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MEDITATION

Maria! – Rabbouni!

“Jezus zeide tot haar: Maria! Zij zich omkeerende, zeide tot Hem: Rabbouni! hetwelk is gezegd, Meester.”—Joh. 20:16.

“En als Jezus opgestaan was des morgens vroeg op den eersten dag der week, verscheen Hij eerst aan Maria Magdalena, uit welke Hij zeven duivelen uitgeworpen had.”—Markus 16:9.

Het is waar, dat de Heilige Apostel Paulus Jezus, en Hem gekruist, in het middenpunt zet der heilshistorie, maar dan als den gekruisten Heiland die opstond ten derde dage, naar de Schriften.

Het kruis zonder de opstanding nut ons niet; het ware het vreeselijkste fiasco, dat ge U zoudt kunnen denken.

Maar neen, Jezus is waarlijk opgestaan, en is van Simon gezien! In dien jubelkreet beluisteren we het begin van de hallels des hemels, hallels die de zalen van het Huis Gods zullen doen daveren van ongekende blijdschap tot in alle eeuwigheid.

Voor vierduizend jaren was de aarde niet dan één groot kerkhof geweest. Maar nu werd de aarde opengebroken; meer nog, de smarten van den eeuwigen, dat is, den tweeden dood, werden verbroken; heete tranen afgewischt, en het Kindeke Gods werd weggerukt tot voor den troon van God.

Van Jozef's hof begint de victorie: het vlammend zwaard keert ons niet meer van de wandeling op het pad des levens, tot den boom des levens, tot de genieting van het eeuwige leven, daar boven bij God!

Want Jezus stond op, vroeg in den morgen van den eersten dag der week: de eerste Zondagmorgen, begin van een ruste die nimmer zal eindigen. Voorts zal Hij, en zullen wij, inblikken in het volbrachte werk van God Almachtig, het werk van Zijn onbegrijpelijke

liefde in onzen Heere Jezus Christus! Roept het allen toe: De Heere is waarlijk opgestaan!

* * * *

Gods werk is altijd wonderlijk: Jesaja zegt ervan, dat Zijn wegen hooger zijn dan onze wegen, en Zijne gedachten hooger dan onze gedachten.

Ik dacht daaraan, toen ik Maria zag bij het graf van Jezus, weenende van verdriet. En toen ik Jezus zag die haar toesprak: Maria!

In de raadskamers van God Drie-Eenig, in die nooit begonnen eeuwigheid, is Hij bezig geweest met de vraag: Wien zullen Wij het verrezen Kindeke Gods het eerst doen zien? Wien zal het gegeven worden om voor het eerst de lieflijkste openbaring van Ons verbondsleven gade te slaan?

En toen heeft de Godheid gezegd: Dat moet Maria Magdaléna zijn!

O, geloof het gerust: er zat Goddelijke logika achter dat besluit. Misschien zullen we het kunnen begrijpen straks, wanneer geen maan meer schijnt, en we zullen wandelen in het volle licht. Nu begrijpen we het niet.

Stelt het U voor: Maria Magdaléna! De vrouw die eertijds rondliep met zeven duivels die haar beïnvloedden, bedierven, verwoestten. Een ieder was als verbergende het aangezicht voor haar. Zij moet een vreeselijk mensch geweest zijn.

En nu is het wel waar, dat zij zevenvoudig verlost was uit een zevenvoudige ellende, maar men geraakt zijn eerst verkregen reputatie onder de menschen niet gemakkelijk kwijt. Ik hoor het gefluister: daar gaat de duivelsche Maria! Het is moeilijk om het in te denken, want wij hebben nu het Evangelie, en de gestalte van Maria Magdaléna is ons van der jeugd aan ingeprent als zeer aanvallig en lieflijk. Zelfs de klank van haar naam is als een ruischende, zachte melodie: Maria Magdaléna!

Maar niet toen de stakkerd op aarde rondliep. Ik denk, dat zij de minste geacht wierd onder de discipelen. Die eenigzins bekend is met onze zondige, valsche, met vooroordeel behepte, het aangezicht aannemende

en verkeerd-kromme menschelijke natuur, die weet, dat wij het niet toestaan, dat het vroeger vuile van onzen medemens te spoedig vergeten wordt.

Zij mocht meelopen, en zij mocht Hem dienen, Wien zij beminde met haar geheele ziel. Zij mocht meelopen van het Galilea der heidenen tot het Juda der prins van Israel.

Maar het was genoeg voor Maria. O, zij zou het U vuriglijk verzekerd hebben: het is genoeg: als ik slechts mee mag loopen, om Hem te hooren, Hem te zien, misschien meehelpen om Hem te dienen!

Ik geloof, dat we bewijs hebben in deze historie om aan te nemen, dat niemand Jezus zóó beminde als Maria Magdaléna.

Want: "verscheen Hij éérs aan Maria Magdaléna", en denkt gij misschien, dat het er voor bladvulling bijstaat: "uit welke Hij zeven duivelen uitgeworpen had"?

En zoo, al redeneerende en lezende de Heilige Schriftuur, zien we misschien meer van de eerder genoemde Goddelijke logika dan we eerst wel meenden. Het schijnt meer en meer te passen, dat eerder besproken raadsbesluit van God Almachtig in de eeuwige raadskameren.

Wie zal Hem eerst mogen zien?

Maria Magdaléna natuurlijk!

Zulks is Goddelijke orde.

Laat ons heel stille zijn. De liefde van God in die vroegere duivelsche Maria heeft haar eischen: het is immers altijd God die Zijn Eigen werk beloont?!

Maria! Zie, hier ben Ik! Zie, hier ben Ik!

Rabbouni! Mijn geliefde Meester!

Wondere, aanbiddelijke, eeuwige, Goddelijke logika!

* * * *

Maria was een der vrouwen die Jezus gevolgd waren vanuit Galilea, en die Hem dienden van hare goederen. Zoo lezen we het in Lukas 8:2 en 3. Maria kwam van het vlek of dorp Magdala, vanwaar haar naam. En met die andere vrouwen volgden zij Jezus en Zijne discipelen om Hem te dienen.

Meer kunnen we dan ook niet verwachten van hen. Maria geeft ons niet den indruk, dat zij sterk theologisch aangelegd was, in den zin, dat zij diepe theologische gesprekken kon volgen. O, we bedoelen niet, dat zij tegen de dogmatiek was, of dat zij minder gaf om de leer die naar de godzaligheid is. O neen. Ik stel mij voor, dat zij aan de lippen van den Heiland hing als Hij sprak. Maar zij komt ons voor als een vrouw die groote capaciteit had voor de dienende liefde. Zij, met de anderen, diende Hem van hare goederen. Zij mocht gaarne voor Hem zorgen in het toereiken van een frissche dronk in de hitte des zomers, of het gereed maken van het eten langs den weg. Zij, met

de anderen, zorgden voor des Heilands kleederen, en wat er verder noodig was voor Hem dien zij beminde met al de kracht van haar verlostte ziel.

En zoo volgde zij Hem, "van de ééne stad en vlek tot de andere", zooals Lucas het ons verhaalt. Zij kleeft Hem achteraan.

Die aanklevende liefde noemen we "pathetisch", ofschoon zij ons de schoonste reactie biedt op de eerste pure liefde van onzen God in Christus Jezus, den Heere. Maria, in haar onbaatzuchtige wederliefde, is een monument van de liefde Gods die steeds een echo wakker roept in ons verlostte hart.

En toen was die laatste vreemde en bange reis gekomen vanuit Galilea naar Jeruzalem. Het zou de laatste reis zijn.

Velen spraken in den kring der discipelen die Jezus volgden op die laatste reis. Allerlei gesprekken werden er gevoerd, onderling, of met Jezus. Vaak sprak Hij alleen, en zijne hoorders zwegen en waren onder den indruk gekomen van de verandering die over Jezus gekomen was. Hij had Zijn aangezicht tot Jeruzalem gewend, wetende, dat zij Hem zouden kruisigen. Hij had van die vreeselijke dingen gesproken op de reis.

Maar we hooren geen woord van Maria Magdaléna.

Kunt ge U voorstellen hoe het haar te moede was geweest bij het aanschouwen van de laatste dingen in de stad des grooten Koninks?

Zij heeft geweten van stap tot stap, wat er geschiedde. Van de opperzal waar het pascha gegeten was, over de beek Kidron, dat bange Gethsemane, de verraderlijke actie van Judas, de inhechtenisneming en verhoor voor Annas en Kajafas, die brullende massa voor het rechthuis van Pilatus, en dan de tocht naar Golgotha. Maria had alles gezien en gehoord, of het was haar verteld. In elk geval, zij had haar plaats gezocht en gevonden, om met een schreiend hart te zien naar Hem wien zij beminde. Lucas zegt ons, dat Zijne bekenden die Hem gevolgd waren van Galilea, met de vrouwen, van verre stonden en zagen dit aan.

Smarten van de liefhebbers van Jezus.

En onder hen, de schreiende Maria.

* * * *

Ook bewees zij hare liefde voor Jezus.

Toen het volk naar Jeruzalem terugkeerde, slaande op hunne borsten, toen was zij gebleven. Want toen straks Jozef en Nicodemus kwamen met volmacht van Pilatus om het lichaam van Jezus van het kruis te nemen en "eerbaar" te begraven, toen was Maria Magdaléna daar. Wie naar huis ging, ging naar huis, maar de liefde tot Jezus waakt. Ze wil weten wat er worden zal van het stoffelijk overschot van Hem die haar alles was.

Het lichaam van Jezus was voorzichtig los gemaakt van de nagelen, en in den nieuwen hof van Jozef neer-

gelegd. Maar tegenover het graf zaten de vrouwen, en misten niets van alles wat er geschiedde. We lezen in het Evangelie van Lucas, dat zij wilden weten zelfs "hoe Zijn lichaam gelegd was".

Zonder twijfel hebben zij dan ook gezien hoe die twee mannen honderd ponden gewicht mirre en aloë gebracht hadden, om het lichaam van Jezus te balsamen. Doch dit belet hun niet om plannen te beramen voor hunne eigene eerbewijzen aan het lichaam van hun wonderen Vriend. Dienzelfden Vrijdagavond, al is het dan ook met brekende harten, hebben zij de specerijen klaar gemaakt voor het lichaam van Jezus. Doch des Zaterdags rustten zij naar het gebod. Vrome zielen!

Maar des morgens vroeg toen het nog donker was, op den eersten dag der week, maakten zij zich op om uiting te geven aan al de liefde van hun hart. Zij spoedden zich naar den hof van Jozef. Maria Magdaléna is zoo gemakkelijk de eerste en de leidster in dien droeven stoet, dat haar naam soms alleen genoemd wordt in de verhalen. Zij was de ziel van deze beweging.

Ongekunsteld, eenvoudig, en daarom zoo schoone openbaring van de wederliefde die het hart doet branden om toch wat te "doen" voor Jezus!

* * * *

Doch, och arme, wat is dat?

De steen is afgewenteld van het graf. De conclusie wordt direct getrokken: Jezus' lichaam is weggenomen.

IJlings keerden zij weer tot de stad om deze schennis van het graf aan de discipelen te melden. Dezen, Petrus en Johannes, haastten zich om zich te vergewissen van de waarheid van het vertelde. De andere vrouwen bleven in de stad. Doch ook hier zien we wederom de groote liefde van Maria. Zij kan niet in de stad blijven zolang het lichaam van haren dierbaren Heiland niet gevonden is. En zij volgt Petrus en Johannes. Doch komt bij het graf, nadat de discipelen terugkeerden.

En dan lezen we het ontroerende tafereel van Maria bij het ledige graf. Het zijn maar eenige woorden. We zijn geneigd om er over heen te lezen. Doch ik zou U willen smeecken om dat niet te doen. De teekening is van den Heiligen Geest. Misschien geeft het ook ons begeerde antwoord op de vraag waarom de Heere God geoordeeld heeft, dat Maria de eerste zou zijn die den opgestanen Heiland zou aanschouwen.

"De discipelen dan gingen wederom naar huis."

Wat zouden ze anders doen? Dit was het einde immers? Jezus was vreeselijk vernederd. Zijn einde was de grootste schande geweest. Hij was gehangen aan het hout en was een vloek geworden. Men kon het U met de Heilige Schrift bewijzen. En zoo gingen men naar huis. De vrouwen, Petrus en Johannes, alle

discipelen waren naar huis gegaan. Men kon niets meer doen.

Geliefde lezer, toen de geheele wereld Jezus verdoemde en bespote, of niets zeide tot Zijn verdediging, was er een moordenaar die het voor Hem opnam.

En toen alle discipelen het eindelijk opgaven en naar huis gingen, toen was er ééne vrouw die het niet op kon geven. Ik stem U toe, zij zocht en bleef zoeken, een dooden Jezus. Maar in al haar zoeken naar dien dooden Jezus, brandde haar hart van de levende liefde Gods.

Luistert naar het Woord: "En Maria stond buiten bij het graf weenende."

God heeft het gezien, en Hij beminde haar.

Jezus heeft het gezien, en Hij zal straks haar hart doen opspringen van vreugde.

De Engelen Gods zagen het, en zij hebben zich tot Maria gewend en haar een belijdenis der liefde afgenomen: "Omdat zij mijnen Heere weggenomen hebben!"

* * * *

Maria!

Rabbouni!

Het zijn maar twee woorden. Meer niet.

Maar er zit het eeuwige Evangelie in.

Zóó roept Jezus Zijn liefhebbers.

Zóó geven zij het antwoord der liefde.

Hij is opgestaan. Vraagt het aan Maria. Ze heeft er van gejubeld na die bange dagen. De discipelen hebben eerst wat gelachen, misschien Maria wat berispt vanwege dat "ijdel geklap". Maar ze konden de paaschvreugde haar niet ontnemen.

Zij is nu in den hemel, en zij ziet al maar naar dat Aangezicht. Ik denk, dat zij vaak denkt aan den hof van Jozef.

G.V.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On April 3, 1948, the Lord willing, our beloved parents,

MR. and MRS. PETER DYKEMA

hope to celebrate their 30th wedding anniversary.

We are indeed thankful to our covenant God for sparing them for each other and us. May the Lord continue to bless them in the future as in the past.

Their grateful children:

Mr. and Mrs. Peter Fedder

Kenneth Lee (grand-son)

Grand Rapids, Michigan.

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EDITORIALS

The Covenant Controversy

6.

With Whom Established. (cont.)

In our last editorial on the covenant controversy, we were treating that wonderful passage of Coll. 1:13-19. And we intimated that we would like to say more on that score, but that this would wait for further issues.

What we had in mind is that part of the above Scripture which speaks of the fact that all things are created by Him and for Him, and also that He is before all things.

This Scripture is very illuminating to an understanding of the Covenant of God, especially to an understanding of the question, With whom is that covenant established?

You see, the question remained the last time we wrote on this text: But if Adam lived 4000 years before the birth of Christ in Bethlehem, how then can God establish His covenant with Christ first of all? How can Jesus Christ be the firstborn of every creature?

The answer to that question we find in the above quoted part of Coll. 1. All things are not only made by Him, but they are made *for* Him! What wonderful light is thus shed on the first Adam in the first paradise! Adam and Paradise are there *for Jesus Christ!* It certainly means that God made all things with a view to Christ, with Christ as its ultimate fulfillment.

If we grasp this Biblical truth we will be spared the erroneous conceptions that speak of reparation, but we will speak of exaltation, and fulfillment.

Adam was created in the image of God, and when coming to himself, he at once experienced that he stood in covenant communion with God. The love of God and the intimate fellowship of friendship was his immediate portion. He loved God and was his friend. And he experienced that God loved him, and that He was his great Friend. Thus Adam lived in the state of righteousness.

Mistakenly, this relation has been named the covenant of works. We will not at this juncture say anything regarding this matter. It has been done by our leaders in past times.

But I would point out here that Adam stands in Paradise in the relation of love and friendship with the ever blessed God, for the sake of Christ. Adam was created *for* Him, remember?

What does that mean?

First, that Adam was a picture of the Christ of God who was to come. Attend to this that the Scripture speaks of the first and the second, or the last, Adam, which is Christ. Especially in Romans 5: 12-21 do we find this matter explained by the apostle Paul. He draws a parallel between Adam and Christ, and note that he proves how both are covenant heads, representative and responsible covenant heads with respect to those whom they represent.

Second, Adam must prepare the way before Christ. He must fall into sin and so pave the way for the revelation of the eternal covenant of God which shall make heaven musical forever.

Yes, Adam falls away from God through his wilful disobedience, and he breaks the bond which united him with God from his side, but attend to the Gospel: he falls backwards into the arms of Christ. I would ask you in all seriousness: if there had not been the relation of covenant love and friendship in Christ, where would we have been? When the first bond breaks away, we see the eternal bond of love of God and His marvelous friendship which was hidden under the first which we broke.

Third, only in this way is the wisdom of God revealed. It was His good pleasure to reveal unto men how wondrous He is in His lovingkindness and goodness. The Lord God wanted to show to you and to me how great is His love and grace, so that myriads of men and of angels would stand before the throne of the Godhead and sing His praises forever. Well, He has shown this great wisdom in Jesus Christ the Lord. Adam falls away, and must make room for the revelation of a love which is past understanding. Imagine: He comes and stands in the room and the place of all God's elect children. He takes upon His head all the sin of His people and becomes a curse for them. And standing thus before the Godhead, He is smitten and cast away into eternal death.

And in this way the Lord reveals to us His eternal covenant of grace.

The second Adam is Jesus Christ the Lord. And He takes upon Himself the covenant obligations of the first Adam, but He fulfills them in hellish torture. The covenant of God is a relation of love and friendship between God and His image bearer. Well, here He stands, nay, He hangs on the accursed tree. Presently we cannot see Him anymore: He has departed to the darkest depths of God-forsakenness. But I would assure you that He still loves God and still is His friend. He is very faithful in this covenant.

Therefore, it has always hurt me when I heard that there are Reformed theologians that deny that Christ is the Head of the covenant of grace, or that God established His covenant with the Christ, and through Him with us.

Let us see.

Go with me to the language of the fathers. They speak in the Formula of Baptism of the second part of the covenant. Well, that second part is laid in the mouth of the second party, or the party of the second part. And that must be man. Now notice how God asks of man "new obedience, namely, that we cleave to this one God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; that we trust in Him, and love Him with all our hearts, with all our souls, with all our mind, and with all our strength; that we forsake the world, crucify our old nature, and walk in a new and holy life."

I think it is because of the fact that we hear this portion so very often, that we have become rather callous to the content.

What tremendous things are here spoken of! I would like to ask you: Who ever did all this? Who is there among all the children of God, including such men as Job and Samuel and Abraham, that could ever do all the things that are here enumerated. The next time a child is baptized in your church, read this portion very carefully, and then say: but no one ever did this!

What must we think in the face of this of that boasting language which we hear so often and which always is an offense to our ears, namely, when we speak of "assuming our covenant obligations"!

Read those covenant obligations again and again, and. . . weep!

No, perhaps it is not wise that I would attempt to set you a-weeping, it is not necessary. Another has done that for you.

And that other who wept for you, has taken all the covenant obligations upon Himself and He has also fulfilled them.

He has shown a new obedience.

The old obedience was shown by Adam in Paradise. And that was relatively easy for him. He was created in the image of God, good and upright. And He walked with God, knew Him at the cool of day. It was his joy to love his God and to walk in intimate communion with Him. And God smiled on him.

But Christ has shown the new obedience, such as no man ever did. This obedience is new in the sense that it was never seen before on earth. A new obedience, for He loved God while God struck Him down in hell. That is something different from Adam's life in Paradise. And Christ never ceased loving God, even though it pleased God to bruise Him with an eternal bruising. He loved God even for the righteous wrath' sake that burned Him in unspeakable anguish.

That, my dear reader, is fulfilling covenant obligations. Let us not talk so glibly of fulfilling our covenant obligations in the face of such Gethsemane and Golgotha.

Oh yes, we must trust God and love Him with all

our hearts, with all our souls, with all our mind, and with all our strength! I would ask: who of you ever came anywhere near such a description of actual human endeavor to please your covenant God. Don't you feel ashamed of your lack?

Well, Christ, the covenant Head of the covenant of grace, with Whom God established His eternal covenant, representing you and me, and all God's elect people, this Christ has loved God exactly like that. He is the party of the second part *par excellence*.

And He also forsook the world. Oh, how He did! He forsook that world so much that they hated Him as no other.

But we?

Read it and pray for forgiveness. We take the world along with us in church when we hear the covenant obligations read within our hearing. Listen to David: *Wend, wend mijn oog van d' ijdelheden af!* "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity!" Ps. 119:37.

And He crucified our old nature. And it is well that He did. It is exactly that old nature which keeps us from doing the will of God. But He crucified it, and nailed it on the accursed tree.

The liberated brethren will not believe that Christ is the head of the covenant of grace. I can but marvel at this. Why, He is not only the head of the covenant, but He fulfills all the covenant obligations of the second part too.

He does that juridically on the cross. His love of God is so intensive that it is enough for all the covenant children for all eternity.

And He does that spiritually, subjectively, within you and me. Even when you and I do love Him a little and walk in a new and holy life, such as the covenant of grace demands, even then we must copy Paul who said one time: I live, but no more I, Christ liveth in me!

When we hold that Christ is the Head of the Covenant of grace, and that He fulfills its obligations on the Cross, and through His Spirit in us, we are in harmony with eternal wisdom of God: But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord!

G. Vos.

CLASSIS EAST

will meet in regular session Wednesday, April 7 at 9:00 A. M., in the First Protestant Reformed Church of Holland, Michigan. Consistories please report on the overture from Creston.

D. Jonker, S. C.

OUR DOCTRINE

Our Covenant God

God's Covenant and The Promise.

God's covenant with man, we have maintained thus far, is wholly unconditional. To be sure, our calling and covenant obligation must be maintained. We must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and hope unto the end. We must fight the good fight of faith that no man may take our crown. We must put off the old man with all his evil works and lusts and put on the new man which is created after God in true righteousness and holiness. We must repent and turn from evil unto the Lord and love Him with all our heart and soul and mind and strength. Moreover, we also have a word to address those, in the name of the Lord, who walk not in the way of His precepts. Of course, not a word of peace and life and comfort. Not even an Arminian can address a word of comfort and life to those who continue to walk in the ways of sin. To them we declare that they are responsible for their iniquity, that the wages of sin is death, that the Lord requires of them their repentance and will hold them accountable, yea, that they who have known the way of truth but have not walked therein will be beaten with double stripes. Indeed, our churches maintain the responsibility of man. But, this does not annul or weaken in any sense of the word the unconditional character of the covenant of the Lord with man. God's covenant is wholly unconditional. This, we noted in our preceding article, is taught throughout the Scriptures. Such is also the clear teaching of our Baptism Form, to which we also called attention. Let us therefore emphasize the unconditional character of God's covenant and our calling. Our calling, our obligation to walk in all the precepts of the Lord is not the condition but the fruit of Jehovah's covenant with us. This, we noted, does not excuse man when he tramples the precepts of the Lord under foot. However, man's responsibility and duty to serve the Lord must never be presented as contradictory to the unconditional character of the grace of the Lord our God.

God's Covenant and the Promise—

Inseparably Connected.

That God's covenant with man and the promise are inseparably connected is evident from many things. This is evident, first of all, from the struggle which is being waged in the present day in the Netherlands in regard to the issue of the Covenant. Dr. H. Ridderbos, professor at the theological school of the Reformed or "Synodical" Churches in the Netherlands, wrote a

pamphlet entitled "The Promise of the Covenant of Grace." He evidently associates, as is evident from this title, the two concepts "covenant" and "promise". According to the Liberated Churches all are in the covenant and the promise is for all. Such is the presentation of the views of these churches as appearing in this pamphlet of Dr. Ridderbos, page 6, and we have no reason, it seems to me, to doubt the truthfulness of this observation of Dr. Ridderbos. This quotation from the pamphlet, "The Promise of the Covenant of Grace", reads as follows: "If one asks, what prompts the grieved or departed brethren (did these brethren simply withdraw from the Reformed Churches or were they cast out?—the Christian Reformed Churches of our land also prefer to speak of us as having withdrawn, whereas it is a fact that we were cast out—H.V.) to lay thereupon such great emphasis and even to disrupt the church for that reason, rather than submit to the confession of the church, then one must refer to the collectivist point of procedure of their conception. According to them all children of the believers are comprehended in the Covenant in the same sense, they all receive in the same sense the whole Baptism and the entire promise. That is the great, all-controlling thought of their entire conception, because otherwise, so they believe, one should fall short of the certainty of the Covenant and the certainty of faith within the Covenant." (The translation is of the undersigned). The meaning of this passage is clear: if we merely preach that the promise is only for the elect, then the sacrament of baptism cannot bestow certainty and assurance because one must know first whether he is in the covenant and any assurance, therefore, must be based on an assumption—we must assume of our children that they are elect. The Liberated Churches of the Netherlands declared that they demand certainty and will therefore have nothing to do with an assumption. And as far as the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands are concerned in this present controversy, although they would maintain that the promise is only for the elect, yet they, too, wish to say something of or for *all* the children of the believers. They proceed from the principle of presumptive regeneration and teach that we must assume the regeneration of all the children who receive the sacrament of baptism. However, it is evident from this conflict in the Netherlands, that a discussion of the Covenant must revolve about and include a discussion of the promise.

That God's covenant with man and the promise are inseparably connected is evident also from the writings of Reformed theologians of the past. We have already quoted from Dr. Ridderbos of the Netherlands. We could also quote from men as Kuyper and Bavinck in support of this contention. Professor Berkhof, in his "Reformed Dogmatics" surely associates the covenant

and the promise. On pages 265-271, when discussing the so-called "Covenant of Redemption" or "Counsel of Peace" between the Father and the Son, the professor speaks of Requirements and Promises. And speaking of the contents of the Covenant of Grace (page 277) he speaks of the Promises of God and the Response of Man. It is evident, therefore, that Professor Berkhof surely associates the Covenant of Grace and the Promise. And the same is also true, we know, of the late Prof. W. Heyns. He sought the essence of the covenant in the promise. And the promise, we know, he explained in the Arminian sense. That God established His covenant with us and with our children simply meant, according to the late professor, that God promised or offered His salvation to all. The sacrament of baptism he explained as a seal of God whereby the Lord confirmed the salvation of all, gave to all without distinction the assurance that He would bestow upon them eternal life and glory. Be this as it may, it is a fact, therefore, that also the late Professor Heyns associated the covenant and the promise.

Thirdly, this connection between the covenant and the promise is also evident from the sacrament, the sign and seal of the covenant. Circumcision was the sign of the Covenant in the Old Dispensation. This sign, administered to all the male children of believers, consisted in the cutting away of the foreskin. Is it not evident, therefore, that this sign was a picture of God's realization of His promise in and through Jesus Christ, His Son, our Lord? It was a symbol, was it not, of the realization of our redemption through the blood of Christ—the sign itself was bloody. And, besides, it also directed the attention of the believing Israelite to the fact that the Christ would come into our flesh and blood in the organical life of the covenant. And Baptism is the sign of the covenant in the New Dispensation. In our Baptism Form we read in paragraph 2 of Part One: "In like manner, when we are baptized in the name of the Holy Ghost, the Holy Ghost assures us, by this holy sacrament, that He will dwell in us, and sanctify us to be members of Christ, applying unto us, that which we have in Christ, namely, the washing away of our sins, and the daily renewing of our lives, till we shall finally be presented without spot or wrinkle among the assembly of the elect in life eternal." In other words, the Lord assures us in the holy sacrament of Baptism that He will realize and fulfil His promise of salvation in us even unto the uttermost. It is evident, therefore, also from our Baptism Form that the sacrament of the covenant and the promise of God are inseparably connected.

That the covenant of God with man and the promise are inseparably connected lies in the very nature of the case. Fact is, they are inseparable. We would not merely affirm that the heart of the covenant is the promise, understanding the promise now in the Re-

formed sense of the word. This would imply that the establishment of God's covenant with us consists in His bestowing upon us of His promise of salvation. But we would affirm that the heart of the promise is surely the covenant and its realization. This is surely true of Genesis 3:15, where we read: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." What does the Lord promise here, at the very dawn of history, in this key-text which discloses to us, fully and completely, all of history? Merely that He will grant His Church, in Christ, the victory over all her enemies? This, to be sure, is implied in this text of Holy Writ. But notice, God will put enmity between His people and the party of the world and of darkness. And enmity is nothing else than the love and friendship of Jehovah. Hence, God promises here that He will put His love into our hearts, and grant us the eternal victory, the victory of His eternal and heavenly tabernacle. And this is also taught in Gen. 17:7-8: "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. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God." Notice how the covenant and the promise are identified here. God is promising Abraham something here—what? He promises His friend in this passage that He will establish His covenant with him and with his seed for an everlasting covenant. And what will the Lord establish with Abraham and his seed when He establishes with them His covenant? The Lord declares that He will be a God unto him and to his seed after him (see 2 Cor. 6:16-18 and our reference to this passage in a previous article, Feb. 1 issue). And all this, we read, will be realized in the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession. As Reformed people we are aware of the fact, of course, that the land of Canaan in the Old Dispensation was a type and symbol of the heavenly Canaan. Fact is, Abraham himself, we read in Acts 7:5, never received any inheritance in that earthly land of the Old Testament. Hence, in Gen. 17:7-8 the Lord promises to Abraham that He will cause him and his seed to be His people forever in the heavenly renewal of all things in glory. And this promise is identified with His covenant in this passage of Holy Writ. Christ, Who is centrally our salvation, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit by Whom we receive Christ and His salvation, the new heavens and the new earth (and all this surely constitutes the establishment of God's covenant, communion and friendship, with us) are surely held before us in Holy Writ as the content of the blessed promise of the Lord. Consequently, that the promise and the covenant should

be inseparably connected and that our conception of the one must also determine our conception of the other, lies in the very nature of the case. It is clear, therefore, why a discussion of the covenant must also include a discussion of the promise.

The Idea of The Promise.

God's promise must not be confused with an offer. There is, of course, a fundamental difference between a promise and an offer. An offer always presupposes three things. It presupposes, in the first place, a willingness on the part of him who makes the offer to bestow something. God, then, declares His willingness to bestow salvation upon all. It presupposes, in the second place, that the Lord actually offers this salvation to all. Mind you, this does not mean that He announces or proclaims to all His salvation. We also believe that the Lord proclaims His salvation to others besides the elect. But an offer implies that the Lord declares it to be His Divine desire and intention that all may accept the proffered salvation. And an offer presupposes, in the third place, that man, the recipient of this offer of salvation, is also able of himself to accept this invitation. God offers salvation; man must accept it.

Let us now attempt to read the word "offer" instead of "promise" into the following passages. We read in Gen. 3:15 the oft-repeated words: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Need anything be said here? Does the Lord offer His love to the seed of the woman? If so, who, then, would ever fight the battle of the Lord? The *Lord will put* enmity, etc. He does not offer something here: He promises to do something. In Gen. 12:2-3 we read: "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." Doesn't the text sound absurd if you insert the word "offer" into this passage? Besides, does not Holy Writ inform us that both, Abraham and Sarah, had died as far as the bringing forth of children was concerned? In Deut. 9:26-29 we read: "I prayed therefore unto the Lord, and said, O Lord God, destroy not Thy people and Thy inheritance, which Thou hast redeemed through Thy greatness, which Thou hast brought forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand. Remember Thy servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; look not unto the stubbornness of this people, nor to their wickedness, nor to their sin: Lest the land whence Thou broughtest us out say, Because the Lord was not able to bring them into the land which He promised them, and because He hated them, He hath brought them out to slay them in the wilderness. Yet they are Thy people and Thine inheritance, which Thou

broughtest out by Thy mighty power and by Thy stretched out arm." Does Israel's entrance into Canaan, in this passage, depend upon the people? Fact is, they had sinned, were utterly unworthy. And fact is also that Moses here appeals to the faithfulness of the Lord. The Lord had promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Moses here pleads upon the *promise* of the unchangeable Jehovah. In Ps. 105:42 we read: "For He remembered His holy promise, and Abraham His servant." Why, according to the context of these words, did the Lord open the rock that the waters gushed out, and why did Jehovah satisfy them with quails and with bread from heaven? Did He offer these to His people? He did so only because He remembered His promise to Abraham. It would be absurd, would it not, to read "offer" here instead of promise? In the following passages from Isaiah, chapter 9, verse 6 and chapter 59; verses 16 and 21, we have the Lord's promise of salvation to His people in Christ, and how ridiculous they would sound if that salvation were actually an offer instead of a promise of the Lord: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. . . . And He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore His arm brought salvation (did He offer it—H.V.?) unto Him; and His righteousness, it sustained Him. . . . As for Me, this is My covenant with them, saith the Lord; My Spirit that is upon thee, and My words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever." How could the word of God express this absolute and positive and certain language if the matter of our salvation were to be regarded as an offer? And so we could continue. We could refer you to Rom. 9:24-26, Heb. 11, Acts 13:23, and a host of other passages. The promise of the Lord, whereof we read over and over again in the Scriptures, is never to be confused with an offer. To the contrary, it is God's announcement, not of what He universally offers and we must accept, but of that which He, and He alone, will perform, faithfully and irresistibly.

The Content of the Promise.

We need not dwell at length on this point, because of the nature of these articles. We can be brief. Sometimes the word "promise" emphasizes the idea of "God-delijke toezegging", the Divine pledge, God's announcement, although even then one can never separate the pledge from its content, that which is pledged—the word probably used in this sense in Acts 13:23. In Hebrews 11:39, on the other hand, the emphasis falls upon the content of the promise. We read there: "And

these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise." It is a fact, we know, that these did receive the promise as far as the announcement is concerned. But the promise from the viewpoint of its content they had as yet not received. And to this the apostle makes reference in the following verse, vs. 10. Sometimes we read of promise in the singular as in Hebrews 11:39 and then again of promises as in 2 Cor. 1:20. The distinction is clear. When Scripture speaks of the promise in the singular it refers to the one, great promise of salvation in Christ Jesus, our Lord. The plural "promises" refers to that promise of the Lord from the aspect of its many variations. Finally, the content of the promise of God is viewed from several points of view. At times the content of the promise is identified with the Christ, as in: Gen. 3:15; 2 Cor. 1:20; Is. 9:6; Deut. 18:15; Num. 24:17. In Acts 2:33 and in Eph. 1:13 the Holy Spirit is identified with the promise. In the former passage He is called the "promise of the Spirit" and in the latter passage we read of Him as the "Spirit of promise". Acts 2:33 emphasizes the truth, not only that He is the promised Spirit, but that the Spirit Himself is the promise, because in Him the actual realization of God's promise of eternal life occurs. In 2 Tim. 1:1 and 1 John 2:25 we read of the "promise of life". In 2 Pet. 3:4 the apostle Peter, speaks of the "promise of His future". And in Rom. 4:13 the promise which the Lord gave to Abraham assured that man of God that he would become the "heir of the world". All these various passages speak, essentially, of the same promise of the God of our salvation, but merely from slightly different viewpoints.

In the light of all this, we would define the promise as the announcement of the eternal Jehovah, that He, and He alone, in and because of and through Christ Jesus, our Lord, and by His Spirit, the Spirit of the risen and highly exalted Lord, will bestow upon His people, whom He sovereignly elected, and who by nature are conceived and born dead in sins and trespasses, the life of His blessed covenant fellowship in eternal and heavenly perfection, and that in connection with the glorious renewal of all things, and using all things unto the realization thereof as means. It is this promise of salvation in Christ Jesus which enabled the child of God throughout the Old Dispensation to endure all the sufferings of this present time, only because this promise was the pledge of the eternally faithful God. The unspeakable glory of this promise but also the certainty of it sustained the child of God in the midst of all his trials and afflictions. And now we purpose to show in subsequent articles the particular and wholly unconditional character of this promise or these promises of the alone blessed God, the God of our salvation.

H. Veldman.

THE DAY OF SHADOWS

The Priests in Nob Slain

As we have seen, Saul hears David has men with him. The king's heart is moved. To him it is the certain indication that at any time now the son of Jesse will deal him the blow that will hurl him and his house from the throne. The king is terrified. He is persuaded in his heart that the whole people, including his fellow tribesmen, have forsaken him to a man and gone over to the side of David. Calling together his officers of state, he lodges against them the most outrageous charges. The servants of Saul stand speechless all but one and that one Doeg the Edomite. Hearing Saul wail, "and there is none of you that is sorry for me," he can contain himself no longer. He tells the king about the supposed treachery of the highpriest Ahimelech. He saw the son of Jesse coming to Nob. And the priest inquired of the Lord for him, and gave him victuals and the sword of Goliath.

The king summons into his presence Ahimelech and the whole priestly family with him there in Nob. Says Saul to them, "Hear now, thou son of Ahitub." The priest replies, "Here am I my lord." Saul continues, "Why have ye conspired against me, thou and the son of Jesse, in that thou hast given him bread, and a sword, and hast enquired of God for him, that he should rise against me, to lie in wait, as at this day?"

Ahimelech's doing is to the king the proof that the priest and the son of Jesse are one by a common purpose to rid the nation of Saul in order that the son of Jesse may reign in his stead. This being for Saul an established fact, he concludes that the priest supplied David with food and arms and enquired of God for him with the intention of doing what he could to help the rebel achieve that purpose.

The priest replies in defense of himself. His words are obscure. One thing is clear, however: Ahimelech takes thought only of His own life; accordingly, his sole aim is to clear himself of the king's baseless charge in order that he may live and not die. His effort to prove himself innocent even leads him to side with the king against David.

He first directs the king's attention to what David appeared to be to him, namely, of all Saul's servants the most faithful. "And who is so faithful among all thy servants as David?" are his words. Further, the priest wants Saul to understand that he cannot be blamed for thinking David to be a servant of such virtue. For he continues, "which is the king's son-in-law, and goeth at thy bidding, and is honourable in thine house?" The point to Ahimelech's argument is

clear. Seeing that David to all appearances is a servant of such excellencies, how could Ahimelech and his brethren in office be expected to surmise that he conspires against the king? But how about the priest's supplying David with food and arms? Ahimelech deems it wise to let that matter rest and to concentrate on the charge that he enquired of God for David. "Did I today begin to enquire of God for him," is the question he now puts to the king. And his answer, "be it far from me." He speaks the truth here. This is proved by the omission of the supposed doing of the priest in chapter 21. The concluding words of his defense are significant, "let not the king impute anything unto his servant, not to all the house of my father; for thy servant did not know of all this matter little or great." This precisely is the point that he is arguing, namely, that he was ignorant of the whole matter—the matter of David's conspiracy against the king. Hence he had helped the fugitive, supplied him with bread and a sword, in his innocence. In pleading this ignorance the priest sides with Saul against David. What he says to the king is in effect this, 'I believe thee, o king. It is as thou sayest. David is a rebel. He conspires against thee. He seeks thy life. For he would be king. Had I only known, I would not have given him bread and arms. I did that in my ignorance. And, certainly, my ignorance is pardonable. For, as far as anyone can judge, David is the most faithful of all thy servants. He comes and goes at thy bidding. And besides, he is thy son-in-law. He occupies a most honorable position in thy house. That he of all men should be conspiring against thee! Who would have thought it!'

Such is verily the thrust of Ahimelech's defense before Saul. In a moral aspect, Ahimelech and Doeg are men of a class. Both side with Saul against David—Doeg, to advance his material interests; Ahimelech, to save his life.

(Some interpreters absolve Doeg from enmity against David, maintaining that he merely stated the fact, to which the malicious interpretation was given by Saul alone. But this does not agree with what Saul had just said against David. He had accused David, be it indirectly, of conspiring against him, to which he had added the complaint that there was none of his servants that would reveal to him what went on. As it was in response to this complaint of the king that Doeg had replied, it follows that his purpose was to present Saul with the evidence of the priest's complicity; and this necessarily implies that he openly sided with Saul against David.

So, too, are there some who maintain the integrity of Ahimelech. But this can be done only in the way of failing to read aright what is written. In saying to Saul, "For not did know thy servants about the whole of this matter either little or great (so reads

the original text), the priest had reference to David's supposed conspiracy and not to the charge of conspiracy that the king had just lodged against Ahimelech and the rest of the priests in Nob. The priest meant to clear himself of Saul's charge. What would he have been contributing toward the achievement of his aim, had he said to the king, 'I know nothing at all of a conspiracy against thee on my part and on the part of my brethren in office.' That would merely be to deny the charge. But the priest must do more. He must prove to Saul that he is guiltless. And his proof is that David is the last man whom anyone would suspect of conspiring against the king; that, as far as anyone can judge, the son of Jesse of all Saul's servants is the most loyal; and that, such being the case, he, the priest, supposing him to be a just man out on the king's business, supplied him with arms and bread in total ignorance of his criminal action against the king. Hence, the text in the original reads not, "And I *know*," but, "and I *knew* nothing of the whole matter." And so, too, the priest's statement, "Far be it from me." It looks directly to the statement that precedes, "Did I begin that day to enquire of the Lord for him?" As was said, Ahimelech speaks the truth here. Though he had given David bread and a sword, he had not enquired for him of God. How plain that he was trying desperately hard to establish his innocence before Saul. Hence, the adverb *then* in his statement, "Did I *then* begin to enquire of the Lord for him that day," is not found in the original text. Thus the statement stands more or less alone as far as the preceding utterances of the priest are concerned, "And who is so faithful among all thy servants. . . .")

Ahimelech's defence of himself is not without some strength. For, whereas David is actually innocent (a thing that the priest now denies) it follows that it is true what the priest says, namely, that to all appearances no one is more loyal to Saul than David, and if so, the priest can be excused for having held him to be such a servant. Yet, the priest has ensnared himself by his own words. For he has now agreed with Saul that David is a rebel. Saul can now insist, and he does insist, that this must also have been plain to the priest all along. Accordingly, Saul declares that he shall die, he and his father's house. These are his words to the priest, "Thou shalt surely die, Ahimelech, thou and all thy father's house." By siding with Saul against David, the priest had signed his own death-warrant. He should have put to Saul Jonathan's question, "What hath David done, O king, that thou accusest him of conspiring against thee." We may conjecture that God would have saved the priest out of Saul's hand, had he done right. But Ahimelech and his brethren in Nob are of the house of Eli and of the house of Eli's father, Ithamar. They are on a whole unprincipled men. There was no true fear of God in

them. They must have been spiritually akin to the two sons of Eli—Hophni and Phinehas,—both of whom died in one day in punishment of their sin of desecrating the Lord's offerings. Hence, it was God's will to destroy this family of priests in order that the word which He spake against them by the mouth of His prophet might go into fulfilment, "Behold the days come, that I will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy father's house, that there shall not be an old man in thine house." We see in the Scriptures the curse of God operative in this house through the years. The first to fall were Eli and his two sons. Then the Philistines, flushed with victory over the Israelites, hastened to Shiloh, where they killed many priests, all of whom were descendants of Ithamar serving under Eli. The next to strike at this house was Saul. He pronounced this whole house guilty of conspiring against him.

The first to be felled by Saul's sword were the 85 priests who, in obedience to his summons, had appeared in his court to answer to that charge. To his guard he issues the following order, "Turn and slay the priest of the Lord; because their hand also is with David, and because they knew when he fled and did not shew it to me." But the servants of the king refused to put forth their hand to fall upon the priests of the Lord. The king commands Doeg, and he obeys. Then going to Nob, he smites "with the edge of the sword both men and woman, children and sucklings, and oxen, and asses, and sheep, with the edge of the sword."

Saul, including Doeg, is a rod in God's hand by which the Lord once more smites Eli's house and the house of his father. Even so, Saul is fully responsible. And his sin is great, be it ever so true that those priests deserved that stroke. The Lord had not commanded him. In slaying those priests, he was thinking only of himself, of the wrong that he imagined they were doing him.

One of the sons of Ahimelech, named Abiathar escaped, and came to David. He told him all that had taken place. David's answer is significant, "I knew it that day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would surely tell Saul: I have occasioned the death of all the persons of thy father's house." That is true. David has occasioned the death of these persons; but the blame is not his but solely Saul's. David had all the right to request Ahimelech for bread and arms. But he sinned in lying to the priest. But he is not on this account in the least to blame for the catastrophe that overtook the priests in Nob.

As to the house of Eli, eventually it fell through its own wickedness in the person of this very Abiathar, the son of Ahimelech. When David was old and stricken in years, Abiathar supported Adonijah, who wanted to be king. Solomon was crowned, and Adonijah once more began to plot, his aim again being

to seize the kingdom; and now, too, Abiathar was among his supporters. Calling him into his presence, Solomon told him that he deserved to die and ordered him to his fields, and thus thrust him out from being priest unto the Lord, I Kings 2:26. The fall of Abiathar was the fall of the whole house of Eli's father.

G. M. Ophoff.

THROUGH THE AGES

The Papacy During The Period Of The Reformation

ADRIAN VI. — 1522-23

Leo having died, the cardinals, to whom fell the task of electing a new pontiff, shut themselves up in the conclave for that purpose. (The *conclave* is the set of rooms within which, since 1274, the cardinals of the Roman Catholic Church are secluded while choosing a new pope). Their object was to choose a pope who would respect their privileges, secure the political importance of the papacy, and be acceptable to Charles V and Henry VIII, king of England. There were several possible candidates for the papal office. Likewise, there were several political parties in the conclave; they were sharply divided; and the struggle between them was intense. As the cardinals could not agree amongst themselves, some of them proposed cardinal Adrian, whose name was not on the list. Adrian was unknown in Rome, but had a reputation for piety. Hence, the reforming party hailed his nomination with delight. Its leaders extolled his learning and the many excellent qualities with which he was endowed; and the result was that he was chosen. His election was unanimous, and was announced to the people of Rome, who heard it with bewilderment. For Adrian was an unknown foreigner; and the cardinals could give no reason for his election. They stood mute before the Roman mob, who screamed out their curses upon their treachery for robbing Italy of its pope, by electing a stranger, absent in a distant country, one who had never seen Italy; who was utterly unacquainted with the customs of the court of Rome; had never had the opportunity of ingratiating himself with any of the cardinals; even being scarcely known to them by name. The cardinals, to excuse their step, alleged the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, which, they said, often moved them to elect one whom they had never once thought of before. But fact is that the greater part of the cardinals had privately pledged

their votes to the emperor Charles in favor of his beloved teacher Adrian, and could easily have accounted for their choice without recurring to any inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Adrian was born at Utrecht on March 1459, of an obscure family. His parents were humble people. According to some, his father, Floris, was a weaver; according to others a brewer's servant, and according to still others a ship carpenter. From childhood Adrian showed an uncommon inclination to learn; and his father procured for him a place in the pope's college at Louvain, where poor children were taught and reared upon charity. He soon distinguished himself above all his fellow-students; and such was his industry that, when the rest were all in bed, he used to spend great parts of the night in reading by the light of a lamp that was kept constantly burning in the church. Thus at the age of seventeen he entered the university of Louvain, where he became a teacher of philosophy in 1488. But he was chiefly occupied with the study of theology; and became a professor of divinity at Louvain. In this capacity he wrote and published a commentary on the Fourth Book of the Sentences and some other pieces, all of which have come down to our time. There are also in existence some letters, written by him after his elevation to the papal chair, and among them one to the elector at Saxony, exhorting him, in a most friendly manner, to abandon the protection of Luther, and adhere to the doctrine of the church. Believing that the spread of learning would solve the difficulties of the times, he employed revenues that were awarded him by several ecclesiastical appointments, in founding a college. The emperor Maximilian chose him to educate his fatherless grandson, Charles, who was to become emperor Charles V. Adrian conscientiously fulfilled his duties. By his learning and uprightness he gained the lasting respect of his royal pupil. As a ruler Charles employed him in his affairs.

In ecclesiastical matters, Adrian was associated, both in Germany and in Spain, with the party that desired reform. But he was opposed to the learning of the Renaissance and to the so-called New Theology. Still more was he opposed to Luther. As a member of the theological faculty of Louvain, he made the statement that Luther's heresies were so plain that not even a novice in theology could make such mistakes and that all that was necessary to secure their condemnation was to quote Luther's words with scrupulous accuracy. When Luther's case was being tried at Worms, he wrote to the emperor Charles that it would be pleasing to God and necessary for his good name as emperor to send to Rome for punishment a heretic who had been condemned by the pope.

Charles had appointed Adrian viceroy over all his Spanish dominions; and in that high station he re-

ceived the unexpected news of his election to the sovereign pontificate. That news he received at Victoria, a town in northern Spain. At first he was incredulous; but he was compelled to receive the tokens of rejoicing and marks of reverence of the townspeople. Then followed the numerous proffers of service and petitions for places; he put them all aside, saying that he would do nothing till he had received a letter from the cardinals confirming his election. This came on February 9. In this letter the cardinals earnestly entreated him to repair, with all speed to Rome, where the sad situation of the affairs of Italy made his presence absolutely necessary. But Adrian did nothing, except take up his abode in the Franciscan convent, where he kept aloof from all petitioners. Men began to wonder whether he would accept the papacy or no. They accused him of making light of so high a dignity. Finally on February 16 he announced his decision. He had accepted the papacy as trusting in God's grace. But he did not embark for Rome until the second of August. On the 27th he arrived at the gates of the city. Here all was confusion. A plague devastated the city. No preparation had been made for the pope's reception; but the next day the public entry into Rome was made. The pope was attended by the college of cardinals, by the clergy in a body, by the magistrates, the nobility, and immense crowds of people. But the cardinals followed the procession with sad hearts. The previous day the dean of the college of cardinals had addressed the pope in a speech which expressed the desires of all serious men in Rome, who had long hoped for measures of reform. Adrian was to free the church from all evils, and reform it according to the canons, allowing himself to be served by the advice of the cardinals and relieving their poverty. To this Adrian replied that reform must begin with themselves. He told them that they must henceforth refrain from sheltering evil-doers in their palaces, and allow the officers of the law to make necessary arrests. It then dawned upon the cardinals that the new pope might be contemplating reforms that might not be to their interests. They feared that the customs of the Renaissance popes were to be swept away, and that a new era was to begin.

(to be continued)

G. M. Ophoff.

Attention !!

MINISTERS CLASSIS EAST

The Minister's Conference will meet on Tuesday, April 6 at 9:30 A.M. in the Fuller Ave. Church.

W. Hofman, Sec'y.

Eating The Lord's Passover

(continued)

So then, it is the people of Israel who eat the passover. For the passover is a holy thing. This being true, it may be eaten only by that people, righteous and holy, not certainly by themselves, but in Christ. That the passover lamb was a holy thing is plainly brought out by the text. The text states that it was, had to be, a lamb without blemish, and a male of the first year. Nothing of the lamb, as prepared for eating, might be left until the morning; that which remained of it until the morning had to be burned with fire. None of its flesh might be carried abroad out of the house. It might not be eaten raw. None of its substance might be wasted by its being sodden with water. It therefore had to be roasted with fire.

And it had to be dished up whole and entire even with its head and purtenances and with all its bones in an unbroken state. The text reads here, "And neither shall ye break a bone thereof." This all has significance in the higher things of Christ's work and covenant. Christ's bones were not broken, neither was his flesh wasted in the grave. And this in fulfillment of the voice of prophecy, "A bone of him shall not be broken." In Holy Writ, *broken bones* signify a broken, wasted, and disolute spirit; that is, a spirit wasted by despair or rebellion, or by both. Thus we read in Psalm 34, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of them all. He keepeth all his bones; not one of them is broken. Evil shall slap the wicked; and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate. The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants; and none of them shall be desolate. The expression, "The Lord keepeth all his bones", the bones of the righteous, looks to the Lord's keeping the righteous, their soul and spirits, in many afflictions, so that their spirits are not dissipated by unbelief, despair, and rebellion, but cleave unto God, resting their case with him, and awaiting his salvation. Thus in the words of the psalmist, they also pray, "All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto thee, which delivereth the poor from him that is too strong for him, yea, the poor and the needy from him that spoileth him" Psalm 35:10. Then we come also upon this prayer in the Psalms, "Make me to hear joy and gladness that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice."

So Christ, our passover, in the midst of His troubles, God kept Him, all His bones, His spirit, so that with all God's billows passing over Him, He still cried, "But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel. But be not far from me, O Lord my strength, haste thou to help me. Save me from the lions mouth . . . And I will declare thy name unto my brethren."

So was His spirit kept in trouble out of all of which the Lord delivered Him. And of this keeping of Christ's spirit, thus of His sustained perfection in the hour of severest trial, the unbroken bones of the pass-over lamb, yea, Christ's own unbroken bones were the token.

And further the children of Israel must eat the passover so the text tells us, with their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, and their staff in their hand; and they shall eat it with haste, for it is the Lord's passover. Those feet clad with shoes, the girded loins, and the hands holding the staff, denote that their hour of deliverance had struck and that the journey to Canaan is to be undertaken. And it is a terrible journey, for it takes them through the wilderness, through a world that lieth in darkness, thus that world of which Satan is the prince, and where they *therefore* must wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. But for their perilous journey, the people of God are well prepared. For in obedience to His command, a command that He efficaciously speaks in their hearts, they take unto themselves the whole armour of God. Their loins are girt about with truth, and they have on the breastplate of righteousness. And their feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; and faith is their shield, and hope their helmet, and the word of God their sword. Thus they are able to stand in the evil day and having done all to stand. Besides the world through which their journey takes them is barren, fruitless. It is a terrible wilderness indeed. Should their lives have to be sustained by what grows there in that wilderness, they all would needs have to perish. So the Lord prepared for His people—for these strangers and pilgrims in the earth—His passover, Christ, the Lamb of God, which is made unto them wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. And His flesh is meet and His blood is drink indeed. And they eat, must eat, their passover in haste, according to the word appearing in the original, with alarm; for, so the text concludes, it is the Lord's passover. Certainly, the meaning is not, cannot be, that God's believing people live in constant dread of being destroyed with the wicked when Christ comes in judgment over Egypt. Such a dread is an insult to Christ and to Christ's God. For God so loved them that He gave His only begotten Son that believing they might not perish with the wicked but have life everlasting. Just how this command of God is to be understood is plainly indicated by two other commands appearing in the text,—the commands, namely that they eat the Lord's passover with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs. This unleavened bread, too, is, in the first instance, a figure of Christ; it is a figure of Christ in His absolute sin-

lessness. For leaven in Scripture is a figure of the principle of sin as it operates in the essence of fallen man's being and as still active in the flesh of God's believing people. But Christ is the lamb of God without spot or blemish. And such a highpriest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners and made higher than the heavens. And such a highpriest is Christ. He is therefore, as the lamb that has been slain, the bread unleavened and on this account the true bread of His people. And as to the bitter herbs with which the passover must be eaten—these herbs look in the first instance to Christ's nameless sorrow, to the travail of his soul by which He, in the language of the prophet, justified many. This lamb of God, as He has been slain, this bread unleavened, the holy Christ, God's believing people eat, truly eat; and eating Him they have in them His life. This being true they, too, are bread unleavened, a holy lump in Christ. And therefore the command comes to them that they eat the Lord's passover with alarm. For they know how God loathes sin, transgression, unrighteousness. The evidence is before them. In this very hour with them eating the Lord's passover, He reveals His wrath over Egypt's unrighteousness. What is more, the very passover they eat bespeaks God's loathing of sin. For they eat a passover that has been slain for them. They eat the flesh of Him, Christ Jesus, whom God in His great love of them, smote, bruised for their iniquities in order to make it right for Himself to condemn sin in their flesh and to conform them according to Christ's image, in order that, as thus conformed, they might see God as He is in Christ's face. And therefore they shall eat their passover with alarm. What does it mean? It means that in the love that God shed abroad in their hearts, and as knowing the terror of the Lord, they always be alarmed by the sin that still dwelleth in their flesh, in order that, as so alarmed, they mortify their members which are upon the earth that the light of the life of Christ that they have in them abiding may shine forth, so that men may see their good works and glorify their Father who is in heaven. And this they also do. For by His mercy they truly eat the Lord's passover with joy in their hearts indeed but with joy mingled with grief. For well do they realize that their obedience as yet is but a small principle in them; that in their flesh there dwelleth no good thing, so that what they hate they do, and what they would they do not; and they cry, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death." Verily, as mindful of their spiritual bondage, they eat the Lord's passover with bitter herbs. For what is this grief of the eaters of the Lord's passover but the fruit of the travail of Christ's soul in them. And therefore do these mourners, who eat the Lord's passover, have good hope. They trust in God through Christ. And they thank Christ Jesus their Lord. And the Lord speaks in their hearts

His word, this word, "Blessed are they who mourn; for they shall be comforted." And comforted are these mourners indeed. For they know by Christ's spirit and His word, that they have Christ's God as their exceeding great reward.

G. M. Ophoff.

SION'S ZANGEN

Eeuwige Goedertierenheid

(Psalm 103; Slot)

De dichter eindigt met denzelfden klank waarmee hij zijn schoon lied inzette: Loof den HEERE, mijne ziel!

Maar vooraleer hij dien laatsten klank doet hooren, zal hij ten slotte het geheel heelal toeroepen en oproepen om den HEERE te loven.

Deze psalm is verheven en schoon: zijn karakter is streng theologisch: God is alles van eeuwigheid tot in der eeuwigheid: het schoonste kenmerk van ware godsvrucht.

"De HEERE heeft Zijnen troon in de hemelen bevestigd, en Zijn koninkrijk heerscht over alles!"

Het woord *bevestigd* komt van een wortel die beteekent recht, rechtop, en daarom vast, en onbeweeglijk te zijn. Het werkwoord wordt hier gebezigd in den causalen vorm.

De troon is zinnebeeld van macht en regeering: de troon is het hoogste in het koninkrijk.

De HEERE doet dien troon vast, onbeweeglijk zijn in het midden des hemels, zoodat Zijn regeering uitgaat over alle schepselen. Dat Hij de hemelen koos voor de plaats waar Zijn regiment uitgaat over het geheele heelal, komt hier vandaan, omdat Zijn heerlijkheid op het hoogst schittert in de hemelen. De aarde is de voetbank Zijner voeten.

En die troon, die regeering van den HEERE, is over *alles*! En dan zullen we dit woord hier moeten nemen in zijn meest omvangrijke beteekenis: het sluit in hemel en aarde en hel; de menschen, de engelen en de duivelen; de goeden en de kwaden; het goede en het kwade; de bewuste en de onbewuste schepselen, tijd, ruimte en de eeuwigheden. Het sluit *alles* in.

Dit vers deed me denken aan Hitler.

En verder: aan het gif, dat Satan ons inspoot in het eerste Paradijs.

Om met het laatste te beginnen: het gif, dat Satan ons inspoot aan den morgen der historie is juist dit, dat wij sinds dien tijd God willen zijn. En God te willen zijn is de zucht van het dictatuur. En zoo dacht

ik aan Hitler, aan Joe Stalin, aan al die wreedaarden die alles willen dwingen, keeren en wenden, naar hun wil, en naar hun wil alléén! Er zijn er die gedroomd hebben in de dagen van Munich, dat Hitler tevreden zou zijn met het land der Sudeten. Of dat Joe Stalin tevreden zal zijn als hij dien ring van staten van West-Europa te pakken heeft. Ach neen, het zijn allemaal droomen. De mensch der zonde, de dictator, is dan alleen tevreden (?) wanneer hij alles aan zich onderwierp. En hij zal het straks ver brengen. De representant van alle goddelooze menschen, de mensch der zonde, de Anti-Christ, zal straks in een soort tempel zitten, en hijzelf, en de andere menschen der zonde, zullen het zichzelf en elkander vertellen, dat de mensch God is, dat zijn koninkrijk over alles is.

En die trek van Hitler en Stalin zit ook in ons, in elk mensch. Er is een spreekwoord in Nederland, dat zegt: "Mijn haan zal koning kraaien!"

Daarom: ge moogt Hitler gerust verslaan; ge moogt gerust Uw entente vormen van democratische landen en regeeringen, die zich bewust stellen tegenover het dictatuur van Stalin; indien ge echter gedenkt, dat toen Hitler verdween, Stalin kwam; en als we hem straks vermorzelen, er een ander zal komen. En dat proces zagen we geschieden van de allereerste eeuwen tot aan den huidigen dag toe. Hitler en Kaïn gelijken op elkaar als tweelingbroeders. Lamech, Nimrod en Nebuchadnezzar zijn hetzelfde genre als Stalin en wat er verder vuils uit het verziekte brein van den hoogmoedigen mensch geboren staat te worden.

En ge vindt dat vuile uitwas in elk mensch.

Ge vindt dat vuile uitwas óók in de kerk van den Heere Jezus Christus. Vraagt het maar aan de ouderlingen die uitgaan, twee aan twee, om te vermanen, te bestraffen het hoogmoedige hart in de gemeente. Aanschouwt het bij alle leden der goe gemeente, bij leiders en volgelingen. Ontdekt het in Uw eigen hart: mijn haan zal koning kraaien!

Nu is er maar EEN dien het dictatuur past, en die EENE is God!

Mijn vers zingt daarvan.

De HEERE heeft Zijn troon bevestigd, en Zijn koninkrijk heerscht over alles.

En dat Hij zulks doet ligt aan het feit, dat Hij de Schepper en Onderhouder is van alles wat bestaat.

Nu moet daar nog één ding bij gezegd worden: Zijn dictatuur is ook goed, want Hij is de Goede bij uitnemendheid. Het is trouw al wat Zijn hand beval; het staat op recht en waarheid pal, als op onwrichtbare steunpilaren. Dat kunt ge nooit zeggen van des menschen dictatuur. Vraagt het aan de stakkerds die gezucht, gebloed en geschreid hebben in de concentratiekampen van alle eeuwen. Als wij de baas willen spelen, dan gaat alles krom en vuil te werk. Dan wordt er geleden.

Wat een rustige gedachte te midden van het rumoer

der volken als ik weten mag, dat de troon Gods bevestigd is in alle eeuwen, dat er werkelijk niets verkeerd gaat, dat alles een openbaring is van het regiment Gods. Onze vaders hebben het zoo juist uitgedrukt in het artikel, dat handelt over de voorzienigheid Gods: Hij beschikt zeer wel en rechtvaardiglijk zijn werk, en doet het, ook wanneer de duivelen en goddeloozen onrechtvaardiglijk handelen. Of wanneer zij zeggen: wetende, dat Hij de duivelen in toom houdt. . . .

Zijn koninkrijk heerscht over alles!

Als we uit dat beginsel altijd leefden, dan zouden we steeds kunnen zingen: In de grootste smarten blijven onze harten in den Heer gerust!

Zoo kunnen we eenigzins verstaan hoe de geïnspireerde dichter verder allen en een ieder oproept om Hem te loven.

Looft den Heere, Zijne Engelen, gij krachtige helden die Zijn woord doet, gehoorzamende de stem Zijns woords!

O ja, die Engelen Gods!

Gods volk is zeer geïnteresseerd in het stuk der Engelen Gods. Van kinds af aan gevoelt men zich tot de Engelen aangetrokken. En leert Gods Woord niet, dat zij allen gediensdige geesten zijn, die tot dienst uitgezonden worden om dergenen wil die de zaligheid beërven zullen? En dan is daar ook die schoone tekst in Mattheus 18, waar de Heere Jezus zegt van Gods volk, dat "hunne engelen in de hemelen altijd zien het aangezicht Mijns Vaders die in de hemelen is." Voorts kunt ge bemerken in alle plaatsen in de Heilige Schrift waar sprake is van de Engelen Gods, dat zij zeer geïnteresseerd zijn in ons. Om nu maar één plaats te noemen, denkt dan aan den nacht toen Jezus geboren is. Wat jubelen en zingen van "eene menigte des hemelschen heirlegers"! Ik kan niet nalaten om ook nog te wijzen op die plaats waar Jezus zegt hoe de Engelen blijde zijn als Gods volk bekeerd wordt: dan is er groote blijdschap in de hemelen.

Nu dan, die Engelen Gods zijn "sterke helden".

Denkt ge hier niet onwillekeurig aan dien bangen nacht toen de heirlegers der goddeloozen rondom Jeruzalem lagen? Ze hadden in hun generaal den God des hemels en der aarde gelasterd, en nog wel in Zijn werk als Jehovah, de VerbondsGod, die niet verlossen kon.

Toen moet God gezegd hebben tegen één van die "sterke helden": Gaat naar de aarde en vernietig 185000 van die spotters! En slechts één engel Gods ging van tent tot tent en in den morgen waren zij allen doode lichamen.

En Jezus kende die helden. In de dagen van Zijn groote smart dacht Hij aan die helden: "Of meent gij dat Ik Mijnen Vader nu niet kan bidden, en Hij zal Mij meer dan twaalf legioenen Engelen bijzetten?"

Die krachtige helden doen Gods woord. Van tijd

tot tijd komen de bevelen Gods tot hen om dit of dat op aarde te doen. Ge kunt er van lezen in de Schrift. Er was wat te doen met het lichaam van Mozes, Elia moest naar den hemel gebracht worden, de stad Gods beveiligd, Lazarus had den laatsten adem uitgeblazen en moest voorzichtig naar boven gebracht, er moest wat gezongen worden in hemelschen klank in Efratah's velden, of ook, er moest gestreden worden tegen Satan en zijn engelen, kortom, keer op keer komen de woorden Gods als bevelen tot de Engelen Gods, en dan stonden zij gereed om dat woord Gods te doen.

O ja, de Engelen Gods zijn zeer gehoorzaam. Het is hun leven om te doen wat God beveelt.

En die Engelen Gods nu worden opgeroepen door den Heiligen Geest om den HEERE te loven.

Ook dat hebben we gehoord.

In het jaar toen de koning Uzzia stierf zag Jesaja de hemel geopend. En door de geopende deur zag en hoorde hij de engelen Gods. En zij werden niet moede om al maar te zingen rondom den troon Gods: Heilig! Heilig! Heilig! is de HEERE der heirscharen, de gansche aarde is van Zijne heerlijkheid vol!

Wat schoon lied des lofs!

Wie wordt niet weemoedig als hij van zulk lieflijk zingen hoort? Weemoedig, want wij hebben er zoo weinig van.

Looft Hem, gij Engelen Gods!

En zij doen het. Zij hebben het al voor bijna zes duizend jaren gedaan. Ook worden zij niet moede dag en nacht om al maar te loven.

Loven is, als ge het den HEERE vertelt al zingende, hoe lieflijk en goed, hoe krachtig en wijs, hoe recht en heilig Hij is. Boven is als gij Zijn deugden opnoemt al zingende.

En dat gij dat doet van harte, dat gij er schik van hebt om het Hem te vertellen wat indruk Zijn deugden op U maken.

De opzet in het volgende vers is nog breder: "Looft den HEERE, alle Zijne heirscharen, gij Zijne dienaars die Zijn welbehagen doet!"

Eerst was het een beroep die alleen tot de Engelen Gods gericht was, doch nu komt het woord tot "alle Zijne heirscharen". Het sluit nu in alle machten en krachten des hemels. Het komt nu tot alle Gods wagens boven 't luchtig zwerk die tien en tien maal duizend sterk zijn. Verdubbeld in getale!

En al die dienaars doen Zijn welbehagen. En Zijn welbehagen is Zijn wil. Het heeft den Heere behaagd om Engelen, om machten en krachten te gebruiken tot de verwerkelijking van Zijn eeuwigen wil. En dat is goed. Daarin bestaat het geluk van het creatuur, hetzij het hemelsch of aardsch is.

Nu dan, die breedere massa van hemelsche dienaars moeten Hem loven. Stelt het U voor, indien ge kunt. Maar 't zal niet gaan. We kunnen er over mijmeren, we kunnen trachten er in te komen, maar het volle

beeld zullen we niet zien totdat vervuld is hetgeen Johannes zag op het eiland Patmos. Geen wonder dat Johannes er van getuigende spreekt van een geluid als van zeer groote wateren. Het geheel moet een ontzettende indruk geven. Alle oogen naar den troon, alle harten vol van de heerlijkheid van Hem die op den troon zit, alle monden open om te zingen van God, te zingen!

En dan het laatste vers: Looft den HEERE, alle Zijne werken, aan alle plaatsen Zijner heerschappij!

Wel, dat sluit niets uit. Hier moet het woord *alle* opgevat in zijn meest omvangrijken zin. Het sluit zelfs de duivelen en de hel in. De verdoemenis is ook een van Gods werken. En de hel is ook plaats van Zijn heerschappij.

Het is onuitsprekelijk mooi om hiervan te zingen. Let er op, dat overal God werkt, en dat alle roeren en bewegen een openbaring zijn van Zijn heerschappij. Antithetisch. Hier rust men van allen angst en vreeze.

Looft Hem, gij creaturen! Looft Hem tot in alle eeuwigheid.

En gij, mijn ziel, loof gij Hem bovenal!

Dit laatste is de vorm waarin de uiteindelijke klank van dit lied gegoten werd door de psalmberijmers.

Er is geen ander geluk, dan naar het Aangezicht te staren, vol te worden van Zijn deugden, en dan te zingen, te zingen!

G. Vos.

IN HIS FEAR

False Doctrine and The Fear Of The Lord

An Impossible Delight.

It is quite impossible for one who fears the Lord to find delight in false doctrines. The fear of the Lord can never find pleasure in teachings which depart from the truth. We have called your attention to the fact that false doctrines cannot produce the fear of the Lord and that the fear of the Lord never brings forth false doctrines. It is well now for us to consider the above fact that those who fear the Lord cannot find delight in those false doctrines already formed and wherewith they come in contact.

Let us first of all make our stand clear. We do not say that God's people never find delight in the lie. We do not say that you will never find an elect, regenerated child of God maintaining and spreading false doctrines. That we would never dare to maintain. There are too many instances in Scripture as well as today which testify against that fact. Did Moses not

call God's people rebels? And did he not thereby deny that blessed doctrine of justification through the blood of Christ? Did he not in effect deny that though our sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow? Did Peter not deny Christ thrice? Did he not thereby deny salvation through Him? Did he not deny that Christ is the Messiah? And these were elect, regenerated children of God. No, the point we make here is that God's people never are moved by the fear of the Lord when they maintain and confess false doctrines. When Moses or Peter or you and I hold on to a false doctrine, it is just exactly because we are not at that moment living from the principle of the fear of the Lord. Our delight and defence of false doctrines is the work of our old nature rebelling against the new life that is within us. The old nature hates the truth and is constantly rebelling against it. The old man is always struggling to keep us from living in His fear. When we let the old man hold sway over our members, our hearts and our minds, we find delight in the lie. But the moment we begin to live from the principle of the fear of the Lord, we hate that lie and reject it immediately. Peter's tears were the external manifestation of his return to the fear of the Lord. And so it is with every elect, regenerated child of God who for a time was living from the principle of sin which was in him from birth. The fear of the Lord can only produce a delight in the truth.

A few examples of how a child of God will behave when he is not motivated by the fear of the Lord appeared upon the pages of The Standard Bearer last month. One of our Home Missionaries wrote of the spiritual indifference he found in the Northwestern section of our country. One individual is reported as having said that he did not see how Romans 9:11-13 could be in the Bible. Another individual is reported to have remarked that it made no difference whether one was a Baptist or Methodist as long as he went to church and read his Bible. While one is living from the principle of the fear of the Lord, he cannot make such statements. We will not judge whether they are truly God's children. We will leave that to be revealed by God Himself in the great day of judgment, but we are not at all afraid to say that such speech does not proceed forth from the fear of the Lord. To say the very least, the fear of the Lord would move one who heard such things for the first time to go and look it up. And having found it, that individual if moved by the fear of the Lord, would bow before it as the truth. It is the flesh that moves us to reject a certain passage of God's Word or else try to reason its teachings away to defend our own preconceived views. But the fear of the Lord will never lead one to do these things.

The other side of the picture is revealed in that apparently gracious gesture of crediting all churches with the truth and thereby upholding membership in

any and every church. The very separate existence of these denominations is already a testimonial of the fact that they have different views of the Scriptures. To say that it then makes no difference to which one a person belongs as long as he goes there is to say that after all it makes no difference whether we believe the truth concerning God or whether we believe the lie. In fact it is equal to saying that God approves of these false doctrines taught in these churches, and that He is not at all particular which phase of the lie you embrace, for in the one you embrace one form and in the other you embrace a different form of the lie. Such an attitude over against false doctrines can never proceed from the fear of the Lord. Instead it shows a profound disrespect for the preciousness of His Word and for the glory of His name. The fear of the Lord always moves one to find delight in the truth and in all that glorifies God's name. As we remarked before, the fear of the Lord moves one to be afraid of saying or believing anything which is not to His honor and glory, and surely such a person will never maintain, defend or be satisfied with the lie to any degree or in any form.

There is a growing tendency towards this phase of living outside rather than in the fear of the Lord. We can stay right at home in our own denomination to see this. We need not go to the pacific northwest nor to any denomination outside our own to see this very thing practiced on an increasing scale. As we rush toward the end of time and the measure of iniquity of the world becomes full, we see an increase in indifference and unconcern for the truth and things spiritual. In an increasing way we can see the prophecy of Paul to Timothy being realized that the time will come when men will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, so that they turn their ears away from the truth and shall be turned unto fables. See II Timothy 4:1-5.

Young couples today marry so easily without ever having considered the matter of whether the union takes them away from the truth and into a church where false doctrines are taught. And even realizing that it will take them away from a sphere where the doctrine glorifies God and into a sphere where He cannot and does not come to His own in the preaching, they often show a desire for this change rather than to break the earthly friendship which demands it. Such a marriage is not transacted nor practiced in the fear of the Lord. Or else for earthly gain, for worldly advancement, for honor and fame some will move away from the sphere where they know that the truth is preached and will separate themselves, if not for good, then for long periods of time from the doctrines which the fear of the Lord maintains. Whether there is a church that preaches the truth is not considered, nor

is the question of Christian education in the day school first satisfactorily answered before the decision is made to move away. Such a move was not and cannot have been made because one was led by the fear of the Lord. Whether we like to admit it or not, such an act was motivated by the principle that man can and may live by bread alone. The bread of life is not of enough importance. If only we get a crumb now and then we can cut off the moldy crusts for our children, then we will be all right. Such is the reasoning behind such a move. One may not consciously have gone through that mental process in coming to his decision, but such is the underlying principle of his act. The fear of the Lord will never allow anyone to behave thus. We repeat that we will not judge of these either whether they are truly elect, regenerated children of God who do these things. But we are sure of this that if they are, by God's grace the fear of the Lord will sooner or later cause them to regret their action and to hunger and thirst for the preaching of the truth as they were wont to enjoy it.

Such may still say that they hate false doctrines, that they still hate them and that their delight is still in the truth, but they surely are not letting the fear of the Lord lead them. We are reminded of righteous Lot who did exactly this same thing, and that he escaped the destruction God's wrath poured out on Sodom and Gomorrah was due only to God's grace. He moved away from Abraham and into the fields of sin for material gain. It was not the fear of the Lord that led him in his choice. But he was an elect, regenerated child of God, and Peter states that he vexed his righteous soul with the unlawful deeds of the world about him. There you have the fear of the Lord working in his soul! But in his choice of a dwelling place the fear of the Lord took no part. And even then, in spite of this vexing of his righteous soul he had almost literally to be dragged out of the city. The angel had to take him by the hand. And remember Lot's wife! Remember likewise the history of Naomi's husband, Elimelech, and her two sons. They never returned to the land of Canaan when they left for material gain.

We therefore emphasize this truth that the fear of the Lord cannot find delight in false doctrines. It is quite impossible. Consider again what we wrote before that false doctrines always deny God His glory. Can he who loves God and has a deep respect and reverence for Him then find delight in those doctrines which deny Him His glory? Of course not. Such an one can only find delight in the truth which glorifies God. And because he finds no delight in false doctrines, he will maintain the truth, defend it and fight for it. In the next installment of this department we intend to call your attention to this fact that the fear of the Lord opposes false doctrines and seeks no compromise of any kind.

J. A. Heys.

FROM HOLY WRIT

The Objective of Christian Education *

If anyone should question the propriety of introducing a subject of this nature on a ministerial conference on the basis that the Christian Schools are not directly related to the church as institute, I would readily agree. That is, I would want to definitely maintain that the training of the covenant child is first of all, not the responsibility of the church, but of the parent. This principle must never be sacrificed at any cost. But Christian education is a matter sufficiently weighty to merit consideration in any group that is interested in the doctrinal, spiritual and practical issues that arise within the sphere of the church. Moreover, our ministers have so much contact with their own local Christian Schools that they are necessarily interested in the matter from their own peculiar aspect.

The one apology I would offer is, that I am no authority on the subject of Christian pedagogy. There are others in our midst who have had far more experience in this respect, and who can therefore do much to enhance and enrich the discussion by their more extensive knowledge of the subject. This may serve as an introduction to create a worthwhile discussion.

It is not a trite bugbear to state that alarming phenomena have made their appearance in the realm of Christian education during the past decade. In some communities, outsiders who have little or no contact with the church have been received into the schools, and their right there has been tenaciously defended. I need only remind you of the recent stir that this issue has aroused in the Chicago Christian High School. Besides that, no one can ignore the present trend toward a nation-wide Christian School expansion program, threatening to undermine the very system itself. Are these phenomena only a natural result of a thoroughly sound Calvinistic conception of Christian education, so that their appearance must be lauded and encouraged? Or are they the outgrowth of a philosophy that has been busy undermining the Reformed principles of doctrine and life for some time? Are they the product of the theory of common grace brought into practice in our present school system? The latter seems to be the case.

There is certainly occasion for all of us to be on the alert to watch the development of these latest trends in the School movement. Ultimately our churches may

be forced to speed up the establishment of our own schools. But even in that case, we must be sure that we build on an absolutely firm and sure foundation, according to the criterion of Scripture itself.

We may well place ourselves anew before the question, What is the real objective, the purpose of Christian education? What is the ultimate goal of the training of covenant youth in the Christian Schools?

Theme:

THE OBJECTIVE OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION.

- I. The Principle Involved.
- II. The Objective.
- III. The Application in the School Curriculum.

The Principle Involved.

All of us are aware of the fact that there are chiefly two Christian School systems in America. The one is the Lutheran parochial system, the other is represented by the National Union of Christian Schools.

The Lutheran Evangelical Schools of America regard the infallibility of the Scriptures as the premise for their philosophy of education. In the "General Course of Study," published by the Lutheran Schools, we find the following statement, "The Bible is the primary source of knowledge. The Christian educator by no means disparages evidences of science and postulates the reason, but he grants them a place only in those areas of human interests whose exploration divine revelation has left to the mind of man, and he fearlessly objects whenever these evidences and postulates presume on holy ground. The Christian educator not only admits divine revelation as a source of knowledge; he regards it as the only absolutely reliable, inviolable source of knowledge. He believes that God, who speaks in the Bible cannot err, that however, the evidences of science and the postulates of reason are subject to error. Therefore he makes the truths of divine revelation and their application the fundamental premises in his philosophy of education."

In passing it may be remarked, that the matter of plenary and verbal inspiration might be more positively expressed, but that nevertheless, it is well to establish such a premise when speaking of the fundamental principles of Christian education.

The truths of Scripture that are considered fundamental to all education are briefly expressed as follows.

1. There is one God, Who is three in persons and one in essence.
2. He is the Creator of all. Man was created in His image.
3. Every creature is born in sin, under the wrath because of the fall of our first parents.

* Paper delivered at the Ministers' Conference of Classis West on March 4, 1948.

4. Atonement is only through the cross of Christ, and salvation is only by faith in His name.
5. The world is a preparation for eternity. Love to God is the basic principle of religion; a love, not merely as a duty for duty's sake, but God demands love from a pure heart.

Our criticism would be that these truths are too general to have any specific value. They leave room for all such errors as general atonement, a universal offer of salvation, etc. And since the Lutheran school system is parochial, the idea of covenant training by the parents is absent.

I have also had occasion to peruse the "Course of Study for Christian Schools" published by the National Union of Christian Schools in 1947.

The first part of this book is devoted to a "philosophy of Christian Education," written by Prof. Henry Schultze, stressing the fundamental principles upon which Christian education must be founded. This dissertation treats the following subjects: 1. What is the nature of reality? 2. Who and what is the pupil? 3. What is Christian education?

Indealing with the first question, he first gives a short resume of the various answers of philosophers of the past. Thereupon he gives the answer of the Christian as follows, "The Christian does not deny the existence and the reality of individual things. They are all created by God and have distinct, though dependent, existence. They are in no sense God. Nor is God in any sense these things. The independent things are the embodiment of divine ideas, which may be called universalia." This reality is further described as "secondary forms of reality". God's thoughts are first, things are but the embodiment of these thoughts, so that we can read God's thoughts in the creatural and providential forms of reality. Since God is a unity, there is also a unity in back of these realities. However, "due to the fall of man this divine plan of self revelation has been seriously disrupted. The recipients of the revelation became incapacitated to read the handwriting of God as it inscribed the thoughts of God back of the world at it was made and as it was developing. Even the forms of revelation became disrupted and were no longer able to reveal perfectly the divine creatural and providential forms. To meet this deficiency, God introduced the device known as Special Revelation. . . . Without this Light the world will remain a disorganized, disintegrated, and confused conglomeration of incongruous materials. It is like a puzzle book of pictures that refuse to be placed in a form that is interpretable.

In answer to the question, Who and what is the pupil?, the following general statement is made, "Christian educators are committed to the proposition that the pupils represent a humanity that has begun its

earthly career in perfection, and has through sin become disintegrated. It has fallen into a state of utter confusion and ignorance. The Christian teacher finds the child to be a bundle of disintegrated tensions and reactions. He finds that there is within his pupil even a constant warfare such as the apostle Paul freely confessed to be in his life. It is obvious that such a view will have a far-reaching bearing upon the contents, methods and objectives of education." Who can refrain from adding, they certainly will!? If statements like these were not so vicious, they would verge on the ridiculous. The writer goes on to explain that the child was created in the image of God, "intellectually God-like, emotionally God-like, and volitionally God-like." The result of sin is that the child is now a "disintegrated image-bearer." Therefore "redemptive education is needed." "The cause of disintegration must be removed to make integration possible. To put it differently, the image of God that has been defaced by sin must be restored in order to effect unification. . . . One cannot make a pupil God-like and leave sin there. And except we make him God-like by God's grace and with His help we are falling short of the highest calling of Christian education."

In conclusion the following definition is given: "Education is the restorative process for 'giving sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, release to the prisoner, recovery to the sick'."

Many objections could be raised against this philosophy of Christian education. No one can help feel that any modernist would be quite ready to undersign these statements. In fact, no one can take offence of them, except the man who loves the Reformed heritage.

Although the author stresses in his introduction that education must be theocentric, it becomes increasingly evident that he regards the objective of Christian education as purely anthropocentric, dealing centrally with a disintegrated image-bearer, in whom the image of God must be restored, to make him God-like.

We might add, that total depravity is denied, the atoning death of Christ is silently ignored, and sanctification is confused with social betterment. Besides, many statements could be adduced to show that the author has allowed himself to be carried away by the Kuyperian Restitution theory.

But these critical remarks must be made only in passing. What is plainly evident, is the fact that the whole idea of God's covenant is sought for in vain.

There is not one word in this whole philosophy that in any way refers to Christian education as covenant training. The fact that our Christian Schools are but an outgrowth of the home, and that they are the fulfillment of the obligation of covenant parents to train their children in the fear of the Lord, is sadly lacking. These things have an absolute certainty among us, that they need no further proof whatever. We should

by all means expect that a "philosophy of education" would contain very definite statements about God's covenant, the place of the child in the covenant, and the obligation of covenant parents to train the child in the fear of the Lord. We even have a right to expect that emphasis be laid on the fact that Christian Schools are parental schools, established by the parents, entirely independent from the local congregations, in order that parents may fulfill their covenant obligation overagainst their children. And furthermore, that covenant training marks Christian education as unique from any secular education. But all this is entirely foreign to the basis laid down for the present Christian school system.

What is more, these things are even denied. The distinctiveness of Christian education is said to be, that it is neither atheistic, nor pantheistic, nor deistic, but theistic. It acknowledges God, the Creator Who providentially reveals His thoughts in His creation, even though this revelation has become seriously disrupted in a disorganized, disintegrated and confused conglomeration of incongruous materials. With the aid of the light of Scripture the thoughts of God must be searched out and the image of God must be restored in a fallen humanity. Man must think God's thoughts, and will God's will, to be of service to God and man. That becomes the objective of Christian education.

Thereby the idea of the antithesis is entirely wiped out. The distinction between the church and the world, between God's covenant people and a world of reprobation is destroyed. That the church lives in the midst of a wicked world, and that she has a peculiar calling to bring up her spiritual seed in the fear of the Lord, even in the midst of a world of wickedness, has no place in the whole system. No wonder that the present Christian School system totters on its foundation.

It needs no lengthy proof among us that Christian education worthy of the name is covenant training. That is of fundamental significance. And that must once more receive all the emphasis.

Bearing this in mind, we may define Christian education as covenant training, which proceeds from the parents, who with their spiritual seed are included in God's covenant, and therefore are called to live as pilgrims and strangers in the world, fulfilling their divine calling as His covenant people by proclaiming the glories of God, each in his own peculiar place in life.

(to be continued)

C. Hanko.

"O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endureth for ever."—I Chron. 16:34.

PERISCOPE

Reflection. . . .

With the hope in our heart that his words may be heard and acted upon we call attention to an address delivered, before a Calvin Alumni gathering, by the Rev. Harry R. Boer, Missionary to Nigeria of the Christian Reformed Churches, and published in the *Calvin Forum* of January, 1948.

He begins by calling attention to the difference in influence which has been exerted upon the Netherlands and America by their respective Calvinistic groups and finds in this respect a serious shortcoming in this country. "In America the Calvinists are living their life largely without the encouragement and stimulus that spring from opposition and criticism. . . . I greatly fear that we are gradually being absorbed by the American activist spirit. . . . the rut of activity, doing, organization, without adequate reflection on ultimate bases and ultimate ends, and on means growing out of the first and suitable to achieve the second. We have built buildings—churches, seminaries, colleges, high schools, grade schools, hospitals—but when we contemplate the writings of the ministers, professors, teachers and doctors who give leadership in these institutions we can register only keen disappointment. . . . There is being discovered in unexpected quarters an alarming ignorance as to what Calvinism really is and implies.

"How shall the trend be turned and a more vital era in American Calvinism be ushered in? When we reflect on this question thoughts and possibilities multiply themselves. They suggest activity especially on two fronts—fronts on which we have done almost nothing, but with respect to which we think that we are the people and wisdom shall die with us. I refer to the field of Theology and Education.

"American Calvinists of Dutch extraction manifest a sense of theological superiority that would not be so irritating were it not so complacent. . . ." After discussing the absence of a truly theological journal among the Reformed Calvinistic element in this country the author continues by pointing out that such a journal would be a step in the right direction and suggests some of those things which should be discussed and published in it. "Four specific questions come to mind, the open discussion of which can be neglected only at the price of making ourselves guilty of sidestepping issues that stand prominently and concretely before us. 1) Is the eschatological question going to die with our esteemed Kromminga? (This refers probably to a protest of Dr. Kromminga to the statement in Art. 37 of our Confession that the number of the elect is complete

at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ—this is of course denied by Premillennialists and also by Dr. Kromminga. The Synod of the Christian Reformed Churches decided 'to drop the matter in view of the demise of Prof. Kromminga'.—J.H.). As a mad world hastens frantically and pell-mell to its dark destiny should we not renew our study concerning God's message about the eschatos? (the end—J.H.). 2) Has the last word been spoken about Common Grace? Leading spirits in and out of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands and in America do not think so. The Barthians are grappling with it. Can we claim theological integrity if we avoid it? 3) The covenant question is an issue so burning in the Netherlands that it has split our sister denomination. Can we square it with good theological conscience and with our confession of the communion of saints to withhold from our brethren the benefit of our study and to ignore a matter that so greatly burdens them? 4) Synodical decree forbids discussion about the University question in our church papers. Does this mean that there should be no discussion at all? Many in our circles believe that an aggressive Calvinism will stand or fall with a Reformed University. Should not this matter be considered fully and freely by the reflecting minds of the church?

"The fear has been expressed that discussion of these issues will plunge the church into unhappy controversies. What! Is the prophet's office and voice to be restricted by such unworthy fears? Are we so weak and timid that the theologian dare no longer be theologian free and unfettered to shed public light on problems that stand in the midst of the church? Will God who would have His revelation unfolded bless with peace in Zion silence in those who are called to explore His Word? Let us study and write. Let us fear only this—that we shall fall short in our duty as free Reformed theologians."

We do not know Mr. Boer personally, but certainly congratulate him on the above stand. Certainly as Protestant Reformed people we must agree that a thorough and complete study and discussion of every issue on the basis of the Word of God and the Reformed Confessions is the only possible way of dealing with the multitude of problems which confront us in these days. And if we may interpret Mr. Boer's article as a protest against that ecclesiastical strait-jacket-ism which is so well known to us—once more we heartily agree and applaud his stand. There must be freedom for discussion and debate within the Confessions else we dry up and die!

And thus also we agree with much of which he has to say with regard to the second field—that of Education. In this section he points out that we have been overly concerned with the externals, buildings, organization, etc., without giving ourselves account of the real meaning and purpose of the Christian schools,

with the result that "Parents and especially teachers, board members and ministers will begin (if they have not already begun) to regard the Christian School as an average public school in charge of Christian people." And he pleads for a further study and development of the educational principles underlying our Christian educational system.

And he begins his conclusion of this interesting article with the following observation: "You may say, Physician heal thyself. What have you done, and what right have you to lift up the critical voice? I have done nothing, and I am not sure at all that I can do anything. But I have one thing, I possess one quality which justifies me in my own mind in speaking as I do: I am disturbed, I am intensely concerned about the future of the church I love and about the Reformed life which it represents. What concerns me so deeply is the pervasive lack of concern about the dangers confronting our religious heritage not only among our laity but especially among large sections of our leadership, the being satisfied with a smoothly running ecclesiastical machinery, the much speaking but little thinking about our "Reformed Position", the complacent resting behind the Maginot Line of our incomparable creeds while an insidious Fifth Column of indifference to it all is developing under our very noses. . ."

Once more we can only applaud these sentiments—regardless for the moment where the author's intended development would lead him. We are and must never be afraid of discussion, of light, of study, yea, of free and open study and discussion of every question, bound only by the Word of and the Confessions!

* * * *

Beginning at Jerusalem. . .

In the recent numbers of "The Banner" the Rev. Harry Blystra, Home Missions Secretary of the Christian Reformed Churches, has been developing the theme of mission work beginning at Jerusalem.

It is not our intention at this time to review his articles as a whole but rather to confine ourselves to the one question, where and what is Jerusalem? Mr. Blystra states in *The Banner* of Feb. 6, "This Jerusalem as stated previously, is for us none other than the community, the city, and the land of our habitation". From this he had previously drawn the conclusion that we must begin our work with our neighbors, the unchurched in our own communities and expand it to the foreign mission field. If we understand Mr. Blystra correctly, then he would make Jerusalem a geographic-social concept—and interpret it by our immediate neighbors, geographically and socially.

To this conception several difficulties attach themselves immediately, it seems to me. In the first place, why did Christ say Jerusalem? Was it not true that

most if not all of the disciples were Galileans? (Was Judas Iscariot perhaps the only exception to this?) Why did Jesus not mention the home town of every one of His disciples? And in the second place why Judea next after Jerusalem when we know that many if not all lived in Galilee? And why Samaria next instead of Arabia or Idumaea or other neighboring regions? And finally the question arises, does this view do justice to the concept Jerusalem?

It seems to me that Jerusalem must be taken in an ecclesiastical sense rather than in the geographic-social sense in which it is taken in these articles. Jerusalem was the center, the heart of the church of that time. There in the heart of the church which had corrupted itself must they begin their preaching. And from that ecclesiastical center the work must be extended. And this must also be the rule for us today.

J. Howerzyl.

A Change, But Essentially Nothing New

During the past several months it has been revealed through the Lord's guidance, that our congregation at Holland received another Pastor and Shepherd. And although this is a change in that we no longer hear the voice of our former pastor Rev. W. Hofman, and now hear our present pastor Rev. B. Kok, essentially nothing new has taken place in that both of these beloved brethren set forth to us the Word of Life.

For the Servants of God have on their shoulders the Holy Office of Ministers of the Word, shouting forth the glad tidings of the Gospel, the Power of God unto salvation. The Church through its Divine Public Worship becomes an Institution radiating light in the midst of darkness. The Body of Christ the believers preach the Word through its ordained Office, the Minister of the Lord. Through the very nature of the Church as Institute, one Body of Believers with Ordained Offices, the proclamation of the Gospel is a light flowing into a sin-darkened world. The entire institution represents its Head, Christ, for Christ uses this Institution with its ordained Offices as the Priesthood of the Gospel, by which the children of God that sit in the darkness, are slain, in order that being renewed by the Spirit, they may be offered to the Lord. This is a gracious and merciful work through God's Almighty grace working in their hearts inwardly. And the Service being public in nature, that is, with its doors open to the weary and heavy laden, the penitent, the broken and contrite in heart being fed the bread of life, with their thirst quenched by the waters

of life flowing from the throne of God, that they eat and drink without money.

These regular Lord's Day services become a haven of rest and peace to the weary and tired pilgrims, the poor and broken hearted ones, the fatherless and the strangers, the orphans that were estranged from God in the shackles of sin. The slaying Word in the mouth of God's faithful servant, through the power of God's grace conforms the whole Church with all their weakness, sins and faults, to the blessedness of the children of God as given by Christ in the Sermon on the Mount, Matt. 5:3 to the end. This is endless, for the children of God need this Divine service every seven days to keep them from stumbling. And every day anew this blessed message must be brought to them. Young and old must be fed, till God's work of sanctification is complete and they enter into the promised rest. This has no end till the very last elect is born, and Christ comes on the clouds of heaven.

Therefore when God called His servant, Rev. Hofman, to labor in another part of His vineyard, He also remembered our congregation at Holland by again sending unto us another servant, Rev. B. Kok. For the entire church as it reveals itself in the midst of this world is God's church, and all God's faithful Servants are bearers of the same fundamental truth, the Gospel of the Promise. The church therefore receives her Ministers as the Servants of the Lord, and as such loves these Brethren, for they set forth unto her the Bread of Life.

Therein the congregation of Holland also rejoices, that whereas Rev. Hofman has faithfully labored amongst her in the Word of God, the administration of the Sacraments, and all other activity connected with his Office, bonds of love and friendship were established which will stand unto all eternity. And although many of these relationships were temporarily broken off by Rev. Hofman accepting the call of Home Missionary, yet they shall be realized in its fullest perfection in the glorious Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. For also therein essentially nothing old has been left behind by Rev. Hofman and his family when the Lord called them away from the Holland congregation. For under the Lord's blessing his labors shall stand unto all eternity, that he performed in our midst. And although the Lord called him to a vastly different field of labor as Home Missionary of our churches, yet essentially nothing new has taken place, for Rev. Hofman remaineth the Servant of the Lord preaching the Gospel, the Word of God, the power of God unto salvation.

Thus on October 5th, 1947, Rev. Hofman delivered his farewell sermon to the Holland congregation, choosing his themes from the following portions of Scripture. II Thess. 3:1. Finally, brethren, pray for us. And II. Thess. 3:16: Now the Lord of peace himself

give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all. This was followed on the evening of October 17th by a congregational farewell social to Rev. and Mrs. Hofman and family, wishing them God's blessing in their new field of labor.

And in as much as it pleased God to take from us our beloved former pastor and brother, Rev. Hofman, He again made our hearts glad with rejoicing in giving us another Servant, to go before us and break the Bread of Life. That Word, pure and unadulterated, feeding us unto the way of life. That Word feeding the youth of God's Covenant in Catechism and other midweek activities. Thus our hearts were filled with thanksgiving and gratitude to God, that He again gave us His Servant our beloved Pastor and Brother, Rev. B. Kok.

Installation services of Rev. Kok took place on the evening of Dec. 18, 1947. Rev. J. De Jong charged both Rev. Kok and the Holland congregation in a sermon delivered on the following text, I Peter 5:2: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof not by constraint but willingly, not for filthy lucre but of a ready mind. Neither as being lords over God's heritage but being ensamples to the flock. Prayer was offered and the form of installation was read by Rev. Hofman. The benediction was pronounced by the newly installed pastor.

The following Lord's Day Rev. Kok delivered his inaugural sermons to our congregation, choosing his themes from the following portion of Scripture, Phil. 1:9-10, And this I pray that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; That ye may approve things that are excellent that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ. Gal. 6:14, But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

On December 30th the Holland congregation gave a reception social to Rev. and Mrs. Kok and family, welcoming them into their midst.

And although a change did take place in that the Holland congregation received another pastor, essentially nothing new took place, for our beloved pastor Rev. Kok continues to set forth to us the same Word of God, which is the power of God unto salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Consistory of the 1st Prot. Ref. Church,
Holland, Michigan.

J. H. Kortering, Clerk.

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to His mercy He saved us."

—Titus 3:5.

IN MEMORIAM

Whereas our Heavenly Father in His wise and loving providence, on February 25, 1948, took out of this life

MR. DIRK MONSMA

the English Men's Society of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan expresses its sincere sympathy to Mrs. D. Monsma and her family in the loss of their beloved husband and father.

May our God comfort them abundantly through His Word and Spirit, and sustain them by His grace in these lonely days.

Mr. A. Van Tuinen, Pres.

Mr. O. Vander Woude, Sec'y.

IN MEMORIAM

The English Men's Society of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, hereby gives expression to its condolence with its fellow member, Mr. G. Stadt, in the recent death of his father,

MR. H. STADT

of Grand Rapids, Michigan. May the God of all grace and mercy comfort the bereaved that they may confess "He doeth all things well."

Mr. A. Van Tuinen, Pres.

Mr. O. Vander Woude, Sec'y.

IN MEMORIAM

The English Men's Society of the First Protestant Reformed Church expresses its sincere sympathy to Mr. G. Zwak and family in the sudden bereavement of their wife and mother,

MRS. G. ZWAK

May the Lord comfort and sustain the sorrowing family in their sorrow in these lonely days.

Mr. A. Van Tuinen, Pres.

Mr. O. Vander Woude, Sec'y.

CHRISTIAN SCHOOL TEACHERS

PLEASE NOTE!

The Hope Protestant Reformed Christian School is in need of a teacher for the lower grades for the season beginning in September. If you are able to serve us in this capacity, please give this notice your earnest and prayerful consideration taking into account the principles which we as Protestant Reformed people are called upon and privileged to maintain. Write, call, or visit Mr. J. Lanning, 1268 Wilson Ave., S. W., R.F.D. No. 5, Grand Rapids, Michigan. Phone 64-7391.