

# THE STANDARD

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## MEDITATION

### “Love”

“Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.”

—I Cor. 13:4.

In the first part of the chapter from which the texts were chosen for our past meditation, the apostle shows how without love in the heart, all show of good works is without value or benefit. Love must be the root from which our good works spring, if they are to warrant acceptance of the God of our salvation, with their deserved reward. To speak and to sing beautifully, as to form and sound and appearance, without love, is nothing but sounding brass or a tinkling symbol. It is as such a very abomination in the ears of God. To speak concerning God, to be deep and penetrating and ingenious in thought and action, without love, is exactly *nothing*. To have a show of mercy, so that you unclothe yourselves to feed the poor, without love, is without profit for the doer. Yea, even though you would give your life as an offering for others, without the Divine motive of love, there would be no gain at all for the self-inflicted martyrdom.

And the reason is plain.

God is the God of love. Love is the fountain from which springs His own love-life. All that God does is motivated by His love. His every thought, word and action is a manifestation of His love. This virtue of God is so fundamental in Him that He tells us how His very name is Love. Love is God, and God is Love.

And we are made in His image. Therefore:

\* \* \* \*

Love suffereth long and is kind!

Suffering here means the suffering that is your

lot because of the offenses and injuries that are inflicted upon you by others.

Well, if others are an offense to us because of their deeds and words, we are at once inclined to even the score: an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. And if the truth be told, we would like to return the damage inflicted upon us with interest.

Such is the natural impulse of every man, be he child of God or wicked.

But not so love!

Love suffereth long. Love has the capacity to take punishment, unjustly inflicted upon one. It will bear undeserved ill-treatment, and reproach; has the capacity, for instance, to suffer the robbing of one's goods, good name, place in society, or one's very life, without striking back, without revenging one's self.

But not, you understand, because a man who is longsuffering is devoid of a sense of justice and righteousness. Oh no, a longsuffering man has a keener sense of equity than the unhappy man who does the inflicting of all the undeserved abuse on his fellow man.

No, but this is the other element of longsuffering: you bear it all in patience, and that is the virtue to wait, the capacity to wait for the Lord, who will surely requite all evil.

Now we have the full picture. Longsuffering is the virtue to bear evil and pain and misery, unjustly inflicted, while he will wait for the coming of the Judge who will avenge His elect that cry day and night to Him.

That, my friends, is not easy to do.

We would rather institute our own private judgment day.

We would rather strike back, and do it hard and fast, endeavouring to mete out the full measure of our wrath.

But if we have love in our heart, we will desist, and wait. We will wait for God.

God is also longsuffering. I am sorry I put it that way. It is really wrong to write like that. God is

not *also* longsuffering. Our longsuffering is not original, but it is original with God.

God suffereth long.

We could write a book on that. On second thought, we need not. The Book is written already. God's longsuffering is written on the earth, on the oceans and on the heavens. The whole sorry world's history is a commentary on His waiting, waiting, waiting! O, do fear a waiting God! He does not come at once to avenge the wrong. He has the capacity to bear evil, wrong, reproach, curses, bloodshed, for centuries!

Attend to the awful Cross of Golgotha!

God can behold His Son in the hand of the evil. They hate Him, they pour out all the vials of their wrath over the Innocent! They take Him in their vile hands and arrange His arms and legs on the accursed tree. They hammer the nails into His holy flesh. His blood flows.

O God! How canst Thou behold all this evil!?

Here is the answer: He suffereth long. He has suffered for centuries.

And He has two reasons for His virtue of waiting.

Reason one: His people must be cultivated in the throes of suffering. They must be born in adversity, and be built up in blood and tears of their suffering. They must all come to conversion. And that takes time, much time: II Peter 3:9. And with regard to the suffering Son, God waits. Jesus must be so treated by the howling mob of God-haters. He must lay the foundation of the New Jerusalem in His holy blood.

Reason two: the wicked must be revealed to be wicked. God must be just when He judges. That is: when the judgment falls, the whole world of men and angels, wicked and good, must *see clearly* that the punishment is commensurate to the crime. Therefore the crime in all its foulness must be manifested. Therefore this terrible history. Let him that is filthy, be filthy still!

Oh yes, God suffereth long. Because He is Love!

And it is for that reason that His people, His children, practice the same longsuffering. They hate evil, but they will not avenge themselves. They wait for God.

\* \* \* \*

And meanwhile, they are kind!

The root meaning of this word is that you are fit for use, useful, virtuous, good. Therefore, it is used for the state of manageableness, mildness and pleasantness. It is opposed to all harshness, bitterness, hardness and sharpness. A kind man does not hurt or pierce you with many sorrows.

A kind, a really kind man, is a pleasure to know.

Micha has painted his picture. A kind man is one who loves mercy.

And the Gospel has shown his face: it is Jesus Christ. He is the kindest man who ever walked the earth. He could be moved with compassion when He saw the misery of those He loved.

The Holland language has a good word for the virtue of kindness. No, it is not *vriendelijkheid*, but "*goedertierenheid*". It expresses the full idea of the Scriptural word *kindness*. It is that virtue where everything in your whole being is urgent to the well-being of the object of your kindness. You want to be good to them. No, it does not merely mean that you desire to bestow all manner of good things on the object of your kindness, but you really want to give *yourself*!

Attend to the origin of that virtue: it is God Himself.

God is kind.

God's kindness is that love of God wherein His whole Being constrains Him to be good to the objects of His kindness, with the expressed desire and determination to give Himself to them for time and for eternity.

God's kindness to us is Christ Jesus the Lord.

And the end of that kindness is that glorious state where God will be all and *in all*.

So then, if you have the love of God in your hearts, you are kind to your neighbours. You have the inner urge to be good to them, to give yourself to them, to beam upon them and to make them feel that you mean their welfare. "Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you!" Eph. 4:32.

What unspeakable comfort to know that God is *chreesos* over us!

What consolation in the midst of the bitter, cruel, hard, and cutting world of devils and men who do their utmost to tear us and inflict their wounds on the innocent! Their very tongues are spears and swords: the poison of asps is under their lips. In the midst of it, we know that the Lord is mindful of us. All His mind is that we shall be blessed forever, that we shall feed on His glorious Image, and that is Jesus! God is kind over us!

And He proved it in the gift of Jesus.

I have said that the kind man gives himself, rather than his gifts.

Well, what did the Lord do?

He gave Himself so intimately to you that the church has fought for ages and struggled to clearly see and understand the two natures of Jesus. God and man are united, for God is kind. "I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one!" John 17.

O, give Thou me the succour of Thy Spirit! Psalm 119.

Then the love of God will be spread abroad in my heart! Romans 5:5.

Then, then I shall be kind to my fellows! I Cor. 13:4.

\* \* \* \*

But there is more.

Love envieth not!

Envy is the capacity to burn, to be hot in the pursuit of someone or something. It is used in God's Word for both good and evil endeavour.

Here it is the foul fruit of hatred.

Envy is the hatred of the natural man overagainst his neighbour, either in prosperity or adversity.

When the brother prospereth, envy is not to be consoled. It gnaws its heart out in the beholding of success of the neighbour: it should not happen to him. An envious soul cannot see the prosperity of his fellows. All the good things that he hath ought to be mine! All the success he hath should be mine! I cannot see that my brother fares well.

It is already evident among us as children.

When the little girl is oh so glad with her new dress, and hastens to school to show it and to wait, eagerly wait for the glad and appreciative response, envy rears its ugly head even when we are small. The dress does not exist! We have not seen it! And when the poor little girl will exceed in boldness and call attention to the boon which made her so happy, the others will spurn and turn away.

Instead of kindness there was envy.

And another little heart is hurt.

Multiply this in the millions, and apply it to all of us in all circumstances, and you will have discovered a world of suffering.

*Our dress, our goods, our person, our children, our all—it is good, praiseworthy, glorious! But the other? It should not be; it should not happen. I, capital I, must be glorious in my little heaven. It is the age-old sin: we are our own little god, and there must not, there dare not, be any god than we!*

Oh, the foul plant of envy!

And all this is but negative language. Instead of envious we should have love. Love is not envious, saith Paul.

Translate it into its opposite, and what have you?

This: you will rejoice with those that do rejoice, and you will weep with those that weep. Such is love!

If someone approaches you, overflowing with happiness for this and that, and such and so, and when every word tells you of all this delirious happiness that

is their portion—then love tells you what to do from *the heart*: you will say: Your heaven is my heaven! I am sincerely glad with you. The one smile engendered two smiles. The one heart that burst with glee found its counterpart. Such is the nature of love!

Oh, that we would emulate it!

When you are in heaven, and time is ended; when you begin your eternal song, you may be certain that God will smile at all this joy and happiness! Notice: you will enter into *the joy of your Lord!*

Love, moreover, vaunteth not itself!

He that vaunteth himself is the notorious braggart, the vainglorious fool!

And I would beg of you not to search too far for this boaster of evil things. He is very near to every one of us.

It is found in the wicked heart of man.

We went to school with the devil.

Of Anti-christ it is said that he spoke great things. Worthy son of the devil. He must have spoken great things too, on the morning of creation. The devil, when he was still an angel, also sang for joy when God completed His work of the creation of men and the hosts of the earth. But later he spoke great things against the Almighty and to the angels that were under him. And they listened to him. The result? A veritable host of wicked demons that speaks great things against God and His Anointed.

And he taught men.

So that all men speak wicked things against God.

Jude the apostle, wrote of them. Listen: "and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him!" Here you have the braggarts!

A man that vaunteth himself is always blowing his own trumpet. He has much to say of himself.

And over against it, there is only one seemly behaviour; we should never vaunt ourselves, but we should grow very still. And even then we should not trust our mouths: we should lay our hands on our mouths! It will happen in the day of days. "That every mouth may be stopped!" When God shows Himself, no one will dare to vaunt himself anymore.

\* \* \* \*

And love is not puffed up!

To puff one's self up is a necessary corollary to all vaunting. I may be found out in my boasting. So I will make myself greater than I really am.

I will tell you what love does. She has learned from the lowly Jesus to be humble and quiet!

O God! be merciful to us the sinners! And give us Thy love!

G. V.

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**EDITORIALS****The Covenant Controversy**

I.

## INTRODUCTION

The undersigned does not know whether or not he will be enabled to finish a contemplated series of editorials on the above theme. And the reason is plain. He is appointed to substitute for the regular Editor-in-Chief, the Rev. H. Hoeksema, who is convalescing from a recent illness. And the stipulation reads that as soon as our Editor is able to resume his rubric or rubrics,, he simply acquaints his substitute or substitutes, and that will be the end of their work. And if I take into account the latest news from the Pacific coast, he may soon reappear on the pages of our Standard Bearer. May God grant it to him and to us in His grace.

However, even if we have to halt our series before its completion, no harm will be done, since our Editor will no doubt at once enter upon the same theme and bring it to its conclusion.

But something must be written about the controversy of the Covenant and related matters. Our people have a right to know how we stand over against the Liberated Churches anent this doctrine, as well as our stand with respect to the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands.

It will not be easy to write about this controversy, and that for more than one reason. First, because of the fundamental nature of this subject. It touches upon all the fundamental truths of Scripture: predestination, Counsel of Peace (so-called), the eternal counsel of God, the Covenant in all its phases, the sacraments, especially Holy Baptism, the question as to who is in the covenant, and their part in that covenant, the promise, and the question of the heir of the promise, etc. Second, because of the danger involved in criticising the Liberated Churches. It has happened more than once that the brethren of the Reformed Churches would use such criticism in order to attack the Liberated brethren in a way that is not seemly. Third, because the battlefield is far away. It has taken us many weary weeks, and even months, to wade through the voluminous material that came to our hands. And I am aware of the fact that I have not read *all* that was written on both sides of this controversy. So I am afraid that I will make mistakes in the proposed series. Still, I did not think it right to hold back because of all these reasons. Again, our people have a right to know how matters stand.

Now then, especially because of one of the reasons

mentioned above I feel constrained in this introduction to outline in how far we are agreed with the Liberated Churches, maintaining Art. 31 of the Church Order of Dordt, the reason, namely, that the opposition might use us to hurt our liberated brethren.

When news of the split in Holland came to us, even before the Netherlands was entirely liberated from the Nazi hordes, we were saddened to hear that Dr. Schilder had split the church of our fathers. The first dispatches sounded gloomy indeed. However, there was one thing in those early dispatches which put us on our guard, namely, the reiterated statement that Dr. Schilder's "behaviour, tone, and actions" anent the controversy were so uncouth, out of order, and unseemly. As one correspondent put it very naively: "You could do nothing with him!"

That put us on our guard, for we know the tactics of those who militate against the truth. If they cannot overcome the man who stands for the truth, they will attack him on his behaviour, his crudeness, his barbarous tactics, and so forth. Make a study of it in the ages that are past, and you will note that all the reformers were so accused. In 1924 we were also accused of the same thing. We have not forgotten the repeated accusation: you can do nothing with Rev. Hoeksema. He hangs on like a bulldog! We thank God that he did!

Yes, that put us on our guard, and I am glad it did.

Later, we received word from both sides, officially, and otherwise. An ever growing flood of papers, magazines, pamphlets, brochures, and personal testimonies appeared in our mail. Also *De Reformatie* appeared again; and still later, we received the various acts of synod, from both sides.

One thing became clear from the start: the churches of our fathers had corrupted themselves with respect to Reformed Church Polity. Rev. Toornvliet may say that the dogmatic side of the question or debate weighs heavier than the church-political side of that same question or debate, but I assure you that it is difficult to take a definite stand on that question. It would be interesting to make a profound study of the corruption of the church of the past which resulted in the rise of the papacy, and determine to what extent the ludicrous travesty of the Body of Christ was caused by dogmatic error or by church-political heresy.

Be that as it may: we saw clearly that the Reformed Churches were no longer Reformed with respect to the Church-Right of our fathers. Even as in America, those churches had arrived at Roman Catholicism with respect to the office of the king. Not the instituted instances of Christ, that is, the elders, but the Classis and the Synod shall rule the body of Christ. This error is so glaring, that we marvel how sincere people can be taken in by it.

Imagine: the Lord Jesus Christ appoints elders to rule the flock, to admonish those that are gone out of the way, to punish the impenitent, to banish the wolves out of the fold of Christ. That truth is abundantly taught in God's Word. No one disputes it. But wait! Here is a body of men who are commissioned to a classis or a synod with definite and limited instructions from the first instances of the rule, namely, the consistory of the elders of the church. That they go at all, that they are delegated at all, has its reason and cause in a practical matter, this namely, that there are things to do in God's churches that no one church can very well do alone, such as the caring for a Theological School, Home and Foreign Missions, Examination of those that are called to the Holy Ministry, etc. But, lo and behold, what they are doing today: They suspend and depose office bearers of consistories and congregations without any regard for the fact that Christ gave His Church elders for that very purpose! There have been cases where the minister of a certain church was suspended from office, while the church where he belonged and where he was subject to the rule and oversight by the elders, knew nothing of this fact. Later it was told them by letter.

I ask: is not such action principally the same as Roman Catholicism? The only difference is that in the latter there is one man who rules: the Pope. In the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands (and also here in America) it is a body of a few men who call themselves a Reformed synod. And, still more evil, it is sometimes one or two men who give leadership (?) who dare do the things that belong to the body of elders of each instituted church. (Remember in this connection the voices of men like Hepp and H. H. Kuyper at the Synod of 1939.) Looking at that synod of 1939 we can now see that coming events cast their shadows before!

Oh yes, it became very clear to us at the very first after the liberation of Holland that the brethren who were cast out suffered the same misery we endured in 1924 and 1925.

And the result was that we at once felt drawn to them.

But later we read *De Reformatie*. And at first we were shocked. We noted that the break had come on the Covenant of Grace issue, with related matters such as the promise, baptism, etc. And the stand of the liberated churches reminded us of the stand of the late Prof. Heyns, who had applied pelagianism to the doctrine of the Covenant of grace. In fact, the name of Prof. Heyns and his works were mentioned in one of the first issues of *De Reformatie* after the liberation of Holland. Long quotations appeared in the writings of Rev. Bremmer to show that all the children of God's people, elect and reprobate alike, have a right to "the offering or giving of Christ in the promise". (*De*

*Reformatie*, July 13, 1945. The second issue after the liberation of Holland. Here follows the whole quotation. I translated: "No, unto all comes the same calling of the Gospel, and that calling is earnestly meant by God. They are seriously called, say the Canons of Dordt, and Christ is offered unto all in the Gospel, this Gospel is confirmed by God with precious oaths, and it is a great boon, this calling by the Gospel, and this offer or this giving of Christ in the promise. It comes to all, elect and those that are not-covenant-children with the testimony of God, that they all have a right to it."

I could quote stronger statements than this one, to show that they teach how every child of God's people have a right to this giving of Christ and all His blessings in the promise.

Another matter which made us pause and question was the matter of the so-called *conditional* promise. If we are to enter heaven we have to fulfil certain conditions. Also on this point there is abundant proof from the writings of the liberated brethren.

Suffice it to say at this juncture that we were suspicious, to say the least.

However, personal contact was sought with Prof. Dr. K. Schilder, and we were very desirous to have him come to our shores in order that he might be able to shed light on the above and many other questions. Without going into details, I can say in all sincerity that this contact of recent months has been a great blessing for both Dr. Schilder and for us. We understand one another much better than heretofore. Not that we are agreed on the Covenant questions. But this: much *misunderstanding* has been removed. From both sides. Allow me to mention just one thing from each side: One, we know now that all pelagianism is wholly foreign to the conception of the covenant and baptism on the part of Dr. Schilder. We arrive at the same destination and conclusions, but along a different way. More about all this later. Two, Dr. Schilder now knows why we detest and wholly reject the late Prof. Heyns' conception of the covenant and baptism; you may have the proof in one of his recent articles in *De Reformatie*.

But I must close here. My space is filled. More about these matters later, D.V.

G. V.

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Since thy Father's arm sustains thee,  
Peaceful be;  
When a chastening hand restrains thee,  
It is He.  
Know His love in full completeness  
Fills the measure of thy weakness;  
If He wound thy spirit sore,  
Trust Him more.

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## OUR DOCTRINE

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### Our Covenant God

We concluded our previous article with the beginning of our attempt to establish our conception of the Covenant in the light of Holy Writ. The covenant of God with man is the communion of friendship between the living God and His people in Christ Jesus. Adam, we noted, was created in that living relationship of friendship to the living God. We reject the theory of a "covenant of Works". Historically this theory is of recent origin. Today it is generally accepted as constituting a part of the Reformed heritage. We reject it, firstly, because of its utter lack of Scriptural evidence, and, secondly, because, fundamentally, it denies the Christ. And we considered it extremely significant that, when Adam tramples God's covenant under foot but the Lord maintains it, the Lord maintains His covenant by setting enmity between the seed of the woman and that of the devil. Enmity against the world is, of course, the friendship of God. This does not mean that the Lord enlists the aid of His people and that together they withstand and oppose the wiles and attacks of the devil and of the kingdom of darkness. Fact is that all things are for our sakes and that also the kingdom of evil must work together for the good of God's people and the realization of His kingdom. Genesis 3:15 does teach us, however, that the Lord maintains His covenant by calling His people into a living relationship of friendship with Himself and that He thereby makes them His people and party also in the midst of a world which lieth in darkness.

#### *God's Covenant with His People is His Own Covenant and Eternal.*

God's covenant, according to Holy Writ, is eternal. We read in Genesis 17:7: "And I will establish My covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee." Notice that the essence of the covenant, according to this text, is expressed in the words: "to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee." He will be our God, love us and bless us. And this covenant is an everlasting covenant. This thought is repeated in verse 8, where Canaan is mentioned as an everlasting possession. Notice that also unto Abraham the land of Canaan is promised as an everlasting possession. Yet, in Acts 7:5 we read: "And He gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on." That Abraham received the land of Canaan as an everlasting possession can only be understood if we bear in mind that he received it as such in its eternal, heavenly reality



whereof the earthly Canaan was but a sign and symbol. The Scriptures, therefore, teach us that God's covenant signifies His eternal dwelling with His own in the heavenly Jerusalem.

That God's covenant is eternal is also emphasized in Ps. 89:1, 4, 28 and Ps. 111:9, where we read: "I will sing of the mercies of the Lord *forever*: with my mouth will I make known Thy faithfulness to all generations. Thy seed will I establish *for ever*, and build up Thy throne to all generations. Selah. My mercy will I keep for him for *evermore*, and My covenant *shall stand fast* with him. . . . He sent redemption unto His people: He hath commanded His covenant *for ever*: holy and reverend is His name."

Notice also, according to Holy Writ, that God's covenant with His people is His own covenant. "And I, behold, I establish My covenant with you, and with your seed after you."—Gen. 9:9. "And I will establish My covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth."—Gen. 9:11. "And I will establish My covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee."—Gen. 17:7. These texts are important not only because they emphasize the monopoleuric character of the covenant. Indeed, "I will establish *My* covenant between Me and thee." It is God, therefore, Who establishes the covenant. Hence, His "*Me*" appears in the text before "*thee*". But to this we will call attention later in another connection. Of interest at this time is the fact that "And I, behold, I establish *My* covenant with you, and with your seed after you." It is His own covenant which He establishes with man. God Himself is a covenant God. And God's own covenant is that blessed life of the Triune God whereby He eternally knows and loves and seeks Himself as the Triune God in the bond or sphere of eternal Divine perfection. It is that blessed life of the love and friendship of God, which eternally characterizes the living God, which He bestows upon His people so that He inducts them into His own covenant life and makes them partakers of His Divine nature according to the measure of the creature.

This also explains why circumcision, and later baptism in the New Dispensation, was the sign and seal of that covenant, even as we may read it in Gen. 17:10: "This is My covenant, which ye shall keep, between Me and Thee and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised." To enter into the covenant of the Lord signified that we become partakers of His life, that we enter into a living relationship with Him, that we become holy even as the Lord Himself is holy, that we are dedicated unto Jehovah even as Jehovah is eternally dedicated unto Himself. Therefore the sign of that covenant is circumcision, the sign and seal which speaks of the cutting

away of the old man of sin and the putting on of the new man of righteousness and holiness, a truly fitting sign of God's covenant with His own.

#### *Scripture Speaks of God's Dwelling With Man.*

The Scriptural conception of the covenant does not merely rest upon Scriptural passages which speak literally of "covenant". Words such as "abide, dwell, tabernacle, temple" also express the covenant idea. Repeatedly Holy Writ speaks of a dwelling of God with man. Permit us to quote a few of such passages. "Lord, who shall abide in Thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in Thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart."—Ps. 15:1-2. "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."—Ps. 23:6. "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His temple."—Ps. 27:4. "Blessed is the man whom Thou choosest, and causest to approach unto Thee, that he may dwell in Thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of Thy house, even on Thy holy temple."—Ps. 65:4. "Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive: Thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them."—Ps. 68:18. "My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house: they will be still praising Thee. Selah."—Ps. 84:2, 4. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."—Ps. 91:1. "He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within My house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in My sight."—Ps. 101:7. "If thy children will keep My covenant and My testimony that I shall teach them, their children shall also sit upon thy throne for evermore. For the Lord hath chosen Zion; He hath desired it for His habitation. This is My rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it."—Ps. 132:12-14. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"—Ps. 133:1. "Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto Thy name: the upright shall dwell in Thy presence."—Ps. 140:13. "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons, and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."—2 Cor. 6:16-18. It is well to note in this latter passage from 2 Corinthians that for God to be our God and for us to be His people is identified with

the words: "As God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them". The idea of fellowship is surely beautifully expressed in this latter passage.

This idea of God's dwelling with His people is further emphasized in the Scriptures by the tabernacle or temple of the Old Dispensation as God's dwelling place with His people. "And let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them."—Exodus 25:8. The same thought is expressed in Ex. 29:44-46: "And I will sanctify the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar: I will sanctify also both Aaron and his sons, to minister to Me in the priest's office. And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God. And they shall know that I am the Lord their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell among them: I am the Lord their God."

We understand, I am sure, that these texts do not refer to an insignificant incidental or meaningless detail of the Old Testament. The temple of the Old Dispensation constituted the heart and core of the entire Old Dispensation. All of Israel's life, its religious-ceremonial-civil life was expressed by it and inseparably connected with it. To refer to the temple of the old day, therefore, means to point to the entire Old Testament. All God's dealings with His people throughout the Old Testament are described, symbolized by the temple that had been erected upon Mount Moriah. And, indeed, what a beautiful symbol it was! The tabernacle consisted of the Holy of Holies, the Holy Place, and the Outer Court. In the Holy of Holies, in distinction from all other holies of holies of the heathen which contained an idol of wood or stone or gold, we see the ark of the covenant. In that ark was the law of the ten commandments. Covering the ark was the mercy seat. And extending from the mercy seat were the two cherubims, facing each other, thereby giving the appearance of a throne. In the Holy Place we behold the seven-armed golden candlestick, the table of shewbread, and the altar of incense. This mighty symbol of the temple of the Old Testament speaks a language which is clearly understood. The temple speaks of a dwelling-place, where God rules over them and in them by writing His law into their (the law in the ark of the covenant). Moreover, the Lord's fellowship with His own is further characterized by the mercy seat, that is, by the fact that our communion with Him and His reigning in our hearts by His Word is possible only in the way of atonement, for none shall again be received into favour with God except the justice of the law of the Lord be fully satisfied. All this is clearly expressed by the temple upon Mount Moriah. It was a mighty symbol of the fact that the Lord had established His communion in the midst of Israel, in Israel alone, and that He ruled over them not by force or coercion but by His Word and Spirit and that only in the way of atonement, the

atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ. What a beautiful but also mighty symbol of the covenant as the relationship of living fellowship between the Lord and His people in Christ Jesus. And if we now may call attention to the monopoleuric character of the covenant between God and man, that is, to the fact that this fellowship is of the Lord alone, we will be able to understand that also that mighty symbol of the Old Dispensation was wholly of Jehovah. Not a single detail of the temple was entrusted to Moses. Not a solitary detail was left to the ingenuity of man. Moses received the plan of the temple, even into minutest details, from the Lord. Even as our living fellowship and communion with the Lord is solely of the Lord, so also the temple of the Old Dispensation was exclusively from the mighty God of Jacob.

#### *Enoch, Noah, Abraham Called Friends of God.*

The idea of the covenant is not only expressed in the Scriptures by words such as "abide, dwell, temple, etc." The word "friend" or "friendship" also appears in Holy Writ. "And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him."—Gen. 5:24. "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God."—Gen. 6:8-9. "And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which He hath spoken of him."—Gen. 18:17-19. "And Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the Lord, before the new court, And said, O Lord God of our fathers, art not Thou God in heaven? and rulest not Thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in Thine hand is there not power and might, so that none is able to withstand Thee? Art not Thou our God, Who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before Thy people Israel, and gavest it to the seed of Abraham Thy friend for ever? And they dwelt therein, and have built Thee a sanctuary therein for Thy name, saying, If, when evil cometh upon us, as the sword, judgment, or pestilence or famine, we stand before this house, and in Thy presence, (for Thy Name is in this house) and cry unto Thee in our affliction, then Thou wilt hear and help."—2 Chron. 20:5-9. These beautiful words were uttered by the king of Judah, Jehoshaphat, at the time when the king of Judah was being threatened by the children of Moab, of Ammon, and others besides the Ammonites. And finally we read in James 2:23: "And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it



was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God."

Enoch, Noah, and Abraham walked with God and were, therefore, the friends of God. One who walks with God is surely a friend of the Lord. This walking of these heroes of faith with God did not consist of a certain mystical awareness of the presence of God, of God's nearness, in the inner secrets or recesses of the heart. That they walked with the Lord does not refer to a deeply mysterious communion with Jehovah. This walking, however, refers to a clear, well-defined consciousness of the covenant, in which God and Enoch, as also Noah and Abraham, were friends, intimately associated with one another. They knew God, loved the Lord, served Him, walked in the way of His commandments, confessed His Name and did so in the midst of a godless world. Gen. 5:24 presupposes that the enemies of Enoch looked for Enoch but they could not find him. Of Noah we read that he was a preacher of righteousness and he surely testified against a wicked world that was rapidly ripening for judgment. And Abraham, upon arriving in the land of Canaan, alone served the Lord God and that in the very midst of idolatrous heathens. Indeed, they were servants of the Lord. And they talked with God and God with them, and Jehovah revealed unto them, confidentially, as a Friend to His friends, all the secrets of His heart. To Enoch the Lord revealed that He would come with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they had ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him (Jude 14-15). To Noah Jehovah revealed the judgment of the world which would presently sweep down upon that world in the form of the flood. And also to Noah the Lord revealed His plan of salvation, making known unto His servants the dimensions of the ark which would serve unto his saving and also unto the saving of his house. And repeatedly God also communes with Abraham. He reveals unto His friend, the father of believers, that He would give him a seed, an innumerable seed, that he and his seed would inherit the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession, but that their inheriting of the promised land must be preceded by a great oppression. And also to Abraham does God reveal the destruction of the cities of the plain, Sodom and Gomorrah. Hence, of Enoch and Noah and Abraham it is true that they enjoyed the most intimate communion and fellowship with the Lord. They were truly friends of God.

*God's Relationship With His people Called in  
Scripture a Marriage Relationship.*

Repeatedly Holy Writ likens the relationship between the Lord and His people to a marriage relationship. "For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of

hosts is His name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall be called." —Is. 54:5. "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion."—Jer. 3:14. In Matthew 22:1-14 Jesus likens the Kingdom of heaven unto a certain king who made a marriage for his son, and the reference is clear: the Lord is speaking of the marriage which the heavenly Father made for His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. In Matt. 25:1-13 we read of the parable of the Ten Virgins, five of whom were wise and five of whom were foolish. And of these virgins we are told that they took their lamps and went forth to meet the *bridegroom*. In Eph. 5:25-33 we have that beautiful portion of Holy Writ where the apostle speaks of the mystery concerning Christ and the church. Also in this latter passage the marriage idea stands strongly upon the foreground. And in Revelation 19:7 we read: "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready." The prophets, Isaiah and Hosea, speak repeatedly of the Lord as our Husband and married to us in the bond of faith. Indeed, the Scriptures repeatedly liken the relationship between the Lord and His people to the marriage state.

That the Scriptures speak of the relationship between God and us is therefore a reciprocal, mutual agreement or contract. This is true of the marriage of a man and his wife. They indeed bind themselves to mutual promises and obligations. But this cannot be applied to the relation between the Lord and His people. Fact is, according to Isaiah 54:5, the Lord is also our *Redeemer*. This certainly signifies that the living God made us and also that He redeemed and bought us out of the power of guilt and sin and darkness. And in Eph. 5:25-33 we read that Christ loved us, sought us, found us, saved us. We did not love Him, seek Him, find Him. He loved and sought and found and saved us. Hence, of mutual promises and obligations, of a mutual agreement and contract we cannot speak in connection with the marriage of the living God and His people in Christ Jesus. However, that God's relation to us is called a marriage relation is because the Scriptures emphasize the idea of *relationship*, of *friendship*, of *love*, in which relationship the Lord is our Husband and we are His children and servants. And, this relationship between the Lord and His own is such that it cannot be broken, that it is inviolable, not because of us but because of Him Who is our Maker and our Redeemer. He has united us unto Himself, in and through Christ Jesus, His Son and our Lord. Consequently, this marriage between the Lord and His people is eternal, an unchangeable covenant relationship of love and friendship, in which He is our God and we are His friend-servants. now and forever.

H. V.

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## THE DAY OF SHADOWS

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### David's Trust In God

It is becoming more and more plain that the Lord is taking the kingdom from Saul and giving it to that "neighbour" better than he. Saul sees and knows but he persists in fighting God. His heart is hard and always harder. It is a hardening process by which Saul is being visited characterized by clearly discernible stages. The first stage in the process was reached when Saul began to eye David. Next he stabbed at David with his javelin. David had to leap in order to avoid being pierced through. Advancing in sin, Saul schemes to slay David by the sword of the Philistines. David was not slain. He lived as kept by the Lord. Then the princes of the Philistines go forth, and David behaves himself wisely and his name is much set by. Unutterably grieved, Saul now makes another advance in sin. He calls on Jonathan and on all his servants to co-operate with him in putting David out of the way. "And Saul spake to Jonathan his son and to all his servants, that they should kill David" (19:1).

This speaking of Saul can be explained. His attempt to put David out of the way by weapons of duplicity having failed dismally, the intensified bitterness of his hatred of the son of Jesse, calls for these drastic orders. And Saul chooses to obey the call. That in doing so he discovers to men his evil heart, does not deter him. He will endure that disgrace, if only he succeed in ridding the land of David.

As for Jonathan, like David, he has suspected for some time that there is in Saul the will to kill the son of Jesse. He now knows it to be true. For Saul has spoken plainly. Jonathan's only thought is of David. For his delight is in him. He rushes into David's presence to speak words of warning and to counsel his beloved friend. "Saul my father seeks to kill thee," are his first words to David. His agitation of Saul is great. Without pausing to allow David to reply he continues almost in the same breath to tell him what now to do, "And now take heed to thyself, I beseech thee, in the morning, and dwell in a secret place and hide thyself, and I will commune with my father of thee; and what I see that I will tell thee." His purpose is to sound his father and learn his real mind. Considering Saul's condition—his soul is periodically being troubled by an evil spirit from the Lord—Jonathan believes that he still has reasons to doubt that his father really wants David killed. But Jonathan will know. The place he named is perhaps one to which Saul is accustomed often to go. Here he will speak with Saul in order to be able to tell David the result of

the conversation immediately without having to go far and thereby running the risk of arousing the suspicion of an understanding with David.

The meeting between Jonathan and Saul takes place the following morning. Jonathan speaks good of David to Saul to see how he reacts. He says to Saul, "Let not the king sin against his servant, against David; because he hath not sinned against thee, and because his works have been to thee-ward good; for he did put his life in his hand, and slew the Philistine, and the Lord wrought a great salvation for all Israel: thou sawest it, and didst rejoice :wherefore then wilt thou sin against innocent blood, to slay David without a cause."

There is more in Jonathan's words of reproof to Saul than appears on the surface. Just why does Saul want David killed? He does not name the reason; for he has none that are valid before God. He may not want David killed on the ground that the Lord has appointed him to rule in Saul's stead. For the throne in Israel belongs to God, and in it He may seat whomsoever He will. Besides, Saul's deposition was in punishment of his rebellion; and the punishment was just. But is David perhaps guilty of criminal action against Saul? Is he plotting against Saul's life? Is he by means fair and fowl undermining Saul's influence with the people? In no way is David working against the king either openly or secretly. He is willing that the Lord give him the kingdom; and while he abides the Lord's time, he does Saul nothing but good, as Jonathan points out. He slew the Goliath of the Philistines; and ever since Saul took him into his service permanently, he has been fighting Philistines. This being true, why is Saul seeking David's life? The king does not say. He names no crime. He cannot. It means that his persecuting David is wanton rebellion against God. He wants David killed because he, Saul, refuses to submit to the sentence of his deposition. To maintain himself in power contrary to the revealed will of God, he will shed innocent blood. This is the thrust of Jonathan's words of reproof to Saul.

But there is still this question. If David has no designs on Saul's life, if he does the king nothing but good, why should Saul want him killed? His refusal to submit to the sentence of God does not fully explain it. This is the reason. He cannot believe that David is not purposed to kill him and to destroy his seed after him. This is proved by what he said to David sometime later. These were his words, "And now, behold, I know well that thou shalt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thine hand. Swear now therefore to me by the Lord, that thou wilt not cut off my seed after me, and that thou wilt not destroy my name out of my father's house. 24:19, 20). Saul imagines that either he must slay David or be destroyed by him, he and his seed. This partly explains Jonathan's talking to him as he does.

His words are calculated to make the king see that of all men David is least intended to do him harm. Did he not put his life in his own hands and kill the Philistine? Is it then not contrary to all reason to even suspect him of wanting to do Saul injury? Can't the king believe that his fears of David are groundless? David is innocent. Should not the king recoil from shedding innocent blood? There is no cause.

Saul imagines, it is plain, that the sentence of deposition and of the loss of his kingdom necessarily implies the slaying of himself and the extermination of his seed after him by his divinely-appointed successor, David. And fearing David, Saul naturally hates him. And he hates David not only because he perceives that the Lord has actually appointed him to reign in his stead, but also because he imagines that David's increase necessarily spells the destruction of Saul and his whole house even by the hand of David. If Saul could free himself of this imagining, he would hate David still, but he would not fear him as he now does at least. If it were not for Saul's great dread of David and for the hatred that this dread genders in him, it is doubtful whether he would go to all the trouble to slay David to which he has already gone and to which he is still to go. From now on Saul will persecute David with a zeal and persistency that is truly wonder-inciting. What will impel and sustain him therein is the hatred and the dread that the aforesaid imagining genders. This is fully proved by Saul's reaction to Jonathan's words of reproof. Saul hearkens to the voice of Jonathan. He even swears, "As the Lord liveth he—David—shall not be slain." Jonathan's words have made an impression. They put to sleep Saul's fear of David. So convinced is he for the moment of the folly of his fear of the son of Jesse that he promises under oath to desist from seeking his life. Undoubtedly Saul takes himself serious. Is he no longer the old Saul? Has he undergone a radical change of heart? Not at all. He is the same self-absorbed man of yesterday. This can easily be understood, too, in the light of the following consideration. It doesn't seem to occur to Saul that the Lord is going to give David the throne and the kingdom in the way of David's non-employment of force or of violence or of any other kind of sinful and forbidden means—thus give David the kingdom exactly in the way of his doing Saul only good and not any evil. To Saul's mind David can become king only in the way of his slaying Saul and can secure his throne only by destroying Saul's seed after him. And he firmly believes that David is purposed to do that very thing—slay Saul and destroy his seed after him—and that he will strike as soon as he can be certain that he has the people back of him. But Jonathan has now succeeded in persuading him that David is intended to do him no harm but to do him only good; and he concludes therefore that, as far as David is concerned, he is going to continue in power,

he and his seed. This being for the moment his conviction, he swears that he will do David no harm, so that in taking that oath he, as always, is motivated by sheer love of self and of his own cause. Besides, he shrinks from shedding innocent blood—blood that is actually innocent. But the trouble with Saul is that, except in rare moments, he believes that David purposes to kill him and that therefore his blood is not innocent but guilty. His sin comes in here that he holds David guilty though all the evidence points to his innocence. But Saul's great sin is that in all the action he takes against David his sole aim is to maintain himself in power contrary to the revealed will of God.

So for the moment Saul is at peace with the world, with David and with himself, yet not actually so. For his peace is war against God. He is at ease in his mind and happy because he imagines, wills to imagine, that, whereas David will do him no harm, he has nothing to fear of the sentence of God pronounced over him by Samuel. And therefore his peace may not continue. Soon he will again be plagued and terrorized in his soul by the lie that David and all men seek his life. And he will be greatly afraid. And in that fright he will again go to persecuting David and so continue to fill his measure of guilt in order that he may be destroyed. But before his end comes he will confess once and again that he seeks the life of a just man and that the lie by which he allows himself to be disturbed and tormented is a lie indeed.

As to Jonathan, Saul's vowing to desist from seeking David's life, strikes joy to his soul. He seems to believe that Saul has permanently been brought to his senses, so that it will be safe for David to return to Saul's court. Jonathan does not know his father. It can't be expected that he should; for he is but a man, and he has not our Bible to lay bear to him Saul's heart. Saul perhaps is a mystery even to himself. It may be that he is unable to explain why at one time he is wholly at ease concerning the son of Jesse and why at another time he allows himself to be driven to distraction by the thought that David wants to kill him. Yet he could know and without a doubt does know that it is the hand of God upon him in punishment of his rebellion.

David, too, thinks it safe for him to return to Saul. For he allows Jonathan to lead him to Saul, "and he was in his presence as in times past."

As was said, the two hundred Philistines that David slew for their foreskins must have formed an enemy garrison somewhere in Judah not mentioned in the sacred narrative. Hearing of the disaster by which it had been overtaken, the Philistines swear vengeance and mobilize for war, and errlong their armies as headed by the princes of the land are encamped somewhere on the soil of Judah, poised for battle. In the words of the narrative, "The princes of the Philistines

went forth" (18:30). As we have seen further, of David's behaviour in this new crisis it is stated, "And it came to pass after they—the Philistine princes with their armies—went forth, that David behaved himself more wisely than all the servants of Saul; so that his name was precious" (18:30). We saw, too, wherein his wise conduct consisted, must have consisted. As in the former crisis so now: he speaks to the terrified people the language of faith, exhorting them to fear not but to trust the Lord to save them. And, as was stated, he also must have made raids upon the Philistine encampment; and the Lord, as working for him, laid his terror on the hearts of those heathen, so that they kept themselves to the place of their encampment instead of spreading over the territory of Judah and Benjamin for plunder and murder. The result was that David's name was precious (18:30). The people were unspeakably grateful to him. As was stated, the result of it all upon Saul was that his fear and hatred of David increased by another long leap and bound. In the language of the narrative, he was yet more afraid of David, and he became his enemy continually (18:29). Finally, unable to contain himself any longer, he spake to Jonathan and his servants that they should cooperate in killing David; and David is compelled to go into hiding. Allowing himself, as we have just seen, to be persuaded by Jonathan that David means to do him no harm, Saul vows to desist from seeking his life; and David is again free to fight the Philistines, which he also does. Rejoining his men, he goes out and fights that Philistine army that had invaded Israel's territory; and he slays them with a great slaughter; and they fled before his face (19:8).

So had the Lord delivered His people. Also this crisis has passed. And he through whom the Lord wrought is again David. The joy of the people is unbounded; and David's name is more precious than ever. All are glad with the exception of one man; and that man is Saul. He receives the tidings of David's great victory, and his countenance falls, and he becomes strangely silent. The narrative does not disclose what goes on in his soul. It is not necessary. From all that it revealed of Saul and especially from the notice that now follows—"And the evil spirit from the Lord was upon Saul, as he sat in his house with his javelin in his hand. . . ."—it is easy to conjecture what goes on in Saul's soul. He thinks of David and of his most recent achievement on the battlefield, and the acclaim of the people. And his anger again burns like a fire in him. And once more he is afraid. For it comes to pass. The kingdom is being rent from him, and it is being given to a neighbour better than he! And he curses David in his soul. Saul's heart is again open to the vile influences of the evil spirit from the abyss. And it comes upon him and troubles his soul as befores. By its lying whisperings that the son of Jesse will yet be his undoing it feeds the flame of

his wrath and terrorizes his soul so that Saul again carries on as though he were mad, which indeed he is. And but one thought races through his mind:—the son of David must die. Seeing his plight, the servants call David. And he comes and plays with his hand, that Saul may once more be healed by the strains of music. For David is unsuspecting. Apparently he is ignorant of the cause of Saul's malady. Besides, the king has sworn, "As the Lord liveth, he shall not be slain." And David believes that Saul holds his oath sacred, especially so since he must be convinced of David's innocency. Saul listens to the strains of music, when all at once, as by a sudden impulse he hurls at David the Javelin that is in his hands. David leaps and the missile, flying past him, lodges in the wall.

David flees to his house. But this time there is no abatement of Saul's madness. He is fully determined to make an end of David in the morning. But David may make his escape during the night. To prevent this, Saul encompasses about David's house with a watch, and instructs the watchmen to slay him in the morning. But it seems that David still is unable to believe that Saul actually thirsts after his blood. For apparently it requires considerable argument on the part of Michal to induce him to flee for his life. "And Michal, David's wife, told him saying, If thou save not thy life tonight, tomorrow thou shalt be slain." Her words prevail. He allows himself to be let down through a window: "and he went and fled and escaped." But it will soon be morning. And the servants of Saul, who came to take David, discovering that he has fled, will take after him. And he being but a short while on the way, they will soon overtake him. Thus to facilitate his flight, the daughter of Saul, in her love of David, takes recourse to trickery. But in doing so, she incidentally betrays the spirit of her home. She has there Teraphim—the old Chaldean household gods, which were perhaps associated with fertility. She must be secretly worshipping at the shrine of these gods. If not, why has she them there in her house? It seems that the Teraphim has the form of a man, judging from the use which she now makes of the image. She places it in David's bed, arranges about its head folds of camel's hair, and covers the whole with a cloth or "uppergarment" to represent David sick abed. The servants come to take David, and Michal tells them that he is sick. Whether they see what is supposed to be David lying there in the bed, or whether they are satisfied that she speaks the truth and thus leave without investigating for themselves, is not stated. Be this as it may, considering that they came to take David that he might be slain, it is strange that they allow themselves to be prevented by his supposed sickness. If he must be killed, what does it matter whether he is sick or well. Saul orders the servants to bring up David to him in the bed, that he may slay him. The servants return. And, behold!

an image in the bed. The stratagem has worked. David is by this time too far on his way to be overtaken. The danger has passed.

David's faith is now being put, and for many days to come will be put, to a severe trial. For Christ's sake he must endure being falsely accused and persecuted relentlessly by an insanely jealous and godless king, as assisted by courtiers as godless as he, and who continually will be inflaming the king against David by their lies and slanders (24:9),—by this lie that David seeks his hurt. But when he is reviled, he may not revile again, may David; and when he suffers, he may not threaten; but he must commit himself to God that judgeth righteously. And David endures by the Lord's mercy. His confidence in God is strong. The triumph of his faith is well reflected in the prayer for deliverance from his enemies that forms Ps. 59 of our Bible. It reveals, does this prayer, what goes on in David's soul with his house surrounded by Saul's menials. The psalm reads in part:

"Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God: defend me from them that rise up against me.

Deliver me from the workers of iniquity, and save me from bloody men.

For, lo, they lie in wait for my soul: the mighty are gathered against me: not for my transgression, nor for my sin, O Lord.

They run and prepare themselves without my fault: awake to help me, and behold.

Thou therefore, O Lord of hosts, the Lord God of Israel, awake to visit all the heathen: be not merciful to any wicked transgressors.

They return in the evening: they make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city.

Behold, they belch out with their mouth: swords are in their lips: for who, say they, doth hear.

Because of his strength will I wait upon thee: for God is my defence."

He endures, does David, and his faith is rewarded. God gives him the kingdom. And all his enemies are eventually cut off. For he makes God his expectation.

It is told Saul how he was deceived by his daughter Michal. "Why hast thou deceived me so," says he to Michal, "and sent away my enemy, that he is escaped?" Her answer is so obviously a lie as to border on open mockery. Says she to Saul, "He said unto me, Let me go; why should I kill thee?" As if Michal had been so determined to hold David captive as to have compelled him to threaten her with death in order to get her to release her hold on him. As if that image that they had found in David's bed did not tell a different story,—tell that she had helped David get away and had put to work all her womanly ingenuity to facilitate his flight. And this is the daughter on whom

Saul relied to co-operate with him, as David's wife, in putting David out of the way.

It can be imagined that Saul is furiously angry with Michal. It must be at this time that he gives Michal to Phatiel, the son of Laish, to wife. Saul thus gives her over to a life of sin. The marriage vow is sacred in Israel; and adultery is a capital crime. But what cares Saul, as long, as he is avenged on Michal for having helped David escape. It is revealing that Michal allows herself to be joined to another man.

David flees to Samuel, who resides in Ramah. To whom else will David turn? Samuel fears God. The word of God is with him. And it is he who, as God's prophet, anointed David. It is with Samuel, therefore, that David seeks refuge; it is to him that he pours out his heart and from whom he receives the spiritual solace and encouragement that he is needing in this dreadful hour. "So David fled, and escaped, and came to Samuel to Ramah, and told him all that Saul had done to him" (19:18).

In Naioth in Ramah dwells a company of prophets of whom the seer is president. They form a free association of truly God-fearing Israelitish men for the revival and nourishment of the spiritual life of the people in those degenerate times. They studied the law of God and the history of God's gracious dealing with His covenant people; and they went forth among the people to testify of the living God, of His Word, and His righteous and gracious dealings. They were inwardly united by the impulse of the Holy Spirit; and in their assemblies in Naioth—a word meaning dwellings: dwellings of prophets—they gave forth inspired discourse, telling God's praises, praising His name, and declaring His marvelous works. This was their prophesying. Hence, they are called prophets; and they prophesy under Samuel's lead.

In the quiet retreat of these prophets David now takes up his residence. "And he—David—and Samuel went and dwelt in Naioth." David's rest in this place is of short duration. It is told Saul, saying, "David is at Naioth in Ramah". Saul sends messengers to take David. Their arrival in Naioth is sudden. Time for flight there is not. David is trapped. But the Lord now comes to the rescue. The messengers arrive during the meeting of the prophets. As they listen to the inspired discourse, the Spirit seizes also on them, and they, too, prophecy; and gone is their will to capture David. They may have been reprobated, every one of them; yet, like the men in the parable of the sower, they receive the word with joy, and in their ecstatic ravishment they cannot will to bring themselves to perform their mission. Hearing of it Saul hardens his heart, and sends still other messengers, who are similarly affected. Still other messengers are sent, and they, too, prophecy. Then Saul himself goes; and when still a ways off, the Spirit comes also on him, and he continues his way prophesying. The internal



excitement raises his temperature. Arriving in Naioth, he casts off his clothes because of the inward heat; and he prophesies before Samuel in like manner, sings divine praises. The ecstasy completely overcomes him, so that he falls unconscious and lies down naked all day and all night. This gives David just that much time to make his get-away. He flees from Naioth and comes to Jonathan. But Saul hardens his heart, and perseveres in persecuting David.

G. M. O.

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## THROUGH THE AGES

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### Renaissance Popes

INNOCENT VIII. 1484-1492

This pope, whose real name was Loranzo Gibo, was born in Genoa, 1443. At the death of his predecessor, Sixtus IV, pandemonium reigned supreme in Rome. The nobles and the cardinals barricaded their homes in mortal fear of the mob that rioted in the streets. Houses were broken into and robbed. The instigators of the wild confusion was the aristocracy. What it aimed at was to intimidate the papacy into renouncing its claims to the headship of the political government of Rome. Quiet was restored when the two leading families responsible for the disorder agreed to withdraw from the city. The cardinals now assembled for the election of a new pope, and Gibo was chosen. He had sat up all night securing by promises of benefices and money the votes of all but six of the cardinals. The next morning two cardinals awakened the six who had not been approached. "Come", they said, "let us make a pope". "Who?" asked the six. "Cardinal Gibo". "How is that?" they countered. "While you were drowsy with sleep, we gathered all the votes except yours," was the answer.

After the election the aristocrat family of the Orsini returned, and lawlessness and confusion were again rampant in Rome. Women were kidnapped during the night. The corpses of the murdered were found in the streets in the morning. The life of the pope—Innocent VIII—was so greatly endangered by the disturbances of this family—the Orsini—that he had to save himself by an alliance with Naples.

Innocent the VIII was a voluptuous sinner. He was the unmarried father of sixteen children, all of whom he openly acknowledged. He loved ease and was without ideals. He did not foster wars, as several of his predecessors had done, but he engaged in the crimes of extortion and luxurious indulgence. He was

indebted for his election to the pontifical throne to Ferdinand of Naples. He repaid the debt by complying with all the wishes of his patron. His extortions were notorious. He set for sale all the offices of the church. Eighteen new papal secretaries paid 62,400 ducats into the papal treasury for their appointments.

Innocent published a decree allowing concubinage in Rome to clergy and laity alike. It declared celibacy contrary to the law of God and hurtful to the honour of the clergy, seeing that almost all the clergy had concubines, or mistresses. The moral degeneracy of the clergy, from the highest to the lowest is further indicated by the presence in the Holy City of 6,800 prostitutes. This could be expected with the supreme pontiff and the sacred senate setting examples in loose morals. Many of the cardinals led lives notoriously scandalous. They dwelt in palaces furnished with princely splendour and numbered their servants by the scores. They set the fashions in extravagant dress and sumptuous banqueting. They had their stables, kennels and falcons.

Though sinner that he was, Innocent was an implacable enemy of heretics. It remained for him to call a relentless crusade against the Waldensians of Italy and France. In a bull of May 5, 1487, he enjoined the king of France, the duke of Savoy and other princes to take up arms against them and exterminate them "as venomous serpents". Their worst crimes were that they did not allow women to preach, denied the real presence of Christ in the Lord's supper, adjured oaths, extreme unction, infant baptism, and rejected the doctrines of purgatory and prayers for the dead. French Waldensianism was as good as blotted out.

In his last sickness, Innocent was fed by a woman's milk. He left a fortune of 1,200,000 ducats, 48,000 of which were distributed, by his request, among his relatives.

Pope Alexander VI—Borgia. 1492-1503.

Like his predecessor, Innocent VIII, Cardinal Rodrigo Borgia bought the spiritual crown of christendom with promises of ecclesiastical offices and money. His elevation to the papal throne occurred in his 61st year. He had been cardinal for 37 years. During these years he was laden with ecclesiastical offices by his uncle, pope Calixtus III.

Alexander was highly gifted intellectually. Had he used his natural endowment aright he might have been one of the most brilliant popes in the annals of papacy. But he was lacking in moral principle. He was easily the most corrupt of the popes of the Renaissance period. During his reign the papacy sank into its deepest moral degradation since the days of the pornocracy in the 10th century.



Alexander was the unmarried father of seven children, all of whom he acknowledged. The conspicuous features of his career as pope were, besides his dissolute way of life, his passion to advance the worldly fortunes of these children, themselves notorious for their gayety, escapades, marriages, worldly distinction and crimes. The misfortunes and the scandals of the papal household were several. In 1497 Alexander's son of 24 years, the duke of Gandia, was mysteriously murdered. The perpetrator of the crime was never known. Alexander was disconsolate; for he was passionately fond of his children. He declared that he loved Don Juan more than anything in the world, and that if he had seven papacies he would give them all to restore his son's life. As bowed down under the weight of his grief, his thoughts turned to reforming the church. But his reformatory zeal was soon spent; and for the next two years he was wholly occupied with the marriage and careers of his children, Ceasar and Lucretia.

Another fearful tragedy of the Borgia family was the murder of Lucretia's husband, the duke of Besiglia, to whom she had born a son. The pope's son, Ceasar, openly declared that he had been the murderer.

Alexander's last achievement for his family was the marriage of Lucretia to Alfonso, son of Hercules, duke of Ferrara, in 1502. The duke was a widower and 24. Though the pope's daughter was only 21 at the time, she had been four times betrothed and twice married. But as the husband of Alfonso, she lived a quiet and domestic life till her death in 1519. She was not forty years when she died. Her son, Hercules, was the husband of Renée, the princess who welcomed Calvin and Clement Marot to her court.

The scandals of Alexander's reign were finally ended by death. It is reported that he died of poison, which he had prepared for a cardinal, but which was accidentally put into his own cup. The day before he died he played cards in bed with some of his cardinals. At the approach of death he received the eucharist and extreme unction. Death finally came to him in the presence of five members of the sacred college.

Few were the acts of Alexander that bore not the aspects of depravity. He was the pope to accomplish the task of the slaughter of the family of the Colonna. It was the last blow dealt to the Roman aristocracy, and thus the temporal dominion of the papacy was finally assured in the city of Rome.

There are at best only two acts of Alexander that do not have the aspect of depravity. Alexander canonized Anselm a saint. Secondly, in 1493 he divided the western world between Portugal and Spain in two bulls. The documents make mention of Christopher Columbus as a worthy man, much to be praised.

G. M. O.

## SION'S ZANGEN

### Het Gebed Eens Verdrukten

(Psalm 102; Vijfde Deel)

We hebben een en ander maal gezien en gehoord de klacht van een verdrukt kind Gods.

En we haasten ons er aan toe te voegen, dat we het beeld van den Messias gezien hebben in al de klacht van den ellendige. Er kwamen stemmen tot ons die alleen pasten op Christus. En onder die verschillende uitspraken is wel de voornaamste waar de zanger van zichzelf zegt, hoe hij "gansch ontbloot" is. Dat moogt ge wel zeggen van een gewoon mensch, doch dan moet ge terstond spreken van het betrekkelijke, van het relatieve. Niemand onder ons werd ooit "ontbloot" *in absoluto*. Maar wel de Christus Gods. Hij werd zóó diep weggedrukt, dat Hij eindelijk klaagt hoe Zijn wezen versmolt. En toen ried Hij ons aan Hem niet meer "mensch" doch een *worm* te heeten.

Evenwel, de zanger had zich gesterkt in God.

En die sterking ging streng theologisch te werk. Hij sterkte zich in het prijzen van God en Zijn deugden.

Ook zag de zanger het glorieuze resultaat. De heidenen zullen, als vrucht van al zijn nood en lijden, den Heere vreezen. God zal er voor zorgen, dat al die bange geschiedenis beschreven wordt, zoodat de navolgende geslachten het mogen hooren, en door lezing ervan tot den Heere getrokken mogen worden.

Doch ook hier zien we, dat het groote motief en hoofddoel theologisch is: 'opdat men den Naam des Heeren vertelle te Sion. . . .'

God moet en zal geëerd; Hij behoort tot Zijn eer te komen.

Die lof is de dienst des Heeren.

Lof is dit, dat men vol wordt van het deugdenbeeld van God, en dan getuigt van al hetgeen men hoorde, zag, proefde en smaakte van God. Uit men dan dit, met een van liefde brandend hart, dan looft men God.

Dit wordt gedaan te Sion, en te Jeruzalem: twee namen die ons hetzelfde voorwerp toonen, hoewel uit verschillend oogpunt.

Sion, zooals we eerder gezien hebben, is de berg Gods. Dat is Sion letterlijk. Als ge wilt en kunt, dan is die berg nog te zien. Ge behoeft slechts naar Palestina te reizen, en daar zult ge hem zien.

Naar de idee, is Sion de verhooving der aarde, die door den vloek ontzettend verlaagd was. Die aarde wordt door God opgezocht om tot in hemelsche hoogte verhoogd en verheerlijkt te worden. Sion beteekent, dat God omneer komt, en dat Hij de lage aarde, met Zijn menschen, omhoog trekt. Daarom is de berg

Sion en al de vroegere en latere altaren één sprake. Het altaar van Abel, en die hem volgden, zeide: de aarde is verhoogd!

Die symbolische en typische sprake van het Oude Testament is vervuld in Jezus Christus. Hij is zeer letterlijk de omneer-komende God die tot in de diepte der hel nederdaalt om Zijn volk te vinden en omhoog te trekken. Reden waarom Jezus Christus als ons heerlijk altaar hangt op Golgotha. Daar hangende grijpt Hij, en vindt U en mij, mijn broeder. Daar op Golgotha is een vreeselijke diepte. De afstanden in de diepte zijn peilloos.

En naar het motief Gods is die berg de aanraking van God en Zijn mensch in Goddelijke min. Sion, Golgotha, Jezus is de kus Gods die Zijn volk van eeuwigheid tot in eeuwigheid bemint.

De profeten hebben dat van verre gezien, en geloofd. Eén van hen jubelde bij den aanblik: "De goedertierenheid en waarheid zullen elkander ontmoeten, de gerechtigheid en vrede zullen elkander kussen." Psalm 85:11.

Jeruzalem is dezelfde gedachte: God en mensch vereend in verbondsmin. De stad van eeuwige vrede. Doch het oogpunt nu is de voltooiing ervan, de kroon van dat werk der verzoening. Het volk woont met zijn God tezamen in een stad.

En dat het dezelfde gedachte ons geeft als de berg Sion wordt duidelijk, als we zien dat Jeruzalem naar den hemel gegaan is toen Jezus opvoer. Hij en Jeruzalem belichamen één gedachte: God en mensch vereend tot in eeuwigheid.

God heeft Zich wonderlijk geopenbaard door de eeuwen heen, in de schepping, de onderhouding en het bestuur der aarde en des hemels. Hij toonde klaarlijk God te zijn in de geschiedenis.

Evenwel, ik wilde U vragen: is er een werk Gods, dat uitblinkt boven hetgeen Hij deed in Christus Jezus, onzen Heiland? Kunt ge ergens een glinsterende schoonheid aanwijzen die de schoonheid van Golgotha doet verbleeken?

Nu begrijpen we het vers: Men looft God op den berg Sion en in de stad Jeruzalem.

Vandaag gaat men naar de kerk om God te loven. Niet omdat Hij niet groot en heerlijk zou zijn bij het groene gras en den boom en de veelheid der sprekende schepselen. Maar omdat Zijn werk in Christus het schoonste is. Dat werk is het werk Gods in centralen zin. En in de kerk is het werk God in Christus Jezus het een en al. Paulus had zich vast voorgenomen om te midden van het volk niets te weten dan Jezus Christus en Hem gekruist.

Daar zingt men blij in lieflijke psalmen: des Heeren hand doet groete kracht!

"Wanneer de volken tezamen zullen vergaderd worden, ook de koninkrijken, om den Heere te dienen".

Wat heerlijkheid zit in dit vers! Hoe zien we het lieflijk gebeuren van Gods geslachten op weg naar den hemel!

De Baptist kent geen verbondssfeer: bij hem kan God net zoo goed te hooi en te gras trekken als Zijn volk trekken in de geslachten. Maar het is tegen de Heilige Schrift om zóó te leeren. God wandelt door de geslachten heen, van vader tot kind en kleinkind. En zoo komen er "volken te zamen" die tezamen reizen naar de eeuwigheid en uit hun hulkjes stappen als ze aankomen aan de stranden der eeuwigheid. Er komen koninkrijken aan die de saamhooring verstonden. Overal waar ge de kerk Gods ziet, merkt ge het, hoe er een saamhooring is die ons inniglijk verbindt. Zoo is het altijd geweest door de eeuwen heen. Ge kunt het zien in den eersten dienst der offeranden. Adam, Eva en hun kinderen offeren den Heere. In de ark was er slechts één huisgezin. Abram en Izak en Jakob behooren tezamen. Verder zijn er de twaalf geslachten Israels.

En in het Nieuwe Testament is het niet anders. Ik denk, dat dit de reden is waarom er bloedverwanten waren in den smallen kring van Jezus' Apostelen. De Heere trok "huizen", en we hooren van een man die discipel was, en die vier dochters had die profeteerden. De stokbewaarder verblijdde zich, dat hij en "zijn huis" geloofden.

En de van God gezondene apostelen verkondigden het Evangelie, hetwelk was voor "u en uwe kinderen".

Zij allen worden "vergaderd".

Hier in Amerika mag men wel eens spreken van een onding: "to join the church", sprekende van jongelieden die belijdenis deden en toegang verzochten tot den tafel des Heeren. Vandaag zegt men: Ik trad toe tot de kerk! En nog wel dat mooie woord: "to join"! Ge vindt die gedachte in den brief aan Efeze, in dat wonderschoone vers 4:16. Welnu, dat "joining" doet de mensch nooit. Dat doet God. De volken en de koninkrijken worden "vergaderd". Wanneer zullen we dat eens goed zien, en beleven? Dat schoone vers, zooveen genoemd, is geheel en al passief. Het is God die het lieflijke lichaam van Jezus ineen zet, doet groeien, totdat het den vollen wasdom bekomen mag.

En die vergadering der volken is, opdat zij "den Heere dienen" mogen.

Godsdienst!

Het eenigste doel van den mensch.

Staat en toestand des levens des menschen, waardoor hij een ongekend geluk ontvangt. En dan niet als loon, doch in den dienst van den levenden God zelf.

Toen ik nog heel jong was hoorde ik een oudoom zeggen: al was er geen hel tot straf, en geen hemel tot loon, dan zou ik nog den Heere willen dienen.

Godsdienst! Ons geheele wezen is er op aangelegd. Alleen in dien dienst is er geluk, vrede, rust.

Ik denk aan de Engelen Gods die altijd gereed staan daarboven in den hemel. Sprak God dan, dan vlogen zij henen, blijde, inniglijk blijde, om te doen wat Hij beval.

Ach, leefden we zóó!

Plotseling worden we er aan herinnerd, dat hier een mensch aan het woord is die zeer veel moest lijden. Temidden van zijn opsomming der deugden en der werken Gods, snikt hij. Het is als met een kindje, dat zeer lang schreide. Moeder nam het op in liefderijke armen. En het kind glimlachte door de tranen heen. Straks antwoordde het kind en het prees moeder.

Doch plotseling komt er nog een snik.

Zoo is het hier.

Met welgevallen, met inwendige blijdschap, had de zanger gezongen van God in Sion en in Jeruzalem, van de vergadering der volken en hun dienst van God.

Maar daar kwam weer de schrijnende smart: hij moet nog snikken.

Luistert: "Hij heeft mijne kracht op den weg terneder gedrukt, mijne dagen heeft Hij verkort. Ik zeide: Mijn God, neem mij niet weg in het midden mijner dagen; Uwe jaren zijn van geslacht tot geslacht."

Bij het neerschrijven van deze klacht moest ik telkens een neiging onderdrukken om naar den sleutel te grijpen op mijn schrijfmachine, die de kleine letters in hoofdletters verandert. Want ik geloof zeker, dat het Jezus is die hier klaagt in Zijn profeet, en alzoo Zijn Eigen lijden in Zijn volk vooruitlijdt.

Het spijt me nu, dat ik het niet deed, want alleen Jezus kan dit vers in zijn juisten toonaard zingen.

Vrage: wie kan zeggen, dat al zijn kracht op den weg ter neder gedrukt is door zijn God? Wie kan zeggen, dat God zijn dagen verkort heeft?

Evenwel, gaat naar Gethsemane en Golgotha, en de verzen zijn daar vervuld.

O ja, ik weet, dat de zanger óók leed, en dat hij zijn eigen leed hier heel werkelijk bezingt. Maar we hebben te doen met de Heilige Schrift hier, en er is ons door Jezus geleerd, dat Zijn Persoon, werk, lijden, sterven, en opstaan, in "alle de Schriften" getoond werd, opdat wij geen "dwazen" zouden zijn, doch gelooven wat de profeten van Hem getuigden.

O ja, het past. Het past geheel en al.

Jezus' kracht is op den weg gedurig terneder gedrukt. God sterkte Hem, en wierp Hem weer neer. Hij sterkte Hem opdat Hij verder kon lijden. Op den weg! En wat een weg! De *via dolorosa*, de weg van oneindig lijden. Verdrukkingen van Jezus!

En Zijn dagen zijn verkort. Toen Jezus stierf met een eeuwig sterven was Hij nog maar drie-en-dertig

jaren. Hij *is* weggenomen in het "midden Zijner jaren"!

Maar Gods jaren zijn van geslachte tot geslachte. Jezus zoekt steun in Gods eeuwigheid.

Jesaja sprak van die eeuwigheid die in onze zonde en de toorn over onze zonde voer. "Opdat wij behouden wierden"!

En het is de Eeuwigheid van God die dan ook Jezus uiteindelijk (wat onzin!) uit de diepte ophaalde.

En nu nog wat roemens.

En het verband is duidelijk. Jezus zal zingen van Gods wondere daden. In schepping maar ook in de herschepping. Hij zegt, dat God het was die de aarde grondde en Zijn handenwerk in de hemelen toonde. En bij het vergaan derzelve, bij hun veroudering, zal God Zich bewijzen als de God wiens naam de Eeuwige is.

Daarom zal uit de brandende en versmeltende massa een nieuwe wereld komen. En het doel? Opdat de kinderen van Gods knechten mogen wonen. En het zaad van Gods volk bevestigd worde.

Zoo weet de zanger, dat de verlossing komen zal.

Zoo wist Jezus, dat na den bangen, eeuwigen nacht van onuitsprekelijke kommer en ellende, het wonen met God te voorschijn zou treden.

Verlossingen van Jezus!

Het wonen van de kinderen der knechten Gods!

Bevestigd tot in eeuwigheid. Vastgezet op den berg van Sion in het hemelsche Jeruzalem. De tranen worden uiteindelijk gedroogd.

Om 't eeuwig welbehagen!

G. V.

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## IN HIS FEAR

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### GROWTH IN PRAYER

In a former article we attempted to describe the need for growth in prayer life. There is, we said, always the danger of falling into custom-praying and into formalism. Therefore we should ever be on our guard.

How now may we enrich our prayers and how may we bring about the necessary variation and how improve our choice and use of words? To that theme we devote this article.

### LEARN!

Teach us to pray, said one of the disciples to Jesus, and Jesus responded with the Lord's Prayer. Hence, prayer is also something in respect to which we have to be taught. None of us ought to imagine that he

has attained perfection, rather every one of us daily feels how many imperfections cling to this holy endeavour. And therefore we should be interested in learning to approach perfection. Our ambition should be: how may I improve and enrich my praying?

Some people say: I can't put my thoughts into words when I pray. We all feel the truth of that remark in our own prayer life. But this is not to be accounted as something which is simply there and can never be removed. I grant that certain people have greater ability to pray than others, and some people have very remarkable prayer-gifts. But instead of this discouraging us or making us feel inferior, it ought to inspire us to approach perfection. Let us not say: I cannot put my thoughts into words when I pray. Remember that children have difficulty to express themselves, but the more they observe and the more they practice what they observe the more proficient they become in this. And these people must realize that when it comes to doing business, buying, selling, etc., they have no difficulty whatever in expressing themselves in hundreds of ways. Have you ever asked yourself then why it is that in every other sphere of life you can express yourself very fluently, but when it comes to prayer you claim you are so handicapped? Can this possibly be due to the fact that you have exercised yourself in and practised diligently at the one but have neglected the other? If you applied yourself half as diligently to your prayer life as to your business life would you still have to complain that you cannot pray because you lack words?

Learn and practise, practise and learn.

#### LEARN FROM SCRIPTURE.

If it is our desire to express ourselves more adequately in our prayers, how could we ever do it than by absorbing more and more of the Word of God. Scripture is replete with prayers which we may make our own. Scripture is full of promises, the fulfillment of which we may request for ourselves and others. Scripture abounds with exhortations, the obedience to which we may beseech God for His grace. All this will tend to enrich our prayers.

I do not believe ministers ought to preach their sermons in their prayers, but the congregational prayer may attach itself to the sermon and that will help to attain variation as well as enrichment in prayer.

A minister told me one time that in his congregational prayer he sometimes followed the Prayer Perfect, advancing from one petition to the other and broadening out on each petition as he proceeded. Have you ever tried that?

And have you ever read Calvin's prayers? They are surely worth reading.

In our family praying I believe we can develop our praying if we give good heed to the Bible passage

which we read at the family service, and then attach our prayer closely to what was read. This will also help us to acquire variation and will immensely enrich our family prayers. If, after a passage of the Bible has been read and discussed, there follows a prayers in connection with what was discussed, a wonderful and an effective service results. If e.g. at the table we read Proverbs, chapter 8, about Wisdom crying at the gates and the entry of the city, how appropriately our prayer may center about our need for this Wisdom, the necessity of knowing Christ Who is that Wisdom, the importance of giving heed to the voice of wisdom as it lifts its voice in church and home, together with the request that the various members of the family may diligently seek this wisdom. This produces an effective unity and meanwhile enriches our prayers. Important therefore is that each reading of the Word of God leave an impression upon your soul. . . . then you will be able to pray, I assure you of that. And the more you read your Bible the more you grow in prayer.

#### LEARN FROM OTHERS.

Valuable it is also that we listen carefully to other saints when they pray, and thus learn from them. None of us is self-sufficient, none of us is beyond the need of having to learn, and it is good to learn from the saints. Follow them carefully when they pray, pray along with them. Observe the requests which they make, the petitions, the thanksgivings which they utter, and the more we do that the more we ourselves will copy their example and thus enrich our prayer life.

This is especially valuable in the home. Naturally it is incalculably valuable in church also, for the minister, unknowingly perhaps, is teaching the saints to pray also when he engages in the congregational prayer (that is, if the saint does not fall asleep during the prayer. . . . which has sometimes befallen you, I suppose). But in the homes especially, where the members of the family must be taught to pray, it is so valuable that the fathers teach them by himself praying in their midst.

I recall when I was a boy, staying at a certain home where the family was supposed to render what men were wont to call "silent prayer". I recall how my thoughts drifted all over the world until I finally settled upon counting the tick-tocks of the clock, meanwhile keeping an ear open for the sigh which the head of the family uttered when the prayer was supposed to end. It stands to reason that such a home exercises no instruction in prayer. But in homes where there are high-priest fathers the youths are in a position to learn the exercise of christian prayer and soon enough can practise it for themselves.

We would say then: give good heed to the prayers

which you hear from the saints and learn from them.

### MEDITATE THEREON.

Psalm 1 speaks of the righteous as meditating upon the Word of God day and night. Psalm 111 speaks of the Lord's works as being sought out of all that have pleasure therein. Psalm 139:17 "How precious are also thy thoughts unto me, If I should count them they are more than the sand". Then, falling asleep in recounting God's thoughts, lo, "When I awake I am still with Thee". A soul that thus meditates upon God, upon His mejeesty, His works, His mercy, etc., will, I would say, spontaneously develop in prayer and enrich the contents of his prayers. For prayer is another form of meditation.

I remember how one of my Christian school teachers one time rendered his close of day prayer, and just at that time there was a heavy electrical shower, with the rolls of thunder vibrating the building in which we were. The teacher glorified God with the words of Psalm 29 "The voice of the Lord shaketh the wilderness, the voice of the Lord is powerful, it is full of majesty. . . ." This came from a soul that was meditating upon the mighty works of the Lord and the meditation of it flowed over his lips into an edifying and for me never to be forgotten prayer.

God's people is a praying people.

May we grow in prayer until the day when our prayers shall be perfect, when we shall no more stammer as even the best of us do now, but when we shall pray in perfection. Meanwhiles may we grow up onto Him who taught us to pray and sends forth His Spirit through whom we pray and ever, while we pray, Himself prays for us in the heavenlies.

M. G.

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## FROM HOLY WRIT

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### The Patience Of Job

This is an emergency measure. We are sorry to hear that Rev. Lubbers is ill, which prevents him from filling this department for the present. Our readers will be disappointed that his regular series of articles on the "Signs In The Gospel Of John" will not appear for a few issues, awaiting his recovery. May the Lord speedily restore him to health that he may soon resume his various duties among us.

Quite reluctantly I take upon myself to temporarily fill the space allotted to him. But under the circumstances, I was also reluctant to refuse, even though

the request comes on a very short notice. So together we'll hope that this emergency is of a short duration.

It is always interesting to note that Scripture is its own interpreter. One passage often throws valuable light upon some other passage, or one section upon some other. Some new aspects are discovered. Some important facts are brought to our attention.

A passage of that nature we have in James 5:11. "Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord: that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy."

In passing, we do well to note that James is spurring the readers on to patiently persevere in the midst of the trials that beset them in their present sojourn upon the earth. He realizes, as becomes evident from the first six verses of this chapter, that they must often suffer in the hands of wicked men, who are sometimes even reckoned among the members of the church. These wicked men are often in power, using their power to oppress the righteous. And because these righteous refuse to resort to force to obtain justice, it is often necessary for them to endure affliction while they voice their protest and continually send up their prayers to Him Who sees all things and judges righteously.

James admonishes them to be patient in the midst of their sufferings, always confident that vengeance belongs to the Lord, Who will recompense every man according to his works, whether good or evil. That day of recompense is not far off, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. Already the Judge stands at the door.

As an incentive, these righteous are reminded of the saints who have gone before. James calls to mind particularly the prophets, who were especially privileged above their contemporaries to be mouthpieces of the Lord. Yet their unique privilege carried with it an added amount of suffering. These are outstanding examples of those who suffered affliction. And they persevered steadfastly, patiently bearing the suffering that befell them.

And then he refers to the example of Job. Even in that day they had often heard of the proverbial patience of Job. They need only be reminded of it. They have also "seen the end of the Lord", that is, the purpose of the Lord in all His dealings with His servant Job. For the Lord had His own wise purpose in afflicting him as He did. The history of Job teaches us that "the Lord is full of pity and of tender mercy."

Job undergoes a *trial of his faith*. It need hardly be said that this trial comes from God. All things, including every happening and all creatures, are in the hands of the Almighty, Who is absolutely sovereign in all His works. The devil who wants to make Job utterly miserable, the Sabeans and Chaldeans who delight in robbing him of his possession, the wind and

the fire that destroy what remained, are but so many instruments in the hands of God to carry out His purpose. Even Job's wife who turns against him in his hour of distress, and his three friends who prove to be such miserable comforters, are serving the purpose for which God intends to use them.

That becomes increasingly evident as we read the book of Job. God brings His servant to the attention of the devil, reminding him that this man stands in the righteousness of Jesus Christ, is sanctified to walk in a new obedience, with the fear of God in his heart, so that he simply abhors evil. (1:8). The Lord also gives Satan power to deprive Job of all his earthly possessions, but setting a limit beyond which even the power of darkness cannot go. Job is perfectly right when he declares that the same Lord Who gave him all these things has also taken them again. (1:21). The conclusion of the entire book expresses emphatically that the Creator of all is almighty in power and unsearchable in all His ways.

Job's faith is put to the test. His suffering is not the common lot of humanity, but is the unique suffering of a servant of God. He does not merely suffer a great natural loss and a serious physical ailment, but he undergoes a spiritual struggle. He suffers for righteousness' sake. His faith is always brought in question. All the powers of darkness are plotting together with the wicked intent of undermining his faith.

The devil is the first to challenge it. In answer to God's challenge to take note of His servant Job, the devil remarks: "Does Job fear God for naught?" The implication is, that man's religion is a matter of utility. He serves God for his own personal interests. Deprive him of all that is most precious to him, and he will readily throw up his faith in God. To prove his point the devil is ready to deprive the man of God of all his earthly possessions, and when that fails to bring the desired result, he is ready to afflict him so sorely that death is more attractive to him than life.

Even Job's wife turns against him, urging him to curse God and die. And his friends accuse him of having committed gross sins that have brought these visitations of God upon him. They proceed from the assumption that prosperity is an unerring sign of God's favor, while adversity is necessarily always a token of His curse. This man has been prosperous, but now he is utterly miserable. The conclusion must be, that he is now receiving a just recompense for his sins. God's visitations are upon him, so that he is doomed to go to the grave childless, as an outcast who is cut off from the land of the living, like a tree that has been uprooted, never to rise again. And when Job pleads his innocence in this matter, he is branded as an unrepentent, self-righteous hypocrite.

You have heard of the unique suffering of this righteous man. You have also heard of his patience.

Not as if true patience is a natural virtue in which some men excel above others. A mere natural patience is often nothing more than timidity, verging on cowardice. It could never have persevered under the strain of this kind of a trial. His patience was an act of faith, which is a gift of grace, powerful enough to bear up under every affliction and able to sustain him in all his distresses.

Not as if true patience is a natural virtue in which perience, you find that he slips into sin, sinks deeper and deeper into the mire that threatens to swallow him up. At the end of chapter one it can still be said, "In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly." But in chapter two, verse ten, this statement is repeated only with definite reservations. There we read, "In all this did not Job sin with his lips." But in the third chapter this can no more be said, for he curses the day of his birth. He even reaches a stage that is well-nigh despair. Until finally he is forced to confess to God, "Behold I am vile; what shall I answer Thee?" (40:4). And again, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." (42:6).

Yet even so his faith triumphs, for true patience is a gift of God. Job does not understand God's dealings with him, but he acknowledges his trust in the Lord. "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." (13:15). Although he knew that he was a sinner and was ready to confess his sinfulness, he also knew that he was just in the sight of His Maker, in the confidence, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." (19:25). And although he could not possibly explain why all this misery should come upon him, he never entirely gave up his hope in the salvation of God. "And though after my skin worms shall destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." (19:26).

Who can fail to see the purpose of the Lord in all this? For he shows clearly in this whole history "that He is full of pity and of tender mercy".

God's pity is rooted in His love. It is the manifestation of His love towards the objects of His love in distress. His sympathy goes out to them. Not as a mere passing sentiment that arises for a moment and soon fades away. But He yearns for them, grieves over their afflictions and pities them as a father pities his children. He is eager to deliver them and to bestow some great good upon them.

He is also of tender mercy. The Dutch calls Him an "Ontfermer". God does not merely entertain a strong desire to deliver His people from all their troubles, but He is also able to do so. He does not stand by in desperation, but He is mighty to save. Therefore God's mercy means, first of all, that He is intensely interested in the welfare of His people, so that even when He sends them afflictions, He does so in His compassion for them. It means, moreover, that He will not allow them to suffer one moment longer than is necessary for their good. Their tears are



precious in His sight. And it means finally, that He delivers them at the earliest possible moment and bestows upon them the great good of His eternal salvation. In all these things He shows that He is full of pity and of tender mercy.

That was also His purpose in the affliction of Job.

The three friends are put to shame. Before their eyes Job is justified and restored to his former position of honor before God. His possessions are doubled, his family is once more complete. It becomes evident that the Lord often chastises those whom He loves.

Job is humbled to the dust. He learns the invaluable lesson, that he is a great sinner, prone to all evil, liable to fall and never able to stand in his own strength. He learns to distrust himself, to become bitterly afraid of his own weaknesses and to trust entirely in his God.

And God is vindicated. He is the living God, almighty in power and sovereign in all that He does. How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! His work withstands the fiery trial that He sends. His grace is sufficient, His pity is great and His mercy is boundless. He is ever faithful, for He changes never. Therefore His people are not consumed.

The conclusion of the matter is, that God never punishes those whom He loves. He does chastise them but His chastisements prove that He deals with them in love as His sons and daughters. He does send afflictions, but He does it to purge, not to destroy.

"We count them blessed who endure." And rightly so!

To express it in the words of Jesus. "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

He who so endures to the end shall be saved.

C. H.

## Ingezonden

Toen ons artikel al in Edgerton was met het verzoek om geplaatst te worden in The Standard Bearer, vernamen we de plannen van de Mission Committee, om Ds. De Jong en Ds. Kok naar Canada te zenden, om daar eens polshoogte te nemen naar de stand van zaken aangaande de Hollandsche emigranten.

Toen ik dat hoorde, was er geen tijd meer om de Redacteur te verzoeken mijn artikel niet te plaatsen, doch de lezers zullen bij nu wel hebben begrepen dat

het geheel mijn bedoeling niet was om de beide Dss. een handje te helpen in het verrichten hunner werkzaamheden, omreden ik van hunne plannen niets wist. Doch de reden dat ik Canada ter sprake bracht bestond hierin, omdat ik in het artikel van Ds. Knott in "Concordia" van Nov. 27, geen woord las van toekomstige plannen over Canada, en dat bevreemde mij. En waar nu in "The Standard Bearer" van Dec. 15 de lezers worden uitgenoodigd wenken te geven aangaande het werk der Zending, neem ik van de gelegenheid gebruik een paar ten beste te geven, doch veroorloof me de vrijheid ze rechtstreeks in de Standard Bearer te plaatsen, omreden onze Zending een publiek belang is 't welk ons allen aangaat, en ten tweede omdat de werkzaamheden en plannen in beide bladen zijn gepubliceerd, en alzoo de wenken ook publiek behooren te worden gegeven zal er een vruchtbare discussie voortstaan.

In de eerste plaats dan zou ik de beide zendeling-leeraars willen aanraden, leer grondig de Nederlandsche taal, en wanneer ge die goed machtig zijt vestig u dan in Canada, Quebec, Montreal of Toronto, dicht bij de daar ter plaatse immigration hall of bij de aanlegplaats der Hollandsche booten in Quebec en Montreal. En dan bestaat de mogelijkheid, zooals Hoboken een toevluchtsoord geworden is onder den zegen des Heeren voor vele immigranten, dat er in een den havensteden van Canada een tehuis van onze kerkengroep kan worden opgericht waar onze Hollandsche stamgenoten met raad en daad kunnen worden geholpen.

Adverteeren in "De Reformatie" zou de zendingszaak zeer kunnen bevorderen.

De Zending gaat ons allen aan, het is de zaak van Gods Koninkrijk.

J. R. VanderWal.

## PERISCOPE

### *Condolences and Congratulations. . . .*

We recently received word from the Rev. G. Lubbers that he has been ill for the past four weeks. He has been unable to occupy his pulpit in Randolph, Wisconsin since December 7. He writes: "First it was 'flu' — then it was 'congestion in lungs', but blood test shows undulant fever. I lost 18 pounds but have regained 8. Incessant fever, goes up to about 101-6 every day. Can rest in the Lord's way."

We extend our heartfelt sympathy to our brother in his affliction and join with him in the prayer that the Lord may give him grace sufficient for the way He leads.

Classis East, which met on January 7, also took cognizance of the illness of Brother Lubbers and decided to grant Randolph "liefde-beurten" during the incapacitation of their pastor.

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On the other hand, we are happy to be able to report that the news from California concerning the Rev. H. Hoeksema is encouraging. In a recent letter, he wrote that he had walked about a half-mile without his cane and had twice walked down-town in Bellflower, a distance of about 3 miles, with his "aid". The Rev. Hoeksema is enjoying and "soaking-up" the California sunshine at the home of his son-in-law, the Rev. L. Doezeema. He expresses his confidence that the Lord is continuing to lead him in the way of recovery. We thank and praise our God, with our brethren, for His goodness.

Christian greetings to both brethren and all the Lord's sick and afflicted!

#### *"Common Grace" and God's Attitude Towards the Ungodly. . . .*

We continue with the transcription of the article by C. V. under the above title from the *Reformatie* of Nov. 22, 1947. We suggest that you refer briefly to the first part of this transcription which appeared in the Jan. 1 issue of the *Standard Bearer*. Prof. Veenhof continues as follows:

"In correlation to all that which has been said concerning 'the beginning of judgment', as it comes to the house of God, we can note the following concerning God's goodness towards the ungodly:

"1. Taken by itself, all that which the wicked receive of good gifts in every respect, is a manifestation of God's grace or favor: it is always completely undeserved; yea, forever forfeited.

"2. In the conferring of much good yet unto the ungodly (for example, in the offere of salvation) there is revealed that justice is not yet accomplished, has not yet become absolute. They still live in the 'day of grace'.

"3. When God's goodness is thus spoken of, reference is not thereby made to the deepest motive of God's dealing with the ungodly. The manner of God's dealing with them, when thus expressed, is 'according to its essential nature by itself'.

"4. So understood, this expression of goodness serves, in the final analysis, to increase their responsibility and hence, aggravates their judgment. This demonstration of goodness is subordinated, therefore, to the execution of God's eternal judgment over all those who reject Him.

"5. This expression of goodness is only temporal. It is but the 'beginning' of goodness. Finally, the ungodly receive only greater punishment.

"6. Considering God's deepest motive with it, and with an eye to the eventual effect of this expression of goodness, it cannot be spoken of as grace or mercy in the full and deep sense of the word. God links it up with the coming of His wrath. He hardens the ungodly through it, and so works in it, that the legitimacy of eternal punishment becomes very obvious.

"From the above it becomes evident that we cannot conclude from God's judgment over believers, a certain *unfavorable* attitude toward these believers. And just as well, we cannot conclude from God's goodness to the ungodly, a certain *favorable* attitude toward these ungodly.

"It was no one less than Calvin who warned against this hasty and superficial judgment.

"In his exposition of Jer. 33:9 for example, he points out that the prophet exhorts the Jews to extol God for His grace (*gratia*) which is the first cause of their trust (*primam fiduciae causam*). 'For the origin of all God's blessings, or the fountain from which all good things flow, is the favor of God in being reconciled to us. He may, indeed, supply us bountifully with whatever we may wish, while yet he himself is alienated from us, as we see to be the case with the ungodly, who often abound in all good things; and hence they glory and boast as though they had God as it were, in a manner bound to them. But whatever God grants and bestows on the ungodly, cannot, properly speaking, (*prorie loquendo*) be deemed as an evidence of his favour and grace; (*testimonium favoris et gratiae*) but he thus renders them more unexcusable, while he treats them so indulgently. There is then no saving good, (*salutare bonum*) but what flows from the paternal love of God. We must now see how God becomes propitious to us. He becomes so, when he imputes not our sins to us. *For except pardon goes before, he must necessarily be adverse to us*; for as long as he looks on us as we are, he finds in us nothing but what deserves vengeance. We are therefore always accursed before God until he buries our sins.'

" 'How is it, then, that God not only maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good,'—so Calvin asks in his Institutes, III, XXV, 9—'but that, for the accommodations of the present life, his inestimable liberality is diffused in the most copious abundance? Hence we see, that things which properly belong to Christ and his members, are also extended to the impious; not to become their legitimate possession, but to render them more inexcusable. Thus impious men frequently experience God's beneficence in remarkable instances, which sometimes exceed all the blessings of the pious, but which, nevertheless, are the means of aggravating their condemnation.'

"It is evident from the above that in the last analysis one can hardly speak of a two-fold attitude of God towards specific individuals.

"There is in God an attitude of *grace* towards the

elect. This attitude governs all dealings and orderings with the elect. All of God's work for and in them is designed and determined by this gracious attitude. Also the evil and the suffering which God so often allows to come to his own. And all of God's dealing with the elect serves to enhance God's greatness in the wonderful, everlasting glorious manifestation of grace to sinners.

"But besides, there is in God an attitude of *wrath* against all the reprobate. And that disposition permeates all of God's speech and dealing with the reprobate. It directs and motivates all His deeds for and in them. Also the goodness which God manifests to them in this dispensation is finally governed by this disposition of wrath. Through this manifestation of goodness also, God's wrath comes to its final full disclosure. And the end of all God's work with and in the demand shall be the reflection of His greatness and righteousness in the complete bursting forth of wrath over the damned in the eternal fire."

N. B.: As we wrote at the beginning of the first installment of the above translation which appeared in the last issue, this subject is one of especial interest to us in this country. We hope to hear and read more of the discussion of "common grace" from the Netherlands. In the meantime, we will refrain from commenting on the above. We are motivated by several considerations. In the first place, we expect and look for further discussion and development of this subject from the Netherlands. In the second place, as we have also found in the controversy regarding the covenant, hasty judgment and criticism of our brethren from across the sea often leads to unwarranted conclusions and stifles friendly and fruitful discussion. Finally, so much has been written in the past, both in the *Standard Bearer* and elsewhere, that it should not be difficult for the brethren in the Netherlands to determine the position of our Churches in respect to the theory of "common grace". Hence, we expectantly await to hear more.

*Signs of the Times. . . .*

#### NEW DUTCH DRIVE SEEN

Ceace-Fire Agreement  
Demanded in Java  
\* \* \*

Reports Marine  
Killed in China  
\* \* \*

Two Escape "Certain Death"  
As Blast Levels Home Here  
\* \* \*

#### PLANE CRASH TOLL IS 17

Two Federal Aides Die  
in Georgia

Crash in Algiers  
Takes Lives of 9  
\* \* \*

Man Slugged,  
Robbed  
\* \* \*

Two Are Killed  
In Flint Crash  
\* \* \*

#### FEARS LACK OF INSULIN

Argentinian Sees Rise in  
Diabetes  
\* \* \*

NOME FIRE LOSS \$40,000  
\* \* \*

Ex-Policeman Owns Killing  
\* \* \*

#### YOUNG KILLER GIVEN DEATH

Reno Seeks "Example"  
for Hoodlums  
\* \* \*

#### FLOODS PERIL DUTCH AREAS

Waal and Yssel Rivers  
Over Banks  
\* \* \*

Corn Borers May Slice  
1948 Crop  
\* \* \*

Red Measles  
Sweep Ottawa  
\* \* \*

New York Police Charge  
Woman Held Up 2 Hotels  
\* \* \*

Seriously Hurt  
By Attacker  
\* \* \*

#### FLOODS WIDEN IN 3 STATES

Hit Oregon, Washington,  
Idaho Areas

The above are just a few of the many headlines that could be quoted. They are all taken from a single issue of the *Grand Rapids, Press* which appeared on Thursday, January 8, 1948. The same could be duplicated any day, from any daily newspaper, anywhere in the world. In fact, these which we quoted might be termed "mild" in comparison to those which appear quite generally; the *Press* is a very conservative journal.

These headlines literally scream at us: "Watch and Pray, for the time is at hand". How real and vital

the words of Christ become for us in the days in which we live: "And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows."

And how comforting for the child of God, in the midst of it all, to remember the Word of Christ: "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

\* \* \* \*

The following article by Prof. S. Greydanus appeared in *De Reformatie* of Nov. 15, 1947. We believe it timely and practical character makes it of value for our readers. We had originally intended to condense and translate it but lack of time forbade. Many of us can still read the Holland and all should be able to fit something from it.

#### VEROVERING DER WERELD

Dr. A. Kuyper Sr. schreef eens: "Geen duimbreed is er op heel 't erf van ons menschelijk leven, waarvan de Christus, die aller Souverein is, niet roept: "Mijn" Dat komt wel overeen met hetgeen de apostel Paulus aan de Corinthiërs schreef: alles is uwe: hetzij Paulus, hetzij Apollos, hetzij Cefas, hetzij de wereld, hetzij leven, hetzij dood, hetzij tegenwoordige, hetzij toekomstige dingen, zij zijn alle uwe; doch gij zijt van Christus, en Christus is van God, I Cor. 3 vs. 21-23.

Wij, d.w.z., die van Christus zijn, allen, die waarlijk in Hem gelooven, zijn onnoemelijk rijk: de armste aan stoffelijke goederen, en de mildst met die goederen bedeelde, de zieke en lijdende en kleine evenzeer als de gezonde, sterke. De geringe en onaanzienlijke niet minder dan de hooggeplaatste en in macht en staat verhevene.

Alles is uwe: leven en dood, tegenwoordige en toekomstige dingen, heel de wereld met al wat er in en op is; alles, want dat is van Christus, Wiens eigendom gij zijt, en dus is alles ook het uwe om Zijnentwil en door Hem.

Als alles van ons is, dan is niets van de wereld. Tusschen alles en niets is geen middelding. Het kan niet zijn: alles het uwe, en ook alles, of veel, of een weinig van de wereld. Want wat van de wereld is, veel of weinig, heel veel, of zeer weinig, is niet van u. Daar is dus geen ontkomen aan: Is alles van ons, geloovigen in Christus Jezus, dan is niets van de wereld die Hem verwerpt. En dus pleegt die wereld, in hetgeen zij neemt en geniet, diefstal. Hetzij veel, hetzij weinig, dat zij neemt, zij neemt en geniet dus niet het hare, maar het onze, zij steelt het onze, d.w.z. hetgeen

van Christus is, en daarom van ons. Eerst wanneer ook zij geloovig den Heere Christus aanneemt, wordt ook alles van haar, en kan zij van dat alles nemen en genieten wat ook het hare is. Eens wordt haar dan ook de macht en gelegenheid ontnomen, als zij zich niet bekeert en den Heere Jezus geloovig aanneemt, om wederrechtelijk van dat alles ook maar iets te nemen ter genieting. De diefstal, die haar dan nu nog mogelijk is, wordt haar eens onmogelijk. Daarom zegt de Heere HEERE alzó: Zie, Mijne knechten zullen eten, doch gijlieden zult hongeren; zie, Mijne knechten zullen drinken, doch gijlieden zult dorsten; zie, Mijne knechten zullen blijde zijn, doch gijlieden zult beschaamd zijn; zie, Mijne knechten zullen juichen van goeder harte, maar gijlieden zult schreeuwen van weedom des harten, en van verbreking des geestes zult gij huilen, Jes. 65 vs. 13-14.

Alles is uwe, n.l. voor u, geloovigen in Christus Jezus.

Wat kunnen wij dan genieten en een leventje van plezier leiden. Denk u eens in. Dan is het bier van ons, en de jenever, en de brandewijn, en de cognac, en de champagne. Wel, dan kunnen we drinkgezelschappen oprichten.

Natuurlijk christelijke. Christelijke bierclubs, christelijke brandewijn- en jeneververenigingen, christelijke champagne-sociëteiten. Want natuurlijk, wij moeten belijdenis doen van ons Christelijk geloof. Dat alles is niet het onze om onzentwil, door ons eigen werk, maar ons geschonken om Christus' verdienste en door Hem ons genadig gegeven. Het is alles eigenlijk het Zijne. Maar omdat wij van Hem zijn en in Hem gelooven, daarom is het ook van ons. En daarom moeten wij dat ook doen uitkomen, openlijk a.h.w. proclameren. En daarom bij alles er bij: christelijk, en dat voorop. Op die wijze belijden wij dan voor allen, dat het alles in waarheid van Christus is, en dat het het onze slechts is in Zijne gemeenschap, om en door Hem, zonder eenige verdienste onzerzijds, uit loutere genade.

Derhalve: christelijke drink- en drankgezelschappen, christelijke bier- en jenever- en brandewijn groepen, christelijke champagnegelagen.

Maar daar kan het natuurlijk niet bij blijven. Alles is immers het uwe, d.w.z. den geloovigen in Christus Jezus. Dus ook voetbalspel en bridge- en kaartspel. Want die voetballen en die kaarten behoren toch ook tot alles. Dat is dus ook het uwe, het onze. En dus mogen we daarmee ook spelen. Natuurlijk christelijk. Dat spreekt. Christelijk voetbalspel, christelijk kaart- en bridgespel. Evenals christelijk bier- en jenever- en cognac- en champagnedrinken. Natuurlijk, het moet alles in mate en wijze christelijk toegaan. We zetten dan voor alles ook het woord christelijk.

En dan is daar nog meer.

(Wordt Vervolgd)

## REPORT OF CLASSIS EAST

### in session Jan. 7, 1948 at Grand Rapids, Mich.

The opening exercises were conducted by Rev. M. Gritters. After the singing of Psalter No. 176 he reads Romans 12 and leads in prayer.

The reading of the credentials revealed that Rev. J. A. Heys and Rev. G. C. Lubbers could not be with us on account of illness. After the credentials are received Rev. B. Kok assumes the presidency and speaks a word of welcome to the delegates.

The minutes of the previous meeting of Classis are read and accepted. Classis comes back to Article 18 of these minutes which was to be carried out by the Classical Committee. Seeing this work had not been done, it was decided, that they shall report at the next meeting of Classis.

Second Church asks Classis to overture Synod in regard to the introduction of a "Wordbook to the Heidelberg Catechism". Classis decides to send this overture through to Synod.

Hudsonville and First Church ask for Classical appointments. There is also a request from Randolph for "liefde beurten" during the illness of their pastor. The following Committee was appointed to draw up a schedule for Classical appointments: Rev. R. Veldman, Rev. J. D. De Jong, and elder D. Langeland. Later in the day they presented the following schedule which was adopted by Classis:

#### Hudsonville

Jan. 18—Rev. R. Veldman  
Jan. 25—Rev. S. Cammenga  
Feb. 1—Rev. J. D. Jong  
Feb. 8—Rev. J. A. Heys  
Feb. 15—Rev. H. Veldman  
Feb. 29—Rev. M. Schipper  
Mar. 7—Rev. B. Kok

Mar. 14—Rev. M. Gritters

Mar. 21—Rev. H. De Wolf

Mar. 28—Rev. G. Vanden Berg

#### First Church

Jan. 18 Eve.—Rev. R. Veldman

Jan. 25 Aft.—Rev. H. De Wolf

Feb. 1 Eve.—Rev. J. A. Heys

Feb. 15 Eve.—Rev. H. Veldman

Feb. 22 Aft.—Rev. J. De Jong

Feb. 29 Eve.—Rev. M. Schipper

Mar. 7 Aft.—Rev. S. Cammenga

Mar. 14 Eve.—Rev. M. Gritters

Mar. 21 Aft.—Rev. B. Kok

Mar. 28 Eve.—Rev. Vanden Berg

#### Randolph

Jan. 18—Rev. R. Veldman

Jan. 25—Rev. M. Gritters

Feb. 1—Rev. H. De Wolf

Feb. 8—Rev. B. Kok

Feb. 15—Rev. G. Vanden Berg

Feb. 22—Rev. R. Veldman

Feb. 29—Rev. S. Cammenga

Mar. 7—Rev. J. De Jong

Mar. 21—Rev. H. Veldman

In connection with the classical appointments for Randolph, Classis decides that Randolph be advised to ask the consistories of the Churches of Classis East for a collection to defray the traveling expenses of the ministers who go to Randolph and of the ministers who must supply their pulpits.

An overture of Creston, referring to a possible change in the Rules of Order for Synod, so that all matters that come before Synod shall first be discussed by the local consistories, is referred to the various consistories for study.

Oak Lawn presented an overture for Synod, requesting that the Acts of Synod and the Year Book be published at an

earlier date. Classis decides to send this request through to Synod.

Grand Haven asks Classis East to overture Synod for them that they be given permission to ask for a collection from the Churches of Classis West. The need for this financial assistance arises from the fact that they must soon vacate their present place of worship and build their own church edifice. Classis decided to so overture Synod.

At the last classical meeting the Mission Committee was asked to obtain contact with emigrants and with those who desire to emigrate from the Netherlands to Canada and the United States.

The Mission Committee reported that they had established some contacts, but that they considered that this work does not fall under the mandate of the Mission Committee; and therefore they suggest that the Mission Committee be advised to appoint a Committee outside itself to continue this work. This recommendation was adopted by Classis.

Rev. Hofman then addresses Classis, giving information concerning the work the Missionaries are doing at present.

The next meeting of Classis will be held in Holland, Michigan, D. V., Wednesday, April 7.

The minutes of this classical meeting are read and accepted. Psalter No. 68 is sung. Rev. W. Hofman leads in the closing prayer.

D. JONKER, Stated Clerk.