man as sinner, can be properly understood and appropriated only by faith and serves the purpose of recuring the end for which man was created in spite of the disturbance wrought by sin.

The objection to this distinction as presented by Dr. Warfield is self-evident. It is altogether too mild. As far as his definition of Special Revelation is concerned, it can hardly be denied that it is addressed to a special class of sinners to whom God would make known His salvation. The revelation of God in nature, apart from the Scriptures, surely does not make known unto us His salvation. The end of all things round about is not life but death. Only the Scriptures speak to us of eternal relief, life, and glory. However, Special Revelation does not only address a special class of sinners to whom the Lord would make known His salvation. It is also addressed to the non-repentant sinner, to the reprobate sinner, and that also with a very definite Divine purpose. God purposes not only the life of some but also the death of others; He does not only will the justification of His own but also the eternal condemnation of those whom He has reprobated from before the foundation of the world. And the Scriptures, or the gospel, if you will, is proclaimed to both classes of sinners with that two-fold purpose of the Lord. This same objection holds as far as Dr. Warfield's definition of General Revelation is concerned. Also here, it can hardly be denied that it is addressed to man as man and that it is rooted in creation. Man is surely adapted to the speech of God in all the works of His hands and this is due to his peculiar creation. For the rest, however, the definition is vague and incomplete. To say that this revelation "has in view to meet and supply the natural need of creatures for knowledge of their God" does not take into consideration the word of God in Romans 1:20 where we read: "For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being under-

stood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse". Of particular importance are the last words of this text: "so that they are without excuse." It would be better to translate the words "so that" as "in order that". The translation leaves the impression that their being without excuse is the *result* of God's revelation of Himself in nature. And this, of course, is true. None would dispute this result of God's speech in creation. Literally, however, we read in the original here: "in order that they may be without excuse." These words, therefore, do not indicate a result but a purpose. To say, then, that General Revelation finds its purpose in the realization of the end of man's creation, to know God and thus enjoy communion with Him, surely does not take into consideration the word of God in Romans 1:20 where the apostle declares emphatically that the Divine purpose of His revelation in creation is that man may be without excuse. Hence, if the Lord's special revelation is characterized by a two-fold purpose, the salvation of the elect but also the condemnation of the reprobate, the same must also be said of His general revelation. Rather than adopt the somewhat confusing distinction, "general and special revelation", we would rather speak of the Lord's revelation in nature or creation and in His Word or the Scriptures.

We must not confuse God's revelation in nature with present day Natural Theology. Natural Theology or Natural Religion views nature as sufficient for man to attain unto the knowledge of God. Man, then, no longer needs the Scriptures, has become intoxicated with a sense of his own ability and goodness, and refuses to listen to the authoritative Word of God. The extolling of things natural, the natural love of the fellow-man is regarded as the essence of true religion. This view reminds us, does it not, of the theory of "Common Grace". This theory, too, has created a sphere, in things natural and civil, wherein the godly and the ungodly can unite and cooperate in a manner pleasing in God's sight. It, too, loves to speak of the natural love of the fellow-man. However, in the first place, man cannot attain unto the true knowledge of God. Man is by nature a hater of God and of his fellow man. God's irresistible grace alone can induce him to acknowledge the living God and lead him unto the true knowledge of God. Natural Theology, therefore, does not consider the element of sin. And, in the second place, nature has undergone a tremendous change since the fall of man. It cannot, apart from the Bible, impart to man the true knowledge of God with respect to the counsel of redemption and the eternal renewal of all things. We must remember that all things, since the fall of man, lie underneath the curse of God. Death reigns everywhere, in all the minutest parts of the Lord's vast creation. Nature cannot impart unto us, therefore, the knowledge of sal-

vation. This fact, together with that of Man's spiritual blindness, establishes the fallacy of Natural Theology.

God's speech in nature is of great practical significance. Several questions thrust themselves upon the foreground and demand an answer. What does nature reveal of God? Why did the Lord thus reveal Himself? What must be our attitude toward this revelation of God, and, in this connection, how must we view and regard the things we receive?

To quote the Scriptures in support of this revelation of God is, of course, not difficult. In Ps. 104:24 we read: "O Lord, how manifold are Thy works; in wisdom hast Thou made them all: the earth is full of Thy riches." Ps. 19 speaks of both, the revelation of God in nature and in His word. In verses 1-2 we read: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." And in the verses 7-9 the poet extols the law of the Lord as perfect and wise, converting the soul and making wise the simple, etc. In Romans 1:18-20 the apostle declares: "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." For other references the undersigned would refer the reader to Job 36, 37; Ps. 29, 33:5, 65, 67:7, 90, 104, 107, 145, 147.

What does nature reveal of God? First of all, the works of God round about us reveal to us the truth that God is God. This receives emphasis throughout Holy Writ. Paul declares in Rom. 1:19-20 that which may be known of *God* is manifest in them, and also that the invisible things of *God* are clearly seen from the creation of the world, namely His eternal power and God-head. Ps. 19:1 teaches us that the heavens declare the *glory of God*, and in the Psalms 19, 104, etc. as well as in Job 36-37 the Lord's power and wisdom are extolled. Creation surely speaks to us of His power, God-head, and infinity. How vast and tremendous is the universe, how great and manifold the works of His hands. "Who can determine the origin of the wind or bridle its power?" Who can enter into the treasures of the snow or see the treasures of the hail? Who hath divided a water course for the overflowing of the waters, or a way for the lightning of thunder; to cause it to rain on the earth, where no man is; on the wilderness, wherein there is no man? Who can know the ordinances of heaven or set the dominion thereof in the earth? Who has given the horse its strength and clothed his neck with thunder?" — Job 36, 37. Who will measure the universe, whereof the

earth upon which we live constitutes but a very small part? Who can explain the horizon or the rainbow in the heavens, count the stars, or control the course of the sun? Who can explain the conception and birth of the living creature, life in all its phases? But, how vast and tremendous the universe may be, God is the Creator of it all. Yes, the whole world is less than a drop of water on the bucket and a particle of dust on the balances in comparison with the Almighty. Should it then not be plain to you and I that the vast creation speaks to us of the infinite power and greatness and infinity of our God? Surely, the Creator is greater than His creature, the Maker cannot be compared with the thing which He has made. What must be our attitude toward this vast universe? Let us admire it, observe it in all its glory and vastness, marvel because of the mystery and development of life round about us, and then understand that this tremendous creation was brought forth by the Creator, Who is surely infinitely exalted above His creature.

Moreover, creation also speaks to us of the amazing wisdom of our God. We hear the psalmist exclaim in Ps. 104:24: "O Lord, how manifold are Thy works; in wisdom hast Thou made them all: the earth is full of Thy riches." Wisdom we may define as practical knowledge, the ability to adapt the best means unto the best end. Indeed, there is a Divine wisdom displayed by the Lord in all the works of His hands which nature itself cannot teach us as apart from the Word of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Nature itself does not speak to us of that amazing wisdom of the heavenly Architect whereby He willed the earthy to be a symbol of the heavenly and causes all things to serve as the best means unto the realization of His eternal glory in the new heavens and upon the new earth. Apart from this will of God to make all things new, however, creation is full of the wisdom of God in the earthly sense of the word. How wondrously all things are inter-related and adapted to each other. What wonderful design we discern in all things round about us! There is not such a thing as an individualistic existence — everything is wondrously related and connected. The sun, the wind, and the rain all cooperate in the production, for example, of a single bean. Each living creature is marvellously adapted to its own particular sphere of existence, and its own particular manner of living. The dog with its keen sense of smell, the cat with its lightness afoot and its sharp eyesight, the horse with its tremendous strength, etc., all speak of design and purpose on the part of its Creator. And how well we can understand the old saying that man is the crown of God's creation! He surely was wonderfully made. Fearfully and wonderfully, he was adapted to the earthy and also to the living God. I now speak, of course, from the viewpoint of Holy Writ. What an opportunity for the Christian school teacher to shew forth the glory of the Lord, and what a calling?

Finally, creation proclaims unto us the truth that the Lord our God is good. In fact, nature may well be called one great book, proclaiming the praise and the goodness of the Lord. God's goodness, whereof the Bible speaks throughout, we would define as the Lord's infinite perfection and His knowledge of and seeking of Himself as the infinitely perfect One. This definition declares that God is not only the God of infinite perfections, but also that He knows Himself as that God of eternal glory and perfection and beauty. All the world round about us speaks of this goodness of Jehovah. We see and are amazed by the beauty of creation all around us before it is stricken by the withering hand of death and are reminded of the fact that the earth is full of the riches and beauty of our God. We see the goodness of the Lord exhibited in the fact that "every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving" I Tim. 4:4. This does not imply that because we receive these temporal things we may therefore conclude that Jehovah is merciful and gracious unto us. These temporal things cannot be called good, we understand, without reservation. They are not unmixed. All things lie within the scope of temporal death. Death is in them all. This life is nothing but a continuous death. Death works in our members from the moment of our birth, and it also works in whatever we eat and drink, and inhale while in this valley of the shadow of death. Besides, if the general love or mercy or grace of God is established by the fact that all men share these temporal "blessings" of the Lord, must we not also conclude that the wrath of the Lord is common from the fact that all men share the "evil" things of this present dispensation? If because all men share the "good" things of life they are recipients of God's common mercy and love, then the conclusion is inescapable that all men also are the objects of His indignation because they also share the "evil" things of this world. Yet, the Scriptures proclaim unto us that all things work together for good for the people of God, yea, that we have all things in common, except the grace and love of the Lord. Nevertheless, every creature of the Lord is good. The food we eat, the water we drink, the air we inhale and exhale is good because it is perfectly adapted to the service of man and can therefore be used by man. The food nourishes our bodies, the water quenches our thirst, sleep refreshes and quickens us. Indeed, every creature of God is good and nothing to be refused.

One more thing about the revelation of the goodness of the Lord in creation round about us. That the Lord is good is also revealed by the fact that the wrath of God is revealed down from heaven upon all the workers of unrighteousness, yea, upon the entire creation of God. This is the outstanding speech which all things round about us proclaim unto us. Death is this world's reality. And this valley of the shadow of

death is one tremendous testimony to the truth that the Lord our God is good, infinitely perfect, and eternally devoted unto Himself.

Death reigns everywhere. It reigns in our bodies and in every part of our bodies. It controls all the food we eat, permeates all the air we inhale and exhale, dominates every drop of water we drink, covers the entire creation of God. For man sinned. But he sinned not alone. Adam was king of the earthly creation. He therefore sinned also in connection with all things, surely intended to subject all things unto himself in the service of Satan and of corruption. But God is good. He is the Lord of infinite perfections. As such He knows Himself, seeks Himself, is eternally consecrated to Himself. Life is possible only in fellowship with Him. Apart from Him is death and unspeakable misery. Hence, when man turned his back upon his Maker, concluded an alliance with the Prince of the powers of the air, the infinitely perfect, the good God, in love of and unto Himself, breathed upon man, all his posterity, and all creation the breath of death. The world became a gigantic valley of the shadow of death.

We conclude, therefore, that nature, apart from the Christ and the Scripture, is the revelation of the goodness of God even as God seeks Himself over against the sinner. To be sure, the things all about us also speak to us of redemption and of everlasting deliverance. The sun speaks of the Son of Righteousness, the stars speak of the elect, the dying seed proclaims unto us that life will arise out of death. This, however, we do not know from nature itself. This truth is taught us by the Word of God. Nature speaks to us of eternal redemption only because the earth was created a symbol of the heavenly and because of the will, the eternally sovereign will of God whereby He purposed to call life out of death, to build His eternal tabernacle upon and out of the ruins of sin and death. But then we also understand that creation speaks to us not of life but of death, not of hope but of despair, not of victory but of shameful defeat.

Viewing the things themselves we behold ourselves hemmed in by the awful wrath of God. Nature, viewed by itself, presents to us the living God Who continually stands before us as the infinitely Perfect One, worthy to be feared, but therefore also as the God Who seeks and maintains Himself over against the sinful and rebellious creature. Yet we know that presently this world of death will be replaced by the eternal Kingdom of our God in Christ Jesus. Life will arise out of death. However, only for Jesus' sake and upon the basis of His atoning merits. How foolish, therefore, to behold in the things themselves a proof of the mercy and the love of God. The question is not, "What do we possess?", but, "Are we in Christ Jesus?" Then, then only, will we also pass out of death into life and will all things work together unto our eternal salvation.

H. V.

The Lord's Supper *

The presence of Christ and the sacramental working in the Lord's Supper. My subject is formed of two parts or expressions: They are: 1. The presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper; 2. The sacramental working in the Lord's Supper. The order in which these expressions appear in the subject is correct. If the matter signified by the last of these two expressions is to be understood, the thing denoted by the first must be first explained. I must confess that the second of the two expressions was not too clear to me. It struck me as being incomplete. I asked myself if perhaps this was not meant, namely, the sacramental working of Christ in the Lord's Supper, that is, what Christ works in His people by means of this sacrament, what He accomplishes in them by it. Or, I also wondered whether this was not meant, namely, the sacramental working of the Lord's Supper instead of *in* the Lord's Supper. After some thought I concluded that there is really no essential difference between the three formulations of the idea contained in this second part of the subject. Each looks to the same thing.

The two expressions that form my subject divides my paper into two divisions, in the first of which must be treated the matter of Christ's presence in the Supper. The question is now in what sense it can be said that the body of Christ is present in the Lord's Supper? As this question has to do with the sacramental union between the sign and the thing signified, we must first have respect to this sign and the thing it signifies. Firstly, that which in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper does service as the sign, is the natural bread and wine. These material substances are not accidentally chosen. Because of their peculiar nature they can serve as signs in the Lord's Supper. God created them for this use. As bread is for the nourishing and strengthening of man's body, so Christ is the nourishment of the New Creature, the man of God. There is the question why the wine was added to the bread. The answers vary. As bread nourishes life, wine makes glad the heart, says the Scriptures. But the principle reason doubtless is this, that by the separation of bread and wine Christ is presented to us as the suffering and crucified Saviour. In a general sense all bread and wine, like all creatures, are signs of things heavenly, definitely Christ, the true bread of life. But not all bread and wine are signs of Christ in the sacramental sense. To be signs in Holy Communion a certain quantity of bread and wine must be separated from common use and consecrated to this sacred use through the prayer of thanksgiving of the officiating minister at the Lord's Table. The bread and wine

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so consecrated are in a special sense signs of the suffering and crucified Christ. More must be said, to be signs, the bread must be broken and the wine shed and both must be used, the former eaten and the latter drunken, by the communicants. The signs includes the bread and the wine as assimilated by the human body and as nourishing it. The sign includes finally also, the action of the minister according to which he, as the servant and ambassador of Christ, delivers these elements to the communicants. Before we go any further, it may be well to define the sacraments. The word sacrament, as we know, is not found in the Bible. It is a Latin word. Among the heathen it denoted a sum of money deposited by two persons involved in civil litigation. The one would say to the other: Since you claim this property I challenge you with a sacrament of 500 asses. Each would deposit this sum, which was then turned over to the priest. The party that lost in the court would then turn over his deposit to the priest for sacred use. The matter was called a sacrament, because it stood in the service of the gods. It thus had a religious meaning. The Greek equivalent of the latin sacramentum was *Musteeron*, meaning, a thing hidden, concealed. The term was adopted by the Christian Church to denote its mysteries. Tertullian speaks of the Sacrament of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Calvin defines sacrament as follows, "An external sign whereby the Lord seals graciously his promises to us on our conscience to maintain the weakness of our faith and whereby we declare our union with him in his presence and in the presence of the angels." The definition found in the Catechism is richer. It reads, "Sacraments are holy signs and seals appointed for this end, that by the use thereof, he may the more fully declare and seal to us the promise of the gospel, namely, that he grants us freely the remission of sin, and life eternal, for the sake of that one sacrifice of Christ accomplished on the cross." We will return to this definition of Christ's accomplishment on the cross." We will return to this definition in the exposition of the last part of our subject.

But the Lord's Supper is not only a sign; it is also a seal. It is this for the sole reason of its being an institution of Christ. For the *sealing* of the promises to His people the Lord could have used other elements but not for the sign, the picture, the reason being that bread and wine only are suitable for this use for the reasons already given.

Now the question: What are the matters signified? The following.

- 1) The suffering and dying of Christ—His broken body and shed blood—signified by the breaking of the bread and by the pouring of the wine.
- 2) The suffering and dying of Christ as the foundation of the Covenant of Grace—for Christ said,

when He instituted the Lord's Supper, "This blood is the New Testament or covenant in my blood.

- 3) This sign is at once a seal of the covenant of grace and all its benefits, from the side of Christ. For Christ said, "Take, eat, this is my body which was *broken for you*. The matters sealed are the covenant and all its benefits, all the fruits of Christ's atonement—sealed are they unto the believers.
- 4) Signified, pictured, further is the exercise of the covenant fellowship of God and His people through Christ in the Spirit, definitely, the feeding and nourishing of the believers by Christ the true bread—signified by the believers eating and assimilating the natural bread and their being nourished by it. Secondly, the exercise of this sacramental fellowship is pictured by the Lord's Supper being a meal, a banquet, at which Christ is the host, as Savior and Lord of His people. He gives the bread and the wine, His own flesh and blood, to His people. This is pictured through His giving the natural bread and wine to His disciples, the church. This He continued to do through the ages by His servants. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper implies the resurrected, ascended and glorified Christ. This is implied in the communicants eating the natural bread and in their being nourished by it.

We could next explain the sacramental working in the Lord's Supper. But it is well that we first explain the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper. The question is definitely in what sense can we say that Christ as to His body and blood is present in the Lord's Supper. This concerns the question of the sacramental union with Christ.

1) It is not a material union. For the bread and the wine are not changed as to their essence into the flesh and blood of Christ. This is the foundation of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper with Rome. There by the words spoken by the priest the substance of the bread is changed into the body of Christ with the visible accidentals remaining, such as color, taste, smell. Hence, according to Rome, Christ's flesh and blood are eaten with the physical mouth. The bread is the Christ and the Christ is the bread also after the communion.

2) The unsacramental union is not local as the Lutherans teach. The Lutherans reject the transubstantiation of Rome. Here the teaching is not that the essence of the elements are changed into the Christ. Here the formula is: with, in, and under. According to this conception the body of Christ is bound by the elements and included by them, thus confined to space. Also according to this conception Christ is eaten with the physical mouth.

3) According to another conception Christ is present in the mind of the believer or the communicant as an idea of the suffering, dying, resurrected and

ascended Christ which the mind receives, and is thus present in the consciousness of the communicant. The communicant combines in his mind, such is the conception, the idea of the Christ, present in his mind, with the bread and the wine. This is the only union that takes place. This was the view of Zwinli.

Just how Christ is present in the Lord's Supper can best be explained in connection with the treatment of the sacramental working of in the Lord's Supper.

Let us consider then that God gave man an eye and an ear for receiving the knowledge of the things heavenly. To the ear corresponds the speech, the spoken word. The image, the picture is for the eye. Hence, the sacraments, definitely the sacramental bread and the wine. Symbols, pictures, they are of the Christ. The word and these sacramental signs go together. The Word can do without the sign however; but the sign cannot do without the word. For the sign, the bread and the wine, speak to us of the Christ, only because God imposed His word upon them. The bread and the wine are really pictures of the word. They serve the word in this sense.

The sacrament and the word of God, the Scriptures, agree in the following respects.

1) God is the author of both. He speaks His word and He instituted the sacraments.

2) The content of both is the same. This content is Christ who is brought to us by word and sacrament. The whole Christ is in the word and likewise the whole Christ is in the sacrament, the whole Christ, as He is our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and complete redemption.

3) There is agreement in the manner in which the content of both word and sacrament are received, namely, by faith. Without faith, true faith, the matter signified by the bread and wine cannot become our portion. So, too, we need faith to become the partaker of Christ as presented to us by the Scriptures, the word.

But they differ however in their necessity. The word is absolutely necessary, not so the sacraments. This does not mean that a man can be saved and ignore the sacraments. He cannot because God commanded His people to make use of these means of grace. Not to do so is to be disobedient, and to walk in disobedience and thus to perish.

The two differ as to their purpose. The purpose of the word is to awaken faith, the purpose of the sacrament is to strengthen faith.

Such then is the reason and purpose of the sacrament, definitely of the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper presents to the believer the same Christ that is brought to his consciousness by the word.

The foundation of the sacrament is the institution of Christ. This is the only guarantee whereby we are

assured that the Lord will use the sacrament as a means of grace. This guarantee is not in the sacrament as such. It is a means of grace only because Christ so instituted it and so willed.

This institution of the sacrament has two parts. There is a command given by Christ. He said, "Do this in remembrance of me." Then there is a word of promise spoken by Christ. He said, "In the way of your doing according to my institution and in obedience to my command in faith, I will certainly give you the grace signified and sealed by the sacrament. "This cup is the New Testament in my blood that was shed for you." Both the promise and the command are repeated by His servants appointed to administer the sacrament. It is Christ Who continues to speak this word through them and in the hearts of His people.

The sacramental working of the Lord's Supper can be plainly brought out by an exegesis of John 6:53-58. The passage reads, "Then Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whosoever eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him. As the father hath sent me and I live in the father, so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is the bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: but he that eateth of this bread shall live forever."

There are several explanations of these words of Christ. It is asked what may be the meaning of all these expressions? Did Christ have in mind the Lord's Supper, when he uttered these words, or was he speaking in general? Calvin was of the opinion that Christ was not speaking here of the Lord's Supper. The Lutherans likewise. The Lutherans maintain that the reference here is to a spiritual eating of Christ. For the Lutherans hold to a twofold eating of Christ, with the physical mouth and spiritually. Also the unbelievers, say the Lutherans, eat Christ with the physical mouth. As in John 6, all those who eat of Christ have eternal life, he could not have been speaking of the Lord's Supper, for this supper is also eaten by the unbelievers. There are others who maintain that Christ here speaks only of the Lord's supper. This is the other extreme. It is certain that these words of Christ have reference also to the Lord's Supper. How can it be otherwise if the signs in this supper—the bread and the wine—symbolize Him, present Him by symbol to our consciousness, and if the symbol, the signs in the Lord's supper, can be speaking to the believer only, and just because he views them in the light of the word? Christ here speaks of a bread that He will give, and that is His flesh. This reminds one of the words

of the institution of the Lord's supper, "This is my body that is broken for you". Christ will give Himself as an offering to God, He will give, present Himself, to the consciousness of His people in the preaching of the Gospel. By the Holy Spirit He will impart Himself to His people as the true bread of life. Thus also here He speaks of Himself not only as the Christ who will suffer and die for His people, but also as the risen and glorified Lord who merited Himself for His people as the fountain of Life. And in this Christ as presented to the Christian consciousness both by word and sacrament God's people believe. Thus, how can the Lord's supper be excluded here? It certainly cannot.

Let us therefore concentrate on some of these utterances. Firstly, on the expression, "except ye eat My flesh and drink My blood ye have no life in yourselves". We must notice these words carefully. He says not, "if ye eat My flesh and drink My blood ye will have life in you, or become alive," but, "except ye eat. . . ye have no life." It means that the eating presupposes life. We could also translate, "except ye do or are eating My flesh ye have no life in you." In the natural sense, the dead do not, cannot eat. So, too, it is in the spiritual. The man dead in sin cannot and does not eat. In the natural sphere bread is for the living. So too in the spiritual sphere.

Further, Christ says that He is bread. As was said, He merited Himself as bread for His people by His suffering and death. But there is this question. Why is He bread, He the risen and glorified Christ, bread for His people now and everlastingly? There can be but one answer. The fruits of His atonement dwell in Him, are one with Him, wherefore He is called the wisdom, justification, sanctification and redemption of His people. He is their life, according to His person and as to both His natures, the whole Christ. Every blessing is in Him. Life in separation from Him is death. Not to eat Him is to be without life, is to be dead and in death and under the curse everlastingly. No one can pass Him by and be the recipient of a single blessing. He is bread.

He is bread for the living, for His people. It means, as has already been suggested, that for His people He is and will be everlastingly indispensable. No man in the natural sense can live without bread. If he stops eating he dies. This is true also of the believers. Should they cease eating Christ, which is impossible, they would fall back into their former state with all its guilt and death. For He is bread. Further, as the true bread, He is for the maintenance or nourishment of their spiritual life. This all is symbolized by the Sacrament of the Lord's supper.

(To be continued)

G. M. O.

THE DAY OF SHADOWS

The Lord Maketh Pharaoh To Stand

Turning to the Book of Exodus, the ninth chapter, the sixteenth verse, we read; "And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout the earth." So speaks the Lord by the mouth of Moses to Pharaoh. The events that lead up to the Lord's speaking these words to Pharaoh—the Pharaoh of the oppression—can be briefly stated. The Lord brings His people into Egypt. And by the permission of the Pharaoh friendly to Joseph, they settle in Goshen. But Joseph dies; and a new king accedes to the throne, who knows not Joseph. This king takes complete possession of the people of Israel; he deals with them as though they belong to him and not to the Lord. He sets them to building his treasure cities; and he is a hard and cruel master. But it is a matter of policy with him thus to oppress the children of Israel. For the people of Israel are a prolific people. They increase abundantly; and it has the king worried. They may soon be surpassing his own people in numbers. What if a war should break out? And what if the people of Israel in their full numerical strength should then join forces with the enemy? That would spell disaster for Egypt. Such are the king's fears, which, of course, are groundless. The people of Israel have never once offended as sojourners in Egypt. They are a peaceful, quiet, and law-abiding people as Pharaoh's tenants. But to arrest Israel's growth, Pharaoh lays upon them heavy burdens. But the measure adopted proves not only ineffective, but, marvellous to say, even seems to produce a result contrary to that contemplated by the king. The more they afflict them, the more they multiply. So Pharaoh seeks the co-operation of the midwives. He instructs them to strangle all the Hebrew males at birth. These instructions are not carried out. For the midwives fear God. Then Pharaoh charges all the people to cast every son that is born into the river Nile. So deals Pharaoh with God's son. And that Israel is—he is God's first-born son.

The people of Israel cry unto the Lord. Then Moses is born. This is the Lord's answer to the cry of His people. We would say that the Lord has made a mistake. The children of Israel are in heavy bondage. They are in need of immediate help. And what can that babe do for them. But the Lord makes no mistakes. After eighty long years of training in the Lord's school, Moses is ready for his life's task, which is to bring forth God's people out of Egypt. What a task! What mortal man is equal to it? No mortal man, certainly. It is a task only for the Lord. He

alone can perform it. That is precisely the way Moses feels about it; for when the Lord calls him, he presents various excuses. But the Lord will be with him, and that makes all the difference. But Moses is still reluctant. But the Lord gets his way with him, nevertheless. The Lord always gets his way with everybody—with men good and bad. Moses goes, he and Aaron his brother. They go, the both of them, first to the children of Israel, as armed with the Lord's glad tidings that the day of salvation has dawned for them. The Lord will bring forth His armies, and his people, the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great judgments. The forth plague or judgment has been sent; but Pharaoh is still disobedient and defiant. He will not let the people go. And then the Lord says to him among other things this; "For now I will stretch out my hand, that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence; and thou shalt be cut off from the earth. And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth".

Let us concentrate first on the clause, "for this cause have I raised thee up." The text in the original reads, "For this cause I have made thee to stand." So, then, pharaoh stands. It implies that he has taken a stand, chosen a position, and that to this position he keeps himself with astounding determination, unwilling to yield one inch. Just what that position is, we learn from Pharaoh's reply to Moses and Aaron in the first encounter. Says Moses to Pharaoh in the name of the Lord, "Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto the Lord in the wilderness." Pharaoh replies, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go. I know not the Lord. Neither will I let Israel go." Let us get the thrust of this reply. Pharaoh means to say precisely this, "Who does this Jehovah, the God of Israel, whom you, Moses claim to be representing, think that he is, that he should be ordering me, Pharaoh, around? Does he suppose himself to be the Lord of the whole earth and master of all the inhabitants thereof, including me, Pharaoh? I don't know Jehovah. What is more, I will not let the people go. And this settles the matter. So, now, Moses, be gone."

Pharaoh's position, then, is verily this, "It is foolish and vain to imagine that there exists a god who can rightfully claim the whole earth and the fulness thereof and who has the power to make good his claim, and thus can command me, Pharaoh, king of Egypt. Let this Jehovah, for whom thou, Moses pretendest to be speaking, show me that he is such a God—the Lord of all the earth. I deny it. For I, Pharaoh, know him not, have never heard his name mentioned. For me Jehovah does not exist."

This verily is Pharaoh's position with respect to the Lord and His people. It is the ground that he oc-

cupies, the vain and wicked imaging in which he stands and walks and sit with all his heart and mind and will and strength. All his thoughts are that the Jehovah God of the Hebrews is not the Lord of all the earth, that there is no God with a sceptre whose sway is that universal and with a power that great, and that therefore there can be no reason why he should let the people of Israel go. This is Pharaoh's position in which he stands and to which he holds with amazing determination. The plagues come and go, and he still stands. Even with all Egypt's first-born in the grave, as slain by the Lord, all the thoughts of Pharaoh's heart again are that the Jehovah of the Hebrews is not the Lord. And he takes his people and six hundred chariots and pursues after the children of Israel but only unto his everlasting doom. This hard-hearted Pharaoh is truly an astounding and terrifying figure in his rebellion and defiance of God, the Lord God of Israel. His heart is hard in the very beginning of the encounter; but that heart of Pharaoh becomes always harder as the evidence that the Jehovah God of the Hebrews is the Lord of all the earth, continue to accumulate before his very eyes. And what is known of God by the plagues, namely, His power and wrath, is also revealed in him by the Lord, so that Pharaoh knows in his heart that Jehovah is the Lord of all the earth.

But there is this question. Who makes Pharaoh to stand in that position, standing in which he denies that Jehovah is the Lord, and refuses to let God's people go? According to our text it is the Lord Himself who makes Pharaoh to stand—to stand in all his rebellion and defiance and unwillingness to let God's people go. There should be no dispute about this. For our text speaks plainly, "for this purpose have I made thee to stand." And there are other places in our narrative, several of them, where we find the same truth and fact clearly expressed. Said the Lord to Moses even at the time he called Moses, thus even before Pharaoh was first commanded, even then already the Lord said to Moses, "I am certain that Pharaoh will not let you go, no, but by a mighty hand." Thus the Lord knows before hand just how Pharaoh will react, not because Pharaoh or some other creature, man or angel, has told the Lord—how foolish the idea—but only because God's foreknowledge is sovereignly determinative also of Pharaoh's wanton rebellion. How else could God know? To say that God knows because he is all-knowing but not to allow that God's foreknowledge is at once sovereignly determinative is not to answer the question but is only to evade it. But the question need not be evaded, but it may be faced with courage and confidence. For the scriptures speak plainly. So also at chapter seven, verse two of our narrative, "And the Lord said unto Moses. . . . thou shalt speak all that I command thee. . . . but I will harden Pharaoh's heart, so that Pharaoh will not hearken unto you." To be sure, Pharaoh, too, hardens his heart. This,

also, receives statement in the text over and over. Pharaoh hardens his heart by persistently keeping under in unrighteousness what is revealed to him of God, namely His power and wrath. Pharaoh hardens his heart by persistently opposing his *way* to the command of the Lord that he, Pharaoh, let the people go. These are Pharaoh's own wicked doings, sinful acts, of which he, Pharaoh, is the willing subject. And therefore Pharaoh is also responsible, and therefore the Lord can find fault with him indeed, hold him guilty, and punish him for his disobedience and rebellion. Yet Pharaoh can harden his heart only according to his being sovereignly hardened by the Lord. Verily, it is the Lord who makes Pharaoh to stand.

And only because and just because it is the Lord who in his sovereign good pleasure makes Pharaoh to stand, can and does the Lord have a purpose in making him to stand, the purpose mentioned by our text. Our text says, "And in very deed for this purpose have I made thee to stand, for to show thee My power; and that My name may be declared throughout the whole earth." The Lord could have made an end of Pharaoh at the outset, and the Lord's people would have been free. But the Lord forbears. Instead of cutting off Pharaoh from the earth immediately, the Lord makes him to stand, hardens his heart so that Pharaoh refuses to let the people go. And this the Lord does, in order that there may be opportunity to Him for achieving with Pharaoh His purpose which is to show Pharaoh His power, or, as the original text has it, to make Pharaoh to see His power. Accordingly, the Lord defiles Pharaoh's Nile by changing its waters into blood, so that the river becomes a stream of death and pollution. The frogs are sent. Flies swarm the land. There is murrain on the cattle. Boils and blains break out on man and beast. There is fire mingled with hail such as there was none like it in the land of Egypt since it became a nation. Locusts cover the face of the earth and eat the residue of that which is escaped from the hail. There is thick darkness in all the land. The first born of Egypt are slain. What is more, Moses foretells everyone of these plagues in the hearing of Pharaoh and his servants and as regards eight of these plagues Moses even specifies the very day on which they begin to riot. And thrice does Pharaoh beseech Moses to pray to God to make the plague to cease. Moses each time does as Pharaoh petitions and each time the plague is removed on the very day that Pharaoh is asked to name, in order that, as Moses tells the king, "Thou mayest know that there is none like the Lord our God," Then, too, Pharaoh investigates and he finds that, according to the word of the Lord to the effect that he will make separation between Israel and the Egyptians, the plagues do not riot in Goshen, where dwells God's people. Verily how clear the Lord's speech to Pharaoh, that it is the power of the Jehovah God of the Hebrews that he beholds and

that it is by Jehovah's judgments that he is being overtaken. But more must be said. God makes Pharaoh to see His power. In the last instance it means that what is known of God by the plagues, namely His power and wrath, the Lord also reveals in Pharaoh, so that Pharaoh sees not only plagues but very actually God's power and thus knows in his heart, actually knows, that the Jehovah God of the Hebrews is the Lord of all the earth. Yet, though Pharaoh knows, even with the tenth plague having come and gone, He again exalts himself against God and His people. He takes after them with his armies with the intent of bringing them anew under his yoke. But it only means that now he is ripe for final judgment. By a mighty and final revelation of His power to Pharaoh, the Lord cuts him off from the earth. He destroys Pharaoh by the waters of the Red Sea. And so does the Lord achieve His full purpose with Pharaoh, which is that the name of the Lord might be declared. For the destruction of Pharaoh spells the deliverance of the children of Israel, the church. And seeing the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore, and thus beholding that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians, the delivered people of God sing the song of Moses. They declare, the name of the Lord, the glories of their God—His power to save, His holiness and wrath and His mercy over His people, as revealed to them in the great work that He has done. But the purpose of God was that His name be declared throughout the whole earth. It is a purpose that will be fully achieved, when the church, the whole family of the redeemed, will have appeared with Christ in glory. Then the Name of the Lord will be declared throughout the whole earth—the new earth—where the tabernacle of God is with men—be declared, will be His name, everlastingly by His people as delivered from all their enemies and thus also from Satan and the world of which he is the prince and of which Pharaoh and his Egypt was the type—thus the world that crucified Christ and through the ages kills Christ's people all the day long. And they shall be delivered—shall God's people. For it is God who makes this combination of evil powers to stand. And in very deed for this purpose doth He make it to stand, to show it His power—a power by which it, too, is being spoiled and corrupted by the judgments of God, as was Egypt corrupted and spoiled by the judgments of God. And the day of the Lord will come in the which this entire vile opposition will be cut off from the face of the earth, as was Pharaoh and his host cut off by the waters of the Red Sea, by the Lord God. And they who have gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, will stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God; and they will sing the song of Moses the servant of God and of the lamb, saying, "Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord, God Almighty;

just and true are Thy ways, Thou king of saints. Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name? for Thou, only, art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before Thee; for Thy judgments are made manifest.

But all this is possible only by reason of the truth and fact that in very deed for this purpose hath the Lord made Pharaoh to stand, that he might show him Him power, that is, only by reason of the fact that he hath mercy on whom He will have mercy and whom He will He hardeneth.

G. M. O.

SION'S ZANGEN

De Beloften Eens Konings

(Psalm 101; Slot)

We hebben geluisterd naar het zingen eens Konings die galmt in groote harmonie van zijn geloften. Het is David, de man naar Gods hart.

Hij had zich voorgenomen om den Heere te dienen, en zulks te doen "in het midden zijns huizes".

Ook zagen we, dat deze David, d.w.z., de Beminde Gods, type is van den beteren David, van Wien de Heere getuigde: "Deze is Mijn zoon, Mijn Geliefde, in denwelke Ik Mijn welbehagen heb!" En van *dezen* David moet met nadruk gezegd worden, alles wat in den psalm gezongen wordt. Hij wandelde in het midden Zijns huizes zooals David dat nooit doen kon. De droeve geschiedenis van David's zonde getuigt ervan, dat hij niet altijd wandelde in oprechtheid des harten, maar dat hij vaak in de zonde viel. Doch Jezus is de Oprechte van Hart! En in den diepsten zin des woords hebt ge hier den psalm van Jezus die orgelt van Zijn heerlijk voornemen om in het midden van Zijn Huis in oprechtheid te wandelen.

En Hij heeft het gedaan.

Als Hij wandelde te Jeruzalem, of elders, dan kon Hij vragen: Wie uwer overtuigt Mij van zonde?

Dat kon David niet.

Hij deed het slechts in beginsel.

En zelfs dat beginsel is door de inwoning van lieflijke genade.

En die lieflijke genade vindt haar herkomst in al het werk van den beteren David, den Zoon van Gods eeuwig welbehagen.

"Mijne oogen zullen zijn op de getrouwen in den lande!"

Ja, ik geloof van harte, dat David dit vers beleefd heeft. Hij zag op het volk, wiens naam is "de getrouwen in den lande".

Vrage: wie zijn ze?

De getrouwen in den lande zijn het volk van God.

Bij alle zonde en gebrek is dat toch hun naam: de getrouwen in den lande!

Hoe zit dat? Trouwigheid hier is toch getrouwheid aan God? Hoe kan zelfs Gods volk met dien naam genoemd?

Wel, geliefde lezer, dat zij dien naam hebben is zeker. De duidelijkste plaats vind ik in Psalm 44. Daar wordt het eenvoudig als een feit gekonstateerd. En ik mag gaarne die plaats aanwijzen tot staving van de stelling, dat Gods volk getrouw is, omdat de omstandigheden waarin dat volk verkeerde ten tijde dat er van hen gezongen wordt in dien psalm, van dien aard waren, dat ze, indien ooit, dan zeker ontrouw zouden geworden zijn. Wat was die toestand? Deze: God verstiet hen en maakte hen tot schande; Hij gaf hen over tot spijs aan den vijand; God verkocht hen en verrijkte Zich niet van hun prijs; God maakte Zijn volk tot een spreekwoord, tot verachting, tot hoon en smaad onder de heidenen!

En nu, let er op! Dat volk is aan het woord. "Dit alles is ons overkomen, nochtans hebben wij U niet vergeten, noch valschelijk gehandeld tegen Uw verbond. Ons hart is niet achterwaarts gekeerd, noch onze gang geweken van Uw pad, hoewel Gij ons verpletterd hebt in eene plaats der draken, en ons met eene doodsschaduw bedekt hebt. Zoo wij den Naam onzes Gods hadden vergeten, en onze handen tot een vreemden god uitgebreid, zoude God zulks niet onderzoeken? Want Hij weet de verborgenheden des harten. Maar om Uwentwil worden wij den ganschen dag gedood, wij worden geacht als slachtschapen!" Psalm 44:18-23.

Later, zeide Jesaja eigenlijk hetzelfde: "Want Hij zeide: Zij zijn immers Mijn volk, kinderen *die niet liegen zullen?*" Jes. 63:8a.

En Johannes: "Een iegelijk die uit God geboren is, die doet de zonde niet; want zijn zaad blijft in hem, en hij kan niet zondigen; want hij is uit God geboren." I Joh. 3:9.

Ik zou meer teksten kunnen aanhalen, doch deze zijn genoeg om te bewijzen, dat Gods volk den naam verdiend van "getrouwen in den lande".

Doch hoe kan dat? Is Gods volk geen ontrouw volk ook? Zegt Daniel niet: "O Heere, bij ons is de beschaamdheid der aangezichten"? Ik zou wel honderd teksten kunnen aanhalen die getuigen van de zonde van Gods volk, tegen één die getuigt van hun getrouwheid. Hoe zit dat?

De sleutel tot de oplossing van dit vraagstuk zult ge vinden bij Johannes. In den tekst dien we aanhaalden uit zijn eersten brief leest ge: "want Zijn zaad blijft in hem". Er is een beginsel, een zaad van

God, dat in elk wedergeboren mensch woont. Paulus noemt dat beginsel "den nieuwen mensch". Jezus noemt dat beginsel: "de reinen van hart".

Dat beginsel nu, dat reine hart, die nieuwe mensch kan niet zondigen. Meer nog: die nieuwe mensch geeft stuur en richting aan het leven. En het is dat nieuwe, onzondige beginsel in God's volk, dat getrouw is, en voor hen den naam verdiende: getrouwen in den lande!

Deze zaak was het juist in het lijden en in de beproeving van Job. De duivel zeide: Op den duur gaat Job aan 't vloeken en zondigen tegen God. En God zeide: Ga uw gang, Satan! Beproof het! En ge zult zien, dat er iets in Job is, dat de overwinning zal behalen.

En wat lezen we van Job, nadat Satan hem bestookte? Dit: "In dit alles zondigde Job niet, en schreef Gode niets ongerijmds toe".

Het is ook duidelijk, dat het zóó moet en niet anders kan. Gods volk op aarde, te midden van duivelen en goddelooze menschen, vertegenwoordigen de zaak van God.

De vlammen en de verstikkende rook van den brandstapel hebben de stemmen van Uw vaderen en mijn vaderen gesmoord. Maar vooraleer zij den laatsten adem uitbliezen, hebben ze getuigenis van God afgelegd.

Wilt ge den diepsten grond kennen voor den naam "getrouwen in den lande"?

Dan zal ik dien grond ophalen uit de Heilige Schrift; hij is deze: "Juich en zing vroolijk, gij inwoneres van Sion, want de Heilige Israëls is groot *in het midden van u!*" Jesaja 12:6.

En als ge blijft vragen en zeggen: "maar Gods volk is toch zoo vreeselijk zondig"? Dan wilde ik U antwoorden en zeggen: tot zelfs in hun zonde toe zijn ze getrouw, want wat zegt David, en wat zingt gij? Dit:

'k Bekend', o Heer, aan U oprecht mijn zonden;
'k Verborg geen kwaad, dat in mij werd gevonden;

Maar ik beled, na ernstig overleg,
Mijn booze daan; Gij naamt die gunstig weg!

Die psalm toont de getrouwigheid van het volk van God.

God zegt van hen: zij zijn kinderen die niet liegen zullen.

Liegt Gods volk niet?

Het antwoord is: ze bedrijven de principieelen leugen niet, en die leugen is: er is geen God!

Ze zijn de getrouwen in den lande, want zij zijn van de partij des levenden Gods.

Doch doe er altijd dit kleine zinnetje bij: Door U, door U alleen, om 't eeuwig welbehagen!

Nu dan, dat volk heeft David lief. Op hen zijn zijn oogen. Die oogen zijn de oogen van het welbehagen.

En dat is vervuld in Jezus Christus.

Ge moogt ervan verzekerd zijn, dat de oogen van Jezus op Zijn volk zijn in groot welgevallen.

"Dat ze bij mij zitten", zegt David.

En: "die in den oprechten weg wandelt, die zal mij dienen".

De getrouwen in den lande zijn dezelfde als die in den oprechten weg wandelen. Het past precies. De oprechtheid des harten wordt bewezen in hun getrouwheid. Want de wandel eens menschen begint in het hart.

Dat volk heeft Jezus verkoren om bij Hem te zitten. En zittende mogen zij Hem dienen.

Het inbegrip van al het verlangen van Gods kinderen. Als David zong: Wie heeft lust den Heer te vreezen, dan antwoorden zij van alle eeuwen: Dat is de groote honger van mijn hart! Hieraan zult ge het volk Gods onderkennen: zij begeeren God te dienen in en door Jezus Christus dien Hij gezonden heeft.

En zij zullen bij Hem "zitten". Later, veel later, zal Jezus hetzelfde zeggen: "Die overwint, Ik zal hem geven met Mij te zitten in Mijnen troon, gelijk als Ik overwonnen heb en ben gezeten met Mijnen Vader in Zijnen troon".

Ja, en zij zullen Hem dienen.

En het dienen wordt zingen, en het zingen wordt jubelen, een jubel van het reinste klankgeslacht.

En nu het tegenovergestelde: "Wie bedrog pleegt, zal binnen mijn huis niet blijven; wie leugen spreekt zal voor mijne oogen niet bevestigd worden."

Ach, voor tijd en wijle zijn er die bedrog plegen in het huis van David. Er is altijd kaf onder het koren geweest, en dat zal zoo blijven tot den laatsten dag.

Nog eens weer: Gods kind zondigt óók, doch hij houdt zijn zonde niet vast, zooals de verworpenen. Wel verre van ze vast te houden, komt hij met al zijn zonden, ook van bedrog, en brengt ze voor den troon van Gods genade. Die zonden worden hem afgenomen, op grond van Jezus' offerande.

Soms wordt het zóó uitgedrukt: Gods volk *leeft* niet in de zonde.

Welnu, David zegt hier: Ik wil geen volk rondom mij dulden, dat in de zonde van bedrog *leeft*. Met andere woorden, hij wil geen Satanskinderen rondom zich hebben.

En al Gods volk zegt het hem na.

Het is een veeg teeken als we op ons gemak zijn bij de goddeloozen.

En Jezus heeft die sprake van David vervuld.

Vandaag zegt Jezus het nog.

Hij haat het gedrochtelijke volk, dat luistert naar Satan's leugen.

Ook zal niemand in het Huis Davids komen die bedrog pleegt. En nu schreef ik Huis met een hoofdletter, want het beteekent de hemel, het nieuwe Jeruzalem. Leest het maar: "Maar buiten zullen zijn de honden, en de toovenaars, en de hoereerders, en de

doodslagers, en de afgodendienaars, *en een iegelijk die de leugen liefheeft en doet.*"

Hebt ge dat ééne woord gezien in den zin die schuin gedrukt staat? Ik heb het oog op het woord: *liefheeft*. Hieraan zult ge het voor Uw eigen bewustzijn weten. Hebt ge de leugen lief?

Indien ja, dan behoort ge niet in het Huis van Jezus.

Indien neen, dan zult ge Hem dienen tot in alle eeuwigheid.

In het nieuwe Jeruzalem zal alleenlijk inkomen het volk, dat hernieuwd is naar het evenbeeld van Jezus Christus. Zij zullen zóó lang door den beteren David bearbeid worden, totdat zij geheel en al zullen zijn zooals Hij is.

Daarnaar verlangt onze ziel.

"Alle morgen zal ik alle goddeloozen des lands verdelgen, om uit de stad des (Heeren alle werkers der ongerechtigheid uit te roeien."

Zoo heeft David gesproken, en ook gehandeld.

Dat wil zeggen, in zoo verre hij daartoe in staat was.

Want David was, ten eerste, een gebrekkig mensch. In absoluto heeft hij het niet *kunnen doen*. Terwijl hij in Jeruzalem leefde, zijn er ook nog wel goddeloozen binnen de muren van die stad Gods gevonden. Onbegrensde kracht had ook David niet.

Ten tweede, zijn er goddeloozen geweest die hun goddeloosheid bedekt hebben. Er zijn altijd hypocrieten geweest, ook in David's tijd en stad.

Daarom roept ook deze tekst om de vervulling van Jezus.

Hij gaat dit vers in absoluto vervullen in zijn dag.

De goddeloozen worden verdelgd en de werkers der ongerechtigheid zullen uitgeroeid worden.

Wat dit ten volle beteekent weten we niet.

Het is *te vreeselijk*.

Maar iets weten we ervan. De Bijbel spreekt van hunne pijniging en van het weenen derzulken en van het knarsen hunner tanden. De rook hunner pijniging gaat op tot in alle eeuwigheid.

In onze dagen groeit het aantal van hen die deze verschrikkelijke waarheid loochenen. Denkt aan de "Jehovah's Witnesses".

Maar Gods Woord blijft eeuwig waar: "Vreeselijk zal het zijn te vallen in de handen van den levenden God!"

Neen! We hebben geen "schik" in de verdoemenis van de ongelukkigen. Het is ons verweten. Dat kan niet, want wij zitten vast aan hen, zoolang we hier op aarde wonen. En ik kan er in komen, dat Paulus om zijner broederen wil van Christus wenschte verbannen te zijn. Maar het is God die waarlijk God is, die hen verwierp. Het past ons stille te zijn.

Looft Hem, die U redde uit zóó grooten dood!

G. V.

IN HIS FEAR

Living In His Fear

With and Through Our Children (cont.)

In the last instalment of this department we began to give our answer to an excuse that is generally given for not sending our children to schools where they may be trained as children of God's kingdom. The excuse we began to answer is the one that many who never were sent to such schools turned out to be good Christians and even attained to high offices in the church. At this time we would like to pen down a few added thoughts besides those we gave last time.

We would begin then by reminding you that the dangers to which our children are subjected today when they are taught by the world are far greater than they were even a few generations back. They were exposed to a great danger a few generations back, let there be no mistake about that. But today the danger is far greater because the world has become more skilled in its presentation of the lie.

Because by the world our children are instructed according to the principle of the lie, it is dangerous to take the citizen's of God's kingdom of truth and righteousness and bring them to the citizens of the devil's kingdom of the lie and unrighteousness for their training and instruction. ALL, absolutely all, the instruction given by the world and supervised by the world is based on the lie of Paradise. Man was taught his first lesson in the lie there in Paradise when the devil taught him the heretical and dangerous lesson that man might disobey God if he so chose and that it was even to his advantage to do so. That is the principle according to which the world lives today. It is the principle which controls all his thinking, willing and acting. Pharaoh, who received a doctors degree from the devil for learning his lesson so well, gave a definite expression to what resides in the heart of every man as he is by nature, when this wicked king said unto Moses, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice?" This reprobate king gave expression to what was in his heart, and although all the ungodly do not say that with their lips, this is the principle of the lie which is behind their every thought, word and deed. Pharaoh is no exception except in the sense that he gave an exceptionally clear expression to what is in the heart of every man as he is by nature. That was even the principle according to which our first parents ate of the forbidden fruit. The moment they decided to eat and partook of that fruit, they said by their deed, "Who is the Lord that I should obey His voice?" And we all are born from such parents. That evil nature is carried down from Adam and Eve unto all their posterity so that

every child born into this world lives according to that principle. And without the regenerating grace of God no man can ever act from any other principle. He cannot serve God, fear Him in love and live to His praise and glory. He cannot begin to walk in good works. His mind is full of darkness, and He cannot believe the truth even when he hears it. He continues to believe the lie and to think that it is to his advantage to keep on walking in that way. It brings pleasure to his flesh. He finds the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life satisfied and uses all God's creatures in the service of his flesh.

According to that principle of the lie he lives. And according to that principle of the lie he instructs his children and yours, if you will give them over to him for their education and training. They simply cannot do anything else. They cannot teach their children that they are here for the purpose of serving God. They cannot teach them that to fear God and to keep His commandments is the whole duty of man. Because he is fleshly minded, he cannot teach his children that to love God is to his advantage and that to disobey is his destruction. He simply does not believe these things. How then can he teach his children what he himself does not believe? He believes only in that which will satisfy his lusts. He may teach his child the golden rule. When he does, however, he does not do so because he believes that he ought to love the Lord his God with all his heart, soul, mind and strength and his neighbor as himself. He teaches the golden rule and even preaches natural love toward mankind because he wants his flesh satisfied. He wants to live in peace for the sake of his flesh. Here again he asks: "What is to my advantage?" rather than to ask "What is my calling?" Had Adam and Eve continued to ask themselves what their God-given calling was, rather than what seemed to promise them an advantage, they would not have fallen. Thus when the natural man teaches the golden rule or any one of God's commandments, he does so that he may live free from fear and from violence from his neighbor. His relationship to God does not bother him. He is still living from the principle of the lie.

It is therefore according to this principle of the lie that he also teaches ALL the subjects in his educational system. The result is that you have a wholly man-centered, worldly minded, godless and antichristian system of education and instruction. What a tremendous danger to which we subject our children when we ask the devil's students and graduates to teach and instruct the sons and daughters of Zion! How dare we ever do it!

Because all the subjects are treated according to the principle of the lie you find that history, for example, simply becomes man's great adventure. After a more or less strongly emphasized evolutionistic beginning, the rise and fall of nations is treated. There

is no real aim in history as the world teaches it. Man is struggling to improve his position to reach the utopia of his dreams, but what the outcome will be is only to be conjectured. There is no room for the church, for the cross or for the return of Christ in glory. The kingdom of heaven and the New Jerusalem do not belong to the history of this world as the unbeliever teaches it. Mind you, that little stone of Daniel 2 which was cut out of the mountain without hands and which grew and grew and finally struck the image of gold, silver, brass, iron and clay, and ground it to powder, that part of the history of this world, that kingdom which subdues all other kingdoms and is an everlasting kingdom is ignored and even mocked. When the world teaches history it stands by that motley image and traces the gold to the silver, the silver to the brass, the brass to the iron and clay and sees man's great adventure. And he says, "How wonderful! Day by day we are progressing to a better world." And behind his back that stone which he ignores and for which he has even no worthy thought grinds closer and closer to the complete destruction of that which is of man.

Similarly, of course, the instruction in geography follows that same pattern of ignoring the Almighty Creator and viewing the creation from a fleshly viewpoint. Here again the beginning is more or less evolutionistic. Such instruction is supposed to be forbidden, but the books of the world abound with it. Reference is made to the billions of years ago when this or that took place. And the very refusal to recognize the Creator in itself brands the instruction as godless and dangerous. The child is not taught that the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof. He is taught that it is his to use to the satisfaction of his lust. He is taught that there is no forbidden fruit. It is all here for his enjoyment. The earth and its fulness has no other purpose than the advantage and enjoyment of man. How can the world teach anything else? How can they teach that we exist for God's glory and that we must live antithetically in this world serving God also BY LEAVING THINGS ALONE. It is impossible for a communist to teach his children democracy because he does not believe it himself, AND BECAUSE HE HATES IT. The world cannot teach your children the fear of the Lord because the world does not believe in Him and BECAUSE IT HATES HIM.

And so the child is taught to read, to write, to spell and to work arithmetic problems. He is here on this earth for his own advantage and enjoyment. And he had better be able to read, to write and to spell, otherwise he will miss many of the nicer things of life. It is not important that he learn to read in order that he may read and understand the Word of God. That he is a thinking, willing being, created in the image of God, so that he above all the creatures of the earth might have fellowship with God, might talk to Him

and hear Him speak unto us is of no consequence at all to the world. Why it does not even believe such things! And, of course, in order that his fellowmen do not cheat him left and right, he should learn to add and subtract, to multiply and divide. The beauty and wisdom of God in the marvelous numerical system He has given us is not even considered, because it is not believed. Your child will be well equipped to take his place with the world in seeking the things here below, but at the same time, he will be taught TO SEEK THESE THINGS ALONE as the highest and only good. He will be taught to eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow he dies. That is what the world believes, and that is what it teaches. Every subject is taught with that principle of the lie as its basis.

Let us not be deceived. Such instruction is anti-christian. Instruction is either Christian or it is anti-christian. It either points us to the coming of Christ or the coming of the antichrist and seeks to increase our hope either in the coming of Christ when we shall enter into that New Jerusalem of righteousness and love to God or in the coming of the antichrist when the lust of man shall feast on the false and deceptive prosperity of his reign. Any instruction that avoids and eliminates the church of Christ which is His body out of its instruction eliminates Christ and is anti-christian. Such elimination and deliberate ignoring (for the birth and death of Christ are historical facts and the Scriptures are the oldest and most published book in the world) of Christ is simply rooted in hatred for the kingdom of God. It is simply one phase and manifestation of that enmity of Genesis 3:15. Far be it from the seed of the serpent to give a place in its educational system for the history, works and belief of the seed of the woman! It will ignore THE SEED OF THE WOMAN, CHRIST. And therefore you may not brand the instruction of the world anything else than ANTICHRISTIAN AND GODLESS. It is not for Christ, and therefore it is against Him. And that brands it as anti-christian.

Such has been the case with all instruction by the seed of the serpent in the past. It has NEVER been otherwise, and increasingly, as time goes on, the instruction given by the seed of the serpent becomes more and more serpentine. The guile, the deceit, the poisonous and dangerous ways of the seed of the serpent grow and develop. The rattle snake is a dangerous creature, but his dangerous character increases when his tell-tale rattles are off. Beware the rattle-snake who gives no warning. And the seed of the serpent is shedding his rattles. In the next instalment we wish to say a little more about this and to show why today the danger of intrusting God's children to the seed of the serpent is increasingly great.

(To be Cont.)

J. A. H.

FROM HOLY WRIT

O. T. Quotations in the N. T.

(Ex. 34:34 in II Cor. 3:16—concluded)

"Turning unto the Lord" in II Cor. 3:16 must, therefore, mean: a deep and abiding change of the heart, a turning away from self chosen ways of seeking to establish their own righteousness on the part of Israel, and turning to the righteousness of God in Christ.

But does "turning unto the Lord" also have this meaning in Exodus 34:34? The text reads literally: "But when Moses *went in before the Lord to speak with Him.* . . ." This hardly can be interpreted as referring to *repentance* on the part of Moses. Neither do we think that such is the implication of Paul in quoting this passage, even though the rendering he gives to it refers to Israel's repentance.

Yet, there are those who would thus interpret this passage. They reason, that whereas Moses represents Israel, and whereas going into the tent to speak with God was an act of fellowship with God, Moses entering into the Old Testament counterpart of Israel's repentance and turning to the Lord in seeing the glory of the risen Christ. Of this view we will not here say much. Only this: It seems to us, firstly, that it is rather far-fetched and assumes that very element in Paul's quotation must find the exact counterpart in the Old Testament passage. Secondly, such assumption hardly squares with the clear and logical argumentation of the apostle Paul in I Corinthians 3.

As for the argumentation of Paul, in the passage under consideration, the following is pertinent in regard to this matter of Moses going in before the Lord.

1. In II Cor. 3 Paul is not at all speaking of the personal life and piety of Moses, neither does he speak of Moses as a sort of Mediator in the stead of Israel, a priest bringing the sacrifice for the sins and weaknesses of the people. What Paul refers to is the *office* of Moses in the *ministry* of the Old Testament. This ministry is that which Paul characterizes as being written in "tables of stone" instead of that "written by the Spirit of the living God on the table of the redeemed heart". Nay, Paul is here not speaking of the piety of Moses, neither of a certain high-priestly function of Moses' part, but he is speaking of Moses' office in administering the law. Moses is here the one who has a ministry of death, a ministry of condemnation. (Compare vss. 6-10). In the light of this alone one should hesitate to make Moses the Old Testament counterpart of the repenting Israel in the N. T.

2. In close connection with the foregoing, it should by all means not escape our attention that Paul is here not speaking primarily of Moses' ministry but that

the theme which Paul here develops is his own ministry as an apostle of Jesus Christ and through His Spirit.

Says Paul to the Corinthians in vs. 2: "Ye are our epistle, engraved in our hearts, known and read by all men, being manifested that ye are the epistle of Christ, *ministered* by us, written not with ink, but by the Spirit of the Living God, not in tables of Stone but on the tables of fleshy hearts." It is to Paul's place as an apostle, his office and ministry in the Spirit that attention is here directed. The new life in the congregation, revealed in the life of conversion and sanctification is what God wrote there through the Holy Spirit, by the ministry of Paul. God *administered* it through Paul's preaching. Says Paul: *ministered by us*. And having developed this theme of the glory of his own ministry, a ministry of righteousness, a ministry of the Spirit that far exceeds in glory the ministry of Moses, Paul begins the 4th chapter of II Corinthians as follows: "Therefore, *having this ministry*, even as we have received mercy, we faint not. . . ." From this it is evident that Paul is here referring to two ministrations of God. The one the ministration of the Spirit, the other the ministration of the law by Moses. Surely, Paul, therefore, does not speak here of the piety of Moses, but he most emphatically, persistently and clearly speaks of the office of Moses in the administration of the law.

3. It is for this very reason also that Paul does not say that Moses put a vail upon his *heart*. Moses most clearly understands the import of the law. Yet, understanding the law on the one hand, and also clearly perceiving the unbelief of Israel on the other hand, he is said to place a vail on his face when speaking with Israel, and we are told that he put the vail off whenever he entered the tent to speak with the Lord.

The difference, therefore, is as follow. Moses as the *office-bearer of God in administering* the law, puts a vail on his face when he talks with Israel. Israel has a vail on their *heart*. This latter is not true of Moses. That is the difference. And this difference is not explained by making Moses a mere pious man without a covering on his heart.

How must this difference be accounted for then?

The answer to this question hinges on the reason for and the nature of the vail on Moses' face. Why did Moses place this vail upon his face? And when this vail is there what is its implication, what does it proclaim to us concerning Israel?

As to the reason for the vail on Moses' face, we are told in Exodus, that it was as follows: "And it came to pass when Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he (Moses) talked with him (God). And when Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone; and they were afraid to come nigh unto him. And

Moses called unto them; and Aaron and all the rulers of the congregation came unto him; and Moses talked with them. And afterward all the children of Israel came nigh: and he gave unto them in commandment all that the Lord had spoken with him in Mount Sinai. And till Moses had done speaking with them, he put a vail on his face. But when Moses went in before the Lord to speak with him, he took the vail off until he came out. And he came out, and spake unto the children of Israel that which he was commanded. And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone; and Moses put the vail upon his face again, until he went in to speak with him." Exodus 34:29-35.

The reason for placing this vail upon the face of Moses is said to be: the fear of the people. What did they fear? They were afraid of Moses because of the radiance of his face.

Two elements are here present in the "shining" of Moses face which must not be confused, but which must clearly be distinguished.

The first is, and we must clearly understand this, that there was a literal, visible light, a glory that was manifest to the naked eye of Israel on Moses' face. It was a glory as impossible for the created eye of man to behold even as it is impossible for the naked eye to look into the brightness of the noonday sun. Just as it was impossible for Israel to view without fear the glory of Mount Sinai when God spoke the ten words, the Decalogue from out of the midst of the thunder, lightning, earthquake and darkness and tempest, so it was impossible for Israel to view Moses' face even from a physical viewpoint. It was divinely terrifying.

But surely it was more than this. If it were no more than this then Israel's request would not be sinful, it would not have been an indication of the vail of unbelief that lay upon her heart. Surely it is more than mere brightness on Moses' face, the meaning of which is left to every man's interpretation and imagination in Israel.

It was also a "glory" which bore its own testimony. Was this glory not on Moses' face because he has spoken with God face to face on the mount, and because he was bearing the tables of stone on which God has inscribed His law with His own finger? It was the testimony of the glory of the law on Moses' face. And this glory of the law is nothing else but God's revealed will, His self-maintenance in His glorious virtues of justice and holiness, equity and truth, which demand that the man that doeth the law, that will face the glory of God even though it condemns, shall live in them. It is the glory of the ministry of the Old Testament written in tables of Stone and not in the tables of the heart. Says Paul, "If the ministry of death. . . . became in glory. . . ." II Cor. 3:7. And again, in verse 8 it is called "the ministry of *condemnation*". The glory of Moses' face is the glory of the

Ministry of condemnation and death for the guilty sinner. As such it is clearly perceived to be by Israel even in the radiance of Moses' face.

The request of Israel that Moses cover his face was, therefore, as to its spiritual nature, fundamentally hardness of heart. The vail on Moses' face was a symbol of this hardness of heart. Hence, the vail on Moses face, is at once the vail of unbelief on Israel's heart. This is the inner connection which is alluded to by Paul in II Cor. 3:15, 16.

Yet, this vail on Moses' face is more than symbol of Israel's unbelief. It is also an act of the minister of condemnation, a judicial act whereby Israel's vision of the telos, the divinely designed end, the purpose of the glory of the law is taken from her vision. Briefly the end of the law was this: it meant to lead Israel pedagogically to Christ, to the Lamb that would take away the sin of the world in facing the glory of God in Moses's face. But when Israel would not see this glory on Moses' face as it must be the taskmaster to Christ, it could not see either the greater glory to come in Christ, a glory so great that it would cause the glory of Moses face to dim and pass away. Turning from the glory of Moses as the minister of death, means turning away from Him who has come to fulfill Moses' law in the perfect obedience at Calvary.

In covering his face Moses does two things. Firstly, he executes the judgment written in the law upon Israel as reflected in the brightness of his face. That was really all that the glory of God in the face of Moses could possibly do. Secondly, he nevertheless maintains the law as to its design in view of the greater glory to come. The time now must come and has come (thanks be to God) that in the face of Jesus Christ the glory of God now shines through the gospel in our hearts. Through whose ministry? That of Moses? Nay, through that of the ministry of the New Testament, through the ministry of the Spirit, the ministry of righteousness and of the glory that is pre-eminent.

For God Himself, the Lord, the Almighty God has come to dwell amongst us. And we have seen His glory, glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. In Him the Lord has come to fulfil the prelude of the tables of stone in Moses' hand and making it a reality in our hearts: "I am the Lord Thy God which hath delivered thee out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." For the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit is there is liberty.

This glory is not difficult to behold. Moses cannot cover it; and Paul will not do so. Never do we desire this glory to be covered as believers. By turning to the Lord in faith the vail is removed. In heartfelt sorrow and contrition we turn unto the Lord. And that we *all* do. We do it with uncovered, unvailed face. And from glory unto glory we, seeing Christ by faith in a glass darkly are changed from glory unto glory as by the Spirit of the Lord!

G. L.

Contribution

168 Reed Ave., Holland, Mich.

May 19, 1947.

Dear Brother and Editor:

Irrespective of what I think of the balance of your article, in answer to me in the Standard Bearer of April 1, 1947, in re Ladies Aid Sales, there are several of your remarks with which I am not satisfied. The very unbrotherly, if not sarcastic and untruthful, accusations which you hurled at me I feel to be sinful on your part, since you place me before the brethren of our Churches and the reading public as a vandal—feigning under the cloak of a Christian, (using the Word of God deceitfully to gain my point of argument over my opponents) in order to establish a fact which is in essence, according to your statements, an untruth.

1. You accuse me of using "bogey" tactics to gain my point.
2. You accuse me of falsehood as pertaining to the tax law.
3. Then in the light of the above, in a disdainful way, you falsely present me (we brethren) as vandals before the eyes of the public. You present us as having stooped so low as to have used God's Holy Word (feigning as a Christian) to champion the things which are not true, merely in order to gain our point over our opponents in the controversy.

These methods you employ are not only unbrotherly but are an insult. What other opinion can the reading public receive of me (we brethren) then that we would stoop to such tactics. Tactics which are not only low but devilish use of God's Word to establish a falsehood as truth, just to gain our point of argument. This is to say the least, a very bad impression you have made of us before the reading public and the brethren of our Churches. I am certain that I (we) have never left such an impression before the Church of God in my (our) walk of life. We have always vigorously championed the truth in love to God and have always sought its welfare. And here with another sweep of your pen you disdainfully placed me before the public and our Churches as a man that would practise such lewdness. This is positively untruthful and false.

Irrespective of who is right or wrong in the argument, you have no right to write about me as you have done. But in order to establish what I seriously contended to be truth of law (though it isn't the main point in the argument) I have before me a letter from the Deputy Commissioner of Revenue of the State of Michigan, dated May 5, 1947, which states that we have interpreted the law correctly. Let me quote an excerpt to prove this: "I promptly admit that there is

nothing I can add to the conclusion or observations made by you as concerns application of the sales tax".

I am not writing this to flout you nor to obtain a victory over you, nor to exalt myself, but only because you expressed your opinion and based your reasoning on this very point. Because you thought you were right caused you to write as you did but you forgot to be brotherly and accused me of things of which I (we) are not guilty. Nor have I falsified the position, misquoted the law, or used God's Word unjustly to maintain my point in question. God forbid! that I should ever stoop so low. Neither can I imagine that you expected me ever to use such devilish tactics as that.

Disagree with me if you must. State your position and let the readers judge and do so in a brotherly manner; which is your duty to me and all others.

I have the letter of the Deputy Commissioner of Revenue of the State of Michigan on file, for anyone who may wish to read it. It was not intended for publication and therefore, I do not publish it. The Commissioners of Revenue will publish what they want to make known. Therefore, I ask you to publish this article in its entirety, to which I have a right before God and the brethren; to defend myself and state my position (not overagainst the Ladies Aid Sales this time) but overagainst you, Editor and brother. That the truth may be vindicated that I am not that "Bogeyman" using God's Word in vain to gain a sinful end as you will confess through the Standard Bearer to remove the blame placed on us, that all things, also our writing, may be done in the way of God's blessing. Thus we may continue again as brethren in the Lord, trusting each other that we fully mean to be serious and crave God's blessing.

Your brother in Christ,
H. A. Van Putten.

To provoke no further argument, we will let the brother have the last word. Let the reader compare and judge for himself.

H. H.

IN MEMORIAM

We hereby wish to express our sympathy to our fellow office bearer, brother G. Gritter Sr., in the loss of his brother,
MR. GEORGE GRITTER

who passed away last August 21.

May the Lord comfort the relatives with His all sufficient grace.

The Consistory of the Creston Prot. Ref. Church
John D. De Jong, Pres.
Paul Vanden Engel, Clerk.

Contribution

May 31, 1947.

Esteemed Editor of the Standard Bearer:

Not being used to writing in public, I hesitate to ask for a little pace in the above-mentioned paper for the following remarks.

Having followed the discussion between the two editors, namely of the "Standard Bearer" and the "Christian Labor Herald", I as an ex-C.L.A. member was disappointed with the answer given by the Standard Bearer Editor in the May 15 issue.

1. The Rev. H. H. states in the first place that Mr. Gritter made a poor job of defending the present stand and action of the C.L.A. in regard to the so-called "closed shop with a loophole", but not even principally defending it but just apologizes for what they were forced to do.

2. I doubt that as the strike question in the same article is presented is exactly correct, as if that is their first and most important weapon. Much has been written on this question, pro and con, and the last word has most likely not yet been said. Is it not possible to look at this thing from a different point of view?

3. Point 3 is something which can not be made out, but consists between the two persons, who are in danger of calling each other a liar, which should not be done.

4. The fourth point of which I have a few remarks is about the so-called "mudslinging" at our Protestant Reformed Churches by tating (namely by Mr. Gritter) that there are persons in our churches who sign closed contracts with the A.F. of L. and C.I.O. which contracts make it impossible for them to employ others than members of said organizations and that these persons are members in good standing in our churches.

Now I for one would not call this mudslinging because this statement is not merely based on rumors, but is a well known fact, at least by many of us. How much they are worked with and admonished by their consistories, we, of course, do not know, but we know that this has been going on for years. We can not, of course, mention names of persons we have in mind, but some of them are leading men in our churches.

And we like to ask what difference is there if a poor man is joining an organization for the sake of his daily bread, for himself and for his dependents. and a person who is in business who makes agreements with the same groups to submit to their demand for the sake of the same purpose? I fail to see the difference. If there is a difference, the poor man has much better excuse than the business man. If the first is wrong, and it is, than the second is just as much wrong. if not more, and should be watched, and treated just as

severely. It becomes more and more difficult to discipline union members because they point us direct to this very condition. Just imagine, an elder in our churches is compelled to discipline a member of his church because he is affiliated with an ungodly organization, but the same elder is running a closed shop or job "without a loophole" having a contract signed with the same union.

Coming back once more to point one, we sure think that Mr. Gritter at least tried to defend the stand of the C.L.A. principally, see the Christian Labor Herald, May, 1947.

Speaking of authority, I would like to have an answer to the question—who really has so-called "God-given authority" one over the other, has the employer, just because he has the means and ability to run a factory? Is he not even much dependent on the employee? Should we not rather speak of dependency and co-operation from both sides? Is there not such a thing as responsibility also among each other as employer and employee, and laborers together?

If conditions can be arranged in such a way that Christians can work in places without being molested and nevertheless be free to join and not to join, should we not support this, instead of condemn it without giving anything better in its place?

Respectfully yours,
Hessel De Jong.

Note:—The above Contributions were received by Rev. Hoeksema before he became ill, but due to the lack of space were unable to be placed until now.

NOTICE

Candidates Gerald Vanden Berg, who has accepted the call of Grand Haven, and Edward Knott, who has accepted the call of Fuller Ave. to become home missionary for the Protestant Reformed Church, will be examined at the October meeting of Classis East according to the following schedule:

Sermons.

Dogmatics I & II—Rev. B. Kok.
Dogmatics III & IV—Rev. H. De Wolf.
Dogmatics V & VI—Rev. J. De Jong.
Controversy — Rev. W. Hofman.
Knowledge of our Confessions—Rev. H. Veldman.
Knowledge of the Scriptures—Rev. M. Schipper.
Practica — Rev. M. Gritters.
Sermon Critics—Revs. J. Heys and R. Veldman.

The Synodical delegates of Classis West are requested to be present.

Classical Committee:
R. Veldman.

IN MEMORIAM

The Consistory of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan hereby expresses its heartfelt sympathy to Deacon J. Boelema in the loss of his sister,

MRS. J. HAGER

May the God of all grace give His rich comfort and the peace which passeth all understanding to all the bereaved.

H. D. Wolf, Pres.
S. De Young, Sec'y.

IN MEMORIAM

The Ladies Society of the Hudsonville Protestant Reformed Church wishes to express its sympathy to one of its members, Mrs. George Lubbers in the loss of her

MOTHER

May the Lord comfort her and all the bereaved relatives, and assure them that "blessed are the dead that die in the Lord."

Rev. B. Kok, Pres.
Mrs. C. Spoelman, Sec'y.

— NOTICE —

Corrected itinerary of Dr. Schilder's lecture tour in the Middle West and West:

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.

— 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.

Report of the Meeting of Classis West held September 3, 1947 at Doon, Iowa

The regular meeting of Classis West was held in the newly remodeled church building of Doon, Iowa. It was a pleasure to all the delegates to accept the invitation of Doon's Church to meet there, and to make use of their newly installed facilities.

The meeting was opened with the usual preliminaries. Rev. G. Vos read Psalm 72 and led the assembly in prayer.

The roll call showed that there was only one delegate from Bellflower, Manhattan, Redlands and Pella. Rev. L. Vermcer was unable to attend this Classis as delegate from Pella on account of a funeral in his congregation.

The Rev. W. Hofman, who was present at this meeting, was given an advisory vote.

After the meeting was declared constituted, Rev. J. Blankespoor took up the presidency for the day, and Rev. G. Vos functioned as clerk.

The reports for Church Visitation are generally presented at our March meeting, but since the visit to Manhattan was delayed until August, Rev. L. Doezeema reported concerning his visit in that congregation.

The consistory of Bellflower informed Classis that their congregation would no longer need financial aid from the Needy Churches Fund, expressing their thanks and appreciation for the aid received in the past, "especially appreciated because it is a gift of love for God's Kingdom." Upon their request, Classis decided to forward this communication to our next Synod.

The consistory of Doon requested Classis to overture Synod in regard to mission work in Canada. The consistory

feels that this field should be investigated because of the present influx of Dutch immigrants from the Netherlands, and that some arrangements should be made that our churches can also work this field. Since this is a matter that warrants immediate attention, Classis decided to present this matter as a suggestion to our Mission Committee at this time, instead of delaying the matter until our next Synod.

Two congregations requested advice in regard to discipline cases, and were advised accordingly.

A request was presented to Classis regarding re-instatement into the ministry of the gospel in our churches. This party was informed that he should present his request to the Synod as the proper body to deal with this matter.

Three members were chosen to serve in the Classical Committee of Classis West. They are: Rev. A. Cammenga, Rev. J. Blankespoor, and Rev. G. Vos.

The Reverends J. Blankespoor and A. Cammenga were appointed as church visitors for the churches in the Middle West. The Reverends L. Vermeer and J. Howerzyl were chosen as their respective alternates.

Rev. P. De Boer and Rev. C. Hanko were chosen to do church visitation in Bellflower, while Rev. L. Doezeema was chosen to accompany Rev. Hanko for church visitation in Redlands.

The customary questions from Article 41 of our Church Order were asked and satisfactorily answered by all the consistories.

Classis decided to express, that "since the Rev. W. Hofman has accepted a call to be home missionary in our churches,

and is in our midst today, Classis West assures the brother of our moral support and of our constant prayer for him and his fellow-laborer in their difficult task.

Although this was not an exceptionally long meeting, it was no less important for the welfare of our churches.

After a few appropriate remarks by the president of the day, the Rev. P. De Boer of Redlands, Calif. led in thanksgiving to our God Who guides His Church by His Spirit.

C. HANKO, Stated Clerk.