

# THE STANDARD

*Bearer*

A REFORMED SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE

VOLUME XXVI

December 1, 1949 — Grand Rapids, Mich.

NUMBER 5

## MEDITATION

### The Gospel Heralds

"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the Angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the Angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the Babe wrapped in swaddlingclothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

—Luke 2:8-14.

Isaiah tells us that God's thoughts are not our thoughts and that as the heavens are higher than the earth, so the Lord's ways are higher than our ways, and His thoughts higher than our thoughts.

And if you would look for a case in point, I would direct you to the story of the birth of Jesus.

Everything is so passing strange!

We know that everything came to pass by Divine appointment, but, oh, how different we would have planned this great event.

It is generally agreed that this event is the most wonderful in all history: the Incarnation of the Lord God.

Well: what do we find at this point in history?

This: we are taken outside a small village in a dispossessed country of lowly people. We are told that it was darkest night. And the event of all events is first heralded by angels to—of all people—lowly shepherd folk who are watching their flock by night!

And this concerns the King of kings and the Lord of lords? Is He not the very King of heavenly Light

and life? And does not His acquaintance spell an eternity of bliss?

Yet, when heavenly light begins to shine into our hearts and understanding we see Divine logic, and grow still in admiration.

It was night indeed: spiritually. God's chosen church was in extreme darkness. The sending of the heralds in the night of Jesus' birth was fitting indeed. That is the way Jesus found His own; in the darkness of folly, ignorance, wickedness and utter condemnation.

The actual, physical darkness of that night near Bethlehem is a sermon of God.

By it the Lord says to us: it was time that I sent Jesus, My Son. You were in a miserable estate.

And when we have difficulty to understand why the Lord sent His wonderful heavenly chorus to such lowly folk, the shepherds of Bethlehem, then He tells us that also there we listen to a sermon of God. And the sermon has content: I send My Son to the lowly and the humble. He is not for the righteous but for humble sinners.

I think we are ready to listen to the beautiful music of the voice of an angel: let us be very still.



And the angel said unto them: Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

These shepherds are believing shepherds. They were children of God, regenerated, converted, believing men. They are of the remnant which always remains on this sin-ridden earth.

I take it that you do not disagree with this evaluation of this happy group of lowly men?

If you did, I would point out to you that there is plenty proof in the text.

They are recipients of a Divine commission.

They receive Divine glory to shine round about them.

They receive a Divine message, and the message was first of all for them. It was emphatically first of

all for them. Listen to the angel's testimony:

I bring *you* good tidings.

Unto *you* is born: a Saviour.

A sign unto *you*.

*Ye* shall find the Babe.

And if we would still doubt I would be encouraged to believe in their piety and fear of God when I read of their conduct.

Listen to their speech: Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, etc.

Their deeds: They hasten, see, believe, proclaim and praise and glorify God!

Oh yes, we begin to see the beauty and wisdom of God's appointments relative the birth of His Son.

These lowly shepherds are your and my representatives. We must find ourselves in them, in their identity, speech and conduct. If we do not belong to the meek, the lowly and the poor in spirit, Jesus is not for us.

The shepherds that receive the Divine sight of glory and a heavenly commission are representatives of the "men of good will". The shepherds are the representatives of the seven thousand that always remain upon the earth until the last day. They represent the Anna's the Simeons, the Josephs and the Mary's. They represented you and me, and all the God-given children to Jesus.



And what wonderful message they received! And we with them!

With beauteous voice this great Angel of the Lord told them of the Saviour!

Oh, how we needed that Saviour!

For we are in a dreadful estate because of our sins, guilt and damnation.

But Jesus came. This Angel that God sent tells us of Him: Fear not: I will tell you of a Saviour.

Fear not!

Yes, I can imagine that these poor shepherds trembled in fright of this strange light and these wonderful beings that came from the heavens.

But they need not fear for these angels that surround them love them, and they bring wonderful news: Fear not, for I bring you good tidings of great joy!

Unto you is born a Saviour!

Yes, and that Saviour proved to be Jesus of Nazareth who is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world, the world of God's good-pleasure.

He is a Saviour, for He will offer Himself willingly as the Lamb of God. As an act of His will He shall be slaughtered for our sins and guilt and damnation. He will shed His precious blood so that the children may go Home, Home with God.

I ask you: did this wonderful Angel of the Lord say

too much when he called his message good tidings of great joy?

Imagine that you would have to continue to own your sins, your guilt and you condemnation? Suppose they would stick to you until you stand before the judgment seat of Almighty God? What would happen to you? I will tell you: He would thunder from the throne and say: Depart from Me you wicked-doer! And the angels of God, with flaming faces of righteous anger, would take you and bring you to your fitting place in hell!

But your Saviour came! A Man, who is also Almighty God, came and He said unto you: My beloved child, I will go to hell for you, because all God's righteousness must be fulfilled. God's justice demands that the sin you committed be paid, and that payment is eternal hellfire. And I will go the deep and sorrowful way to eternal torment so that you may be happy forever! I ask you: is not that a good tidings of great joy?

How can people hear and read of this Saviour and not go with beaming faces to God and tell Him of their thanksgiving and praise?



Good tidings of great joy?

Attend to this: He is Christ!

And Christ means the Anointed. And anointing of the Lord means that there is work for you to do, it means that you are authorized and capacitated to do a certain work for the Lord.

Therefore Jesus is also the Christ for those lowly shepherds. And also for us that find our picture in these simple souls.

And pray, what may Christ mean? To what work is He ordained and qualified?

And the answer is equally joyous for God's people. It is this: He is commissioned of God to do the work which we left undone, and, in the second place, to exalt our estate from the earthy to the heavenly, from the temporal to the eternal and from the carnal to the spiritual. That is the Christ's work for us.

And first, that means that He must fulfill the work of the prophet. He must know God. And He does.

And He is the great Prophet of God, knowing God, for us! That is so wonderful on Christmas morn. Here is our Christ! Here is He who knows the Father such as Adam never would have known Him. And He knows Him for us, and then declares this Father to us, and so we learn to know God in intimate communion and fellowship.

And He is also our Priest.

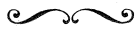
A Priest must be able to love. That is essentially the work of a priest.

Must I say anything at all about this point? The smallest child in catechism knows about the wonderful

love of Christ. How He came, suffered, died on the cross as the supreme act of the loving High Priest who was so concerned about the sins of the people.

And He is also our King.

The King must rule in righteousness before the great King in the heavens above. And that is your Christ. He did rule and shall rule over all the works of God's hand, and here is the Gospel of Christmas: you are allowed to rule with Him. You may presently sit in His throne and rule with Him and all God's children. And our rule shall be in righteousness. For our Christ's name is the Lord our Righteousness !



Good tidings of great joy that shall be to all the people of God!

Yes, there is more.

This Saviour who is Christ, is moreover, your Lord!

And this means that Jesus is commissioned to wrest all things from the power of the devil and thus establish His own Kingdom on the basis of righteousness. And also, that He will be the Head of the Church. He is our Lord. It means that He has bought us, that we belong to Him and not to ourselves.

The Saviour is our Lord.

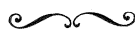
It means that He rules us absolutely by His Holy Spirit and Divine Word.

And that is the reason why we always stress that Word and pray for that Spirit. We desire to be ruled by Him for then we know that all is well. He will surely bring our little ship into His haven of rest.

And this Lord will finally be revealed unto the whole Universe at His own day. Then the living God will proclaim Him to this Universe as the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

Yes, this also belongs to the Gospel of great joy: He shall rule the wicked with a rod of iron. For He alone is the Lord.

Oh, what tidings, what good tidings of great joy to all the people of God!



Yes, and this shall be a sign unto you: you shall find the Babe wrapped in swaddlingclothes and lying in a manger.

Wonderful wisdom!

God knew that we need the sign! And in His pity and compassion He gave this most wonderful sign of all signs. The unspeakably rich God in the dirt and squalor of a dirty stable. What a wonderful sign! At one glance, that is, if we are like the believing shepherds, at one glance they *see* the sign: and this is the meaning: I, the rich God, am come down in your dirt and squalor in order to remove it and to make you beautiful forever!

I ask again: is it not a tidings that is good, that will be unto great joy for ever and ever?

Blessed Christmas!

And then we have the end of this wonderful story.

When this Angel of God had stood in the midst of the shepherds and when he had finished telling the story of all this goodness and joy, he might have gone back to heaven, but he did not. Instead, he was slowly raised from the earth, and was engulfed in a host of angels that surround him, and listen: we are going to be educated in the correct way of the praises of God.

Glory to God in the highest!

That is strange. I would have made the first stanza, and the first line of the stanza, to be expressive of the boon to man! And also there is my mistake. We are always inclined to be anthropological instead of theological. But the angels know all that. And they follow the correct order.

And this is the correct order: God first. God must always be first.

He gave the Son so that the Father might be known among men. And knowing the Father they might glorify Him forever.

Did you ever think on it that even sin came so that God might be glorified as the Saviour, as the Great Shepherd?

Well, the angels think on that wondrous mystery unto all eternity. And they are not going to change the order in that night outside Bethlehem.

Listen to them: Glory to God in the highest!

Are you ready to sing it with the angels, the shepherds, the seven thousand that are left in Israel?

Are you desirous of singing that song unto all eternity?

You are when you are a man of good will on Christmas.

And then not as the world interprets that phrase. But as we see the examples in these lowly shepherds. They are the men of goodwill and those that are like them. They hear, they obey, they see the sign and go out praising God and telling His wonders abroad.

And on earth peace!

Is it? Is not this some grisly jest? Peace on earth? Look at the twenty centuries that followed this song, and we tremble of all the war and rebellion. Yes, but the angels are singing of the peace of God. And that was established on earth in the Christ child.

To men of goodwill.

We tremble again. Oh, what a marvellous lot if we may belong to this select company.

The phrase means: men who are the object of the goodwill of God! They are those that are loved from all eternity. God looks down on them in His everlasting pity and compassion and He delivers them from all their misery.

Wish I had the tongue of an angel to sing, to sing of my Redeemer!

G. Vos.

## The Standard Bearer

Semi-Monthly, except Monthly in July and August

Published By

The Reformed Free Publishing Association

Box 124, Sta. C., Grand Rapids, Mich.

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Communications relative to subscription should be addressed to MR. J. BOUWMAN, 1131 Sigsbee St., S.E., Grand Rapids 6, Mich. Announcements and Obituaries must be mailed to the above address and will be published at a fee of \$1.00 for each notice.

**Renewals:**—Unless a definite request for discontinuance is received, it is assumed that the subscriber wishes his subscription to continue without the formality of a renewal order.

Entered as Second Class Mail at Grand Rapids, Michigan.  
(Subscription Price \$2.50 per year)

## CONTENTS

### MEDITATION—

The Gospel Heralds .....	97
Rev. G. Vos	

### EDITORIALS—

As To Conditions .....	100
Correspondence .....	102
Rev. H. Hoeksema	

### THE TRIPLE KNOWLEDGE—

An Exposition of the Heidelberg Catechism .....	102
Rev. H. Hoeksema	
Van Boeken .....	103
Rev. H. Hoeksema	

### OUR DOCTRINE—

The Counsel Of God. (2) .....	109
Rev. H. Veldman	
Prof. B. Holwerda's Address .....	112
Rev. G. M. Ophoff	

### SION'S ZANGEN—

Van Ganschert Harte .....	117
Rev. G. Vos	
A Psychopathic Hospital for Mentally Defective Children .....	120
Rev. G. Vos.	

## EDITORIALS

### As To Conditions

Thus far we have shown:

1. That in our Confessions the term *condition* never occurs in a good sense. From this we may safely conclude that in the Reformed system of doctrine there is neither room for nor need of the term. For, first, our fathers were well acquainted with the term; and, secondly, in our Reformed symbols we have a rather complete and even elaborate system of doctrine, so that we might certainly expect that, if the term *condition* were at all important, if not indispensable, for the expression of Reformed truth, it would occur in these symbols. Yet it is never employed there in a sound sense.

2. That in those Confessions faith never appears as a condition, but uniformly as a means or instrument which God works in the heart by the Holy Spirit. And to be sure, faith cannot be a condition which somehow man must fulfill and a God-given instrument, which He unconditionally works in man's heart, at the same time.

3. That the gift of faith, according to the same Confessions, flows from God's unconditional election. We are not chosen on *condition of*, but *unto* faith. In God's decree, therefore, faith does not occur as a condition. It follows that it cannot appear as such in time, either objectively in the promise of the gospel, or subjectively in the experience of the believers.

4. That, in the Confessions, the term *condition* is always attributed to the Pelagians and Arminians. They, and they only, had room for and need of the term. And, to my mind, this is sufficient reason to be "vuurbang" for the term, and not even to attempt to employ the term in a sound Reformed sense, lest we "instill into the minds of the imprudent and inexperienced . . . the poison of the Pelagian errors." Canons II, B, 6.

I think that the truth of the above conclusions is plain to all our readers.

The term *faith as a condition* is not confessionally Reformed; is, on the contrary Pelagian and Arminian.

But we are still discussing the Canons.

We meet with the term *condition*, as ascribed to the Pelagians, also in I, B. 4.

There we read: "The true doctrine of election and reprobation having been explained, the Synod rejects the errors of those:

"Who teach: That in the election unto faith this condition is beforehand demanded, viz., that man should use the light of nature aright, be pious, humble,

meek, and fit for eternal life, as if on these things election were in any way dependent. For this savors of the teaching of Pelagius, and is opposed to the doctrine of the apostle, when he writes: 'Among whom we also once lived in the lust of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest; but God being rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace have ye been saved), and raised us up with him, and made us to sit with him in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus; for by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, that no man should glory.' Eph. 2:3-9."

The Arminians taught an election on the basis of foreseen faith and perseverance. God had chosen those whom He knew would believe and persevere. Faith, therefore, is a condition in the counsel of God, unto salvation. Yet, they understood, too, that man does not have this faith of himself. Scripture teaches too plainly that it is a gift of God. Now, how did they meet or rather circumvent this difficulty? By their theory of "common grace", or of the proper use of the light of nature. By this theory, they could even, if need be speak of an election *unto* faith! O, the error is made to look so much like the truth! When the Reformed believer speaks of sovereign grace, the Arminian agrees with him wholeheartedly—it is all of God! When the Reformed believer confesses to believe in election, the Arminian has no objection. When the Reformed child of God confesses that we are saved through faith, and that faith is a gift of God, the Arminian agrees with him. And yet their views are opposed to each other as light and darkness. This becomes apparent as soon as you ultimately ask the question: but to whom does God give this saving faith? Then the Reformed believer confesses: God gives the saving faith to whom *He* will, unconditionally, according to His absolutely free and sovereign and unconditional election! There are absolutely no conditions in the matter of salvation, no condition of faith, neither any conditions unto faith! But the same question the Arminian answers as follows: God bestows the gift of faith upon those that are willing to receive it. There is, after all, a condition attached unto election unto faith, and that condition is that man must use the light of nature aright, that by that light he must walk humbly and in meekness before God, become pious, and render himself worthy and fit for eternal life!

Thus the question is always ultimately: is salvation determined by God or by man?

If you answer: by God, you say at the same time:

there are no conditions which man must or can fulfill.

But if you speak of conditions in the matter of salvation, no matter how or where or when, you deny that salvation is of God, and you agree with the Mssrs. Pelagius and Arminius.

That is why our fathers were so "vuurbang" for the term *conditions*.

Some Reformed theologians use the term and camouflage it by adding that God Himself fulfills all conditions which He demands.

This, however, is plain nonsense.

For a condition is either something which man must fulfill in order to receive grace from God, or it is no condition, but simply a work of God.

Faith, or believing the promise of the gospel, is either a condition the fulfillment of which God demands of man before He saves him, and in order that God may establish His covenant with Him; or the gift of faith, together with the act of believing, is the sovereign work of God, and then it is no condition.

And only the latter is true.

We say that the sinner is responsible for the sin of unbelief; and rightly so, because he is a rational and moral being.

But did you ever hear that he is responsible for his faith, even though by faith he becomes a rational and moral being in highest and perfect freedom?

To be sure, no Reformed man would ever speak thus.

But in the article quoted above, the Pelagians and Arminians teach that man is responsible for his own faith, for it is entirely up to him, up to his free will, up to his fulfillment of certain conditions, viz., the proper use of natural light, whether or no God will bestow or not bestow faith on him.

Did you ever hear of the nonsense of a man's being responsible for his own election?

Yet that nonsense is the plain implication of the theory of the arch heretics Pelagius and Arminius. For they teach that man is elected unto salvation on condition of faith, or on condition of the proper use of his natural light.

And ultimately any theory of conditions must lead to the same Arminian error.

I have room in this issue for just one more reference to the Canons. In Art. 5 of I, B, we read:

"The true doctrine concerning election and rejection having been explained, the Synod repects the errors of those who teach:

"That the incomplete and non-decisive election of particular persons to salvation occurred because of foreseen faith, conversion, holiness, godliness, which either began or continued for some time; but that the complete and decisive election occurred because of foreseen perseverance unto the end in faith, conversion, holiness and godliness; and that this is the gracious

and evangelical worthiness, for the sake of which he who is chosen, is more worthy than he who is not chosen; and that therefore faith, the obedience of faith, holiness, godliness and perseverance are not fruits of the unchangeable election unto glory, but are conditions, which being required beforehand, were foreseen as being met by those who will be fully elected, and are causes without which the unchangeable election to glory does not occur."

This articlee needs, perhaps, some elucidation for some of our readers, perhaps for most of them.

We will therefore wait with discussing it till our next issue.

But even now I want to point out that one who sets his feet on the path of conditions moves on a very slippery road.

For once he speaks of faith as a condition, there is no possibility of stopping, and he will soon discover that the entire way of salvation is strewn with conditions.

But about this next time.

H. H.



## Correspondence

Prof. C. Veenhof  
Kampen, The Netherlands.

Esteemed brother:—

Your letter and article for the Standard Bearer I received. Thanks. As soon as I have a little time (I am very busy again, believe it or not!) I will answer the letter personally.

As to your article, as soon as possible I will publish it. But you must have a little patience. You must understand that your article will have to be translated, for otherwise many of our readers cannot read it. That means that I will have to put it on the wire recorder, send the reel to my son in Doon, Iowa, and have him type it for me. It also means that I will have to publish it in installments, for your article is rather long, and together with its translation, it will require considerable space, especially if my comment is added. I will, however, try to have the first installment in the next issue, and ask the printer to send you all the issues in which your article appears by airmail.

You write in your letter, brother, that you would consider it a calamity if separation or alienation between your and our churches would be the result of the recent trouble between us. To this I can subscribe. But, brother, why don't your committee of correspondence do their duty and get into contact with us? Is it

not strange that a year and a half after our Synod addressed you we did not hear one word from them? I certainly think so.

One more remark, esteemed brother.

At the close of your article, you write that it is not your purpose to invite more polemics, and that you even urgently request not to start a discussion about your article. That is impossible. If you will read your article again, you will admit that it provokes discussion throughout. But what of it? If the discussion is only conducted in a brotherly spirit, it can only be beneficial to a better understanding between us.

With love and esteem,

Oom Herman.




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## THE TRIPLE KNOWLEDGE

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### An Exposition Of The Heidelberg Catechism

#### PART TWO

#### Of Man's Redemption

#### LORD'S DAY XXVII.

#### 4.

#### Infant Baptism and Its Ground.

#### A.

The Heidelberg Catechism in Question and Answer 74 treats of the subject of infant baptism as follows: "Are infants also to be baptized? Yes: for since they, as well as the adult, are included in the covenant and church of God; and since redemption from sin by the blood of Christ, and the Holy Ghost, the author of faith, is promised to them no less than to the adult; they must therefore by baptism, as a sign of the covenant, be also admitted into the christian church; and be distinguished from the children of unbelievers as was done in the old covenant or testament by circumcision, instead of which baptism is instituted in the new covenant."

Hence, the Catechism offers a three-fold ground for the baptism of infants. The argument in favor of infant baptism runs as follows:

1. Children are included in the covenant and church of God.
2. The promise of the covenant is for them as well as for the adult,—redemption and the Holy Ghost.



3. Baptism as a sign of the covenant, like circumcision, must therefore be applied to them.

This is no doubt a sound and thoroughly Scriptural argument.

Virtually the same ground for infant baptism is offered by the *Netherland Confession* in Article 34. There we read: "Therefore we believe, that every man, who is earnestly studious of obtaining life eternal, ought to be but once baptized with this only baptism, without ever repeating the same: since we cannot be born twice. Neither doth this baptism only avail us, at the time when the water is poured upon us, and received by us, but also through the whole course of our life; therefore we detest the error of the Anabaptists, who are not content with the one only baptism they have once received, and moreover condemn the baptism of the infants of believers, whom we believe ought to be baptized and sealed with the sign of the covenant, as the children in Israel formerly were circumcised, upon the same promises which are made unto our children. And indeed Christ shed His blood no less for the washing of the children of the faithful, than for adult persons; and therefore they ought to receive the sign and sacrament of that, which Christ hath done for them; as the Lord commanded in the law, that they should be made partakers of the sacrament of Christ's suffering and death, shortly after they were born, by offering for them a lamb, which was a sacrament of Jesus Christ. Moreover, what circumcision was to the Jews, that baptism is to our children. And for this reason Paul calls baptism the circumcision of Christ."

And again, essentially the same argument is followed in our "Form for the Administration of Baptism". There we read: "And although our young children do not understand these things, we may not therefore exclude them from baptism, for as they are without their knowledge, partakers of the condemnation in Adam, so are they again received unto grace in Christ; as God speaketh unto Abraham, the father of all the faithful, and therefore unto us and our children (Gen. 17:7), saying, '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.' This also the Apostle Peter testifieth, with these words (Acts 2:39), 'For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.' Therefore God formerly commanded them to be circumcised, which was a seal of the covenant, and of the righteousness of faith; and therefore Christ also embraced them, laid his hands upon them and blessed them (Mark 10).

"Since then baptism is come in the place of circumcision, therefore infants are to be baptized as heirs of the kingdom of God, and of His covenant. And

parents are in duty bound, further to instruct their children herein, when they shall arrive to years of discretion."

The above quotations, therefore, represent the official position of the Reformed churches. They hold that children must be baptized because they are included in the covenant of God, and therefore are heirs of all the promises of salvation. Whether or not this can be said of all the children born under the covenant is a different question; that is worthy of a separate discussion. Now, however, it must be established that it is the Reformed position that children are and must be baptized because they are included in the covenant of God and the promises of salvation are theirs.

It would seem to us, however, that something should be added to this. The question naturally arises: Why are children included in the covenant of God? And the answer to this question must be: because God establishes His covenant in the line of continued generations. There is only one people of God throughout the ages, both in the old and in the new dispensations, the true seed of Abraham.

It is important, especially in opposition to the view of the premillennialists, who must needs reject the Scriptural truth of infant baptism, that we see this point clearly. The deepest reason why all baptists reject the baptism of infants is that they fail to recognize the truth that the people of God are one and the same throughout all ages and that the same covenant is established with them and with their children throughout their generations, both in the old and in the new dispensations.

Especially the pre-millennialist fails to see this truth and denies it emphatically. According to him there are really two peoples of God, two different seeds of Abraham: the Jews and the Church, natural Israel and spiritual Israel. The Jews are the real and natural Israel, with special privileges, a special promise, a separate covenant for them only, and a special future. For them is meant the earthly Jerusalem, earthly Mount Zion, the earthly throne of David, the earthly temple, and the earthly land of Canaan for an everlasting possession. They are and will be the real and true Israel forever, the proper seed of Abraham. But believers in the new dispensation are called the seed of Abraham in a figurative, spiritual sense of the word. Of them the apostle speaks in his third chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians.

However, I emphatically maintain that this view is erroneous and contrary to Scripture. Over against it I offer that the Word of God knows only of one seed of Abraham, the spiritual seed, the elect, the children of the promise. This is true both of the old and of the new dispensations. It is by no means correct to say that in the old dispensation the Jews were the seed of Abraham, while in the new dispensation believers are

this seed. To put it very emphatically and concisely: *the Jews never were the seed of Abraham*. It is indeed correct to say that for a time the seed of Abraham were found exclusively among Abraham's descendants, as they are found now among all nations. But Scripture never identifies Abraham's descendants with the seed of Abraham. The latter, the children of the promise, are at all times only the believers. In the times of the old dispensation they are found in the generations of Seth, Noah, Abraham, Israel. In the new dispensation they are among all nations, there being no difference any more between Jew and Gentile. But wherever they are found, the children of the promise, named after Abraham as the father of believers, are always the true children of God, the believers. These, and these only, are the seed of Abraham.

I will now take time out to prove this contention from the Word of God.

And then we naturally turn first of all to Romans 9:6-8: "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel. Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." From this passage it is abundantly evident: first, that in the passage itself as well as in the context the apostle is speaking of the Jews of the old dispensation; there can be no doubt about this truth. Secondly, it is plain that the apostle here makes a distinction between those that are *of* Israel and those that *are* Israel indeed. The people as such, the nation, were all *of* Israel; but even in the old dispensation that nation was not Israel. They were indeed all of the seed of Abraham according to the flesh; yet they were not all the true, spiritual seed. Thirdly, it should be evident that according to the passage only spiritual Israel, believers, they that were born not of the flesh but of the promise, that is, by the power of that promise, as Isaac was, are counted for the seed. When, therefore, the Lord speaks of the seed of Abraham,—such is the whole argument of the apostle,—you must not make the mistake of applying that Word of God to the Jews as such. It does not mean the Jews, but only the true Israel, the children of the promise: for they, and they only, are the seed of Abraham. And therefore the Jews were never the seed of Abraham, although the seed of Abraham for a time were Jews.

Next, let us consider Romans 4:11-16: "And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also: And the

father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised. For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all." It is, of course, impossible, neither is it necessary, to offer a detailed explanation of this rich passage of Scripture here. It is only necessary to point out the salient points in the passage, that prove my contention that not the Jews as such, but only believers are the true seed of Abraham, both in the old and in the new dispensation. Notice, in the first place, that Abraham is here pictured as the father of all them that believe, both of those that are of the circumcision (the Jews), and of those that are of the uncircumcision (all nations). They that believe, therefore, are the seed of Abraham, whether they are of the law or simply of faith. Secondly, note that the text emphasizes that only in that sense is he the father of circumcision: not all that are of the circumcision, that is, that are circumcised in their flesh, are the true seed of Abraham, but only those among them that also believe. For he is the father of circumcision, that is, "to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised." vs. 12. And finally, note in the third place, that to this one seed there is one and the same promise that with their father Abraham they should be heir of the world. They which are merely of the law and of the flesh are not heirs of the promise of all; but only they which are of the faith of our father Abraham, and he is the father of us all. One father Abraham, one seed of Abraham, one promise, and one way to obtain the promise, the way of the righteousness which is by faith,—such is the clear teaching of this rich passage of Scripture.

I would also call your attention to the well-known passage in Romans 2:28, 29: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." This passage is very clear, and speaks for itself. It teaches us very plainly that the mere Jew was never the seed of Abraham, was never a real Jew. Only he was a real Israelite in whose heart ~~there~~ <sup>he</sup> ~~was~~ <sup>ent</sup> the spiritual reality corresponding



to the sign of circumcision, that is, faith. Here, too, therefore it is emphasized that not the Jews are the seed of Abraham. They never were. Believers only are.

Again, I would call your attention to a passage that is, perhaps, the clearest statement of the unity of the people of God in the old and new dispensations. I have reference to Galatians 3:7-9, 16-25; and 4:1-7. In 3:7-9 we read: "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." And in the same chapter, verses 16 to 29, we read: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise. Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." And finally, in chapter 4, verses 1 to 7, we read: "Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption

of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."

Also of this passage I can only accentuate the main points, in as far as they apply to the truth of my main contention in this connection, namely: that only believers, both of the old and of the new dispensation, are the true seed of Abraham. Notice, therefore, in the first place, that the apostle here teaches that essentially and centrally the seed of Abraham is Christ, and He only. This truth the apostle emphasizes in verse 16, where he draws an argument from the fact that the singular *seed* is used, instead of the plural *seeds*. The seed of Abraham, therefore, is Christ. Secondly, if Christ is the seed of Abraham in the central sense, it stands to reason that they only can be seed with Him that are in Him, whether they be of the old or of the new dispensation. And so the apostle teaches in verse 7 of chapter 3: "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham." Only believers, therefore, are the seed of Abraham whether it be in the old or in the new dispensation. Then, in the third place, the entire passage emphasizes that there is only one promise for the one seed of Abraham, and that therefore believers are the only heirs of the one promise, as the apostle writes in 3:29: "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." And now, in the fourth place,—and let us pay special attention to this,—the apostle compares the church of all ages, of the old dispensation and of the new, to a growing child. In the old dispensation it is the heir that is still a child and is therefore under the tutorship of the law. But now in the new dispensation it has grown into an adult; it is a son, and has received the inheritance. The point is here that the church of the old dispensation and that of the new are likened unto one person. When a child grows into an adult, does it become an altogether different person, or is it not rather the same individual, only developed? It is therefore the clear teaching of the Word of God that there is only one people of God, that this people of God is called the seed of Abraham in Christ, that therefore the seed of Abraham is not the Jews as such, neither the Gentiles as such, but the believers with faithful Abraham of the Jews and of the Gentiles both. The unity of the church of all ages is incontrovertibly established.

The same result, namely, that of the unity of the church of the old dispensation and the church of the new, is yielded by a comparison of some passages of the Old Testament and some others of the New Testament.

Compare, for instance, Hosea 1:10, 11 with Romans 9:24-26. In the former passage we read: "Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand

of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God. Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land: for great shall be the day of Jezreel." This passage relates to the ten tribes of Israel, and is evidently a prophecy of a great and glorious restoration, in which Israel shall be changed from being called Loruhamah (not my people) into the state of being called the sons of the living God. However, the apostle Paul in Romans 9 does not hesitate at all to interpret the passage of Hosea in such a way that it applies to the church of the new dispensation. For there we read: "Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God." It is very evident that such an application of the text in the prophecy of Hosea could never be made except on the thoroughly Scriptural basis of the unity of the church of the old and of the new dispensation.

The same truth is evident from a comparison of Jeremiah 31:31-34 with Hebrews 8:6-13. In the former passage the prophet speaks of a new covenant which the Lord will make with Israel and Judah, as follows: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." But the Epistle to the Hebrews is quoting this passage that speaks so plainly and specifically of Israel and Judah with application to the church of the new dispensation. And again I say: such application can be understood only on the basis of the fact that the church of the new and of the old dispensation is one and the same.

One other comparison I wish to make. It is that of Amos 9:11-15 with Acts 15:13-17. In the former

passage we read: "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: That they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the Lord that doeth this. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them." And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God." When you read this passage, you cannot escape the impression that it is nothing but a prophecy of a literal restoration of Israel to their own land. Yet, in Acts 15 we read: "And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things." It is evident that while Amos speaks of the restoration of the tabernacle of David and of the possession of Israel of all the heathen, of the return of Israel to their own land and of their everlasting possession of it, James in Acts 15 explains that this restoration of the tabernacle of David is now fulfilled as in the new dispensation the Gentiles enter into the fellowship of Christ.

And thus Scripture speaks the same language throughout.

Always it presents the people of God as one. Consistently it teaches that although there is a difference between the two dispensations, the church is the same essentially both in the old and in the new dispensations.

How otherwise would it be possible for Christ to claim that He is in possession of the keys of the house of David? Cf. Isaiah 22:22; Rev. 3:7. How otherwise could it be explained that Scripture so plainly teaches that Jerusalem and Mount Zion are not destroyed, but that they are now realized in the new dispensation, while only the shadows of them are gone forever. Cf. Is. 28:16; Rom. 9:33; I Peter 2:6; Heb. 12:22; Gal. 4:25, 26; Rev. 3:12; 21:2; 21:10. And the same is true of the temple, the altar, the holy place,

the sacrifice, the high priest. Cf. Heb. 9:1-12, 21-24; 10:19-21; I Cor. 3:16; II Cor. 6:16; Eph. 2:18-22; Rev. 3:13. And the land of Canaan which is indeed promised to Abraham and his seed, and which certainly shall be their everlasting possession, is not the earthly country near the Mediterranean Sea, but is the heavenly country that is to come, when the new Jerusalem shall come down upon the new earth. For such was the hope of the patriarchs of old. For we read in Heb. 11:8-10: "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." And in the same chapter, verses 13 to 16, we read: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city."

In short, the whole Word of God teaches this unity of the people of God and of all that pertains to them. All the promises are in Christ, and through Him they are for the true seed of Abraham of all ages, that is, the believers.

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### Infant Baptism and Its Ground.

#### B.

#### One Sign.

In the preceding chapter we emphasized the truth that there is only one people of God in the old and new dispensations, the true seed of Abraham, the seed of the promise.

Now we must take the next step in our argument in favor of infant baptism, and show that there is also essentially only one sign of the covenant, although its form changed in harmony with the twofold dispensation, according to which circumcision was the sign of the old covenant, baptism the sign of the new. But although they are different in form, they are essentially the same in meaning.

The Reformed churches have always called attention to this truth, and correctly so, for it is an im-

portant and necessary link in the chain of the Scriptural argument for infant baptism.

The objection Baptists love to make against the baptism of infants is not a Scriptural one, but rather one they draw from their own mind. It is that baptism is a sign and seal of the righteousness of faith, of the forgiveness of sin, of regeneration; that therefore it may be administered only to those whom we know to be believers, that is, to those that confess their faith; that it is an established fact that many of the infants that are baptized in later life prove to be no children of God at all and are lost; and that for this reason it is certainly wrong to administer the sign of baptism to children of believers before they have come to years of discretion.

Against this argument many objections may be brought. But I now want to emphasize what is to my mind the chief objection of all: the Baptist with his argument directly argues against Scripture, and therefore, against the Lord. For what he here urges against infant baptism holds in its full force against infant circumcision. Yet the circumcision of infants is directly enjoined by the Lord upon the seed of Abraham in their generations.

Also circumcision was a sign of the righteousness which is by faith, of spiritual circumcision, of the circumcision of the heart, of regeneration and sanctification, of the cutting away of the old man of sin, of the love of God in a new heart. In all these respects the significance of the old covenant sign is the same as of the sign of baptism. The identity of the two signs, though they differ in form, I will now proceed to prove from the Word of God.

H. H.

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### IN MEMORIAM

The Men's Society of the Fourth Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan wishes hereby to express its sympathy to one of its members, Mr. Ed Yonkers, in the loss of his father,

Mr. R. Yonker

Rev. R. Veldman, Pres.

R. P. Ezinga, Sec'y.

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### TEACHERS NEEDED

The Redlands, Calif. Protestant Reformed School is in need of two teachers for the coming school year. One teacher for grades 1 through 4; and one teacher for grades 5 through 9.

For particulars, write:

John De Vries, Secretary  
329 Sonora St.  
Redlands, California.

## Van Boeken

*Praedestinatie. Onze Verkiezing In Christus*, door Dr. L. vander Zanden. Uitgave van J. H. Kok, n.v. Kampen, Nederland.

(Prijs: ingen. f. 2.90; geb. 3.90)

Dit boek biedt een verhandeling over de gereformeerde lecer der predestinatie, inhoudende verkiezing en verwerping. Het behandelt achtereenvolgens: de praedestinatie van Christus, de praedestinatie der menschheid, en de persoonlijke praedestinatie. De schrijver staat op het infralapsaarsch standpunt der confessies: "Verworpen zijn sommigen, die zich door hun eigen schuld in de 'gemeene ellende' hebben gestort, d.w.z. God zag hen als in Adam gevallen, dus als medeschuldigen aan de moedwillige ongehoorzaamheid in het paradijs." p. 27. Hij legt nadruk op het "uitverkoren zijn in Christus", maar meent, dat wij van een logische volgorde in Gods decreet, in betrekking tot de vraag, of onze verkiezing voorafgaat dan wel volgt op de verkiezing van Christus, niet kunnen spreken. p. 32 ff. In zijn boek oefent Dr. Vander Zanden kritiek uit op afwijkende beschouwingen, voornamelijk op die van Barth en Brunner, van wier beschouwing over de praedestinatie hij blijkbaar tamelijk grondig studie heeft gemaakt. Met zijn kritiek op de Barthiaansche beschouwing zijn we het dan ook eens. Het ware te wenschen, dat hij ook de moeite genomen had, om even grondige kritiek te oefenen op Hoeksema's beschouwing. Dan had hij zeker niet het verhaaltje helpen te verbreiden, zooals hij nu doet, dat Hoeksema verkiezing en verwerping coördineert. Cf. pp. 88-94.

Natuurlijk zijn we het niet eens met de opmerkingen van den schrijver over "de gemeene gratie".

Wie belang stelt in een grondige studie over de praedestinatie, schaffe zich dit boek aan, en leze het kritisch.

H. H.

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*Om Woord en Kerk*, door Prof. Dr. K. Schilder. Uitgave van Oosterbaan en Le Cointre, n.v. Goes, Nederl. (Prijs: geb. f. 5.)

Dit boek van 250 bladzijden is een tweede deel van verzamelde "preeken, lezingen, studiën en kerkbode-artikelen van prof. Schilder, verzameld door prof. C. Veenhof." Het bevat pennevruchten van prof. Schilder geschreven in vroegere jaren, i.e. van 1917 tot 1933, het jaar dat hij benoemd werd tot professor in Kampen. De verschillende artikelen in dit boek verzameld onder den titel "Om Woord en Kerk", handelen over allerlei onderwerpen. Ze kenmerken den toen nog jeugdigen

predikant, jeugdig ook naar het portret van hem geboden vóór het titelblad, als een man van een rijken geest en vaardige pen. Hij schrijft in heldere en levendige stijl. Wie soms bang mocht zijn om dit boek te lezen, omdat hij bevreesd is voor den zwaren Schilder-stijl van tegenwoordig, zal aangenaam verast worden bij het lezen van "Om Woord en Kerk". Wie nader kennis wil maken met Dr. Schilder van vroeger, leze dit boek.

In een slotartikel van Ds. Knoop troffen mij enkele zinsneden, omdat ze precies weergeven den indruk, dien ik kreeg, toen ik voor de allereerste keer den professor ontmoette: "Wie den mensch Schilder ontdekt. . . die moet hem liefhebben. . . Menigeen immers, die hem van dichterbij bezag, vroeg zich af: is dat die felle polemicus?"

Gaarne beveel ik dit interessante boek bij ons volk aan.

H. H.

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*Uit de Wereld van het Nieuwe Testament*, door Dr. A. Sizoo. Uitgave van J. H. Kok, n.v. Kampen, Nederl. (Prijs: geb. f. 6.50.)

Dit boek van 228 paginas, voorzien met onderscheidene illustraties op kunstdrukpapier, is een vervolg op een soortgelijk boek van denzelfden schrijver getiteld "De Antieke Wereld en het Nieuwe Testament". Op zeer eenvoudige, en in voor ieder leerbaren stijl, beschrijft Dr. Sizoo personen, plaatsen, "historische, staatsrechtelijke, geographische en religieuze bijzonderheden," die in het Nieuwe Testament voorkomen. Eerst handelt hij over personen zooals koningen, viervorsten, etc., daarna beschrijft hij de rechtspraak onder de Joden in de dagen van het Nieuwe Testament, en onderscheidt deze in een rechtspraak, waarmede de Romeinen niets en waarmede ze wel iets te maken hadden; vervolgens vinden we een hoofdstuk over belastingen; daarna volgt een beschrijving van de Joodsche verstrooiing. In hoofdstuk IX hebben we een interessante beschrijving van de plaatsen, waarheen Paulus' brieven gezonden werden, gevolgd, in hoofdstuk X door een beschrijving van de steden waar de zeven gemeenten in Klein Azië verkeerden. Hoofdstuk XI geeft een verklaring van verschillende Nieuw Testamentische namen. En het boek besluit met een hoofdstuk over de heidensche religie in de Grieksch-Romeinsche wereld.

Dr. Sizoo schrijft vlot, en weet smakelijk te vertellen.

Gaarne aanbevelen.

H. H.

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## OUR DOCTRINE

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### The Counsel Of God. (2)

Calling attention to the counsel in the general sense of the word we, in our previous article, defined God's counsel as referring to the eternal thoughts, wisdom, knowledge of God, whereby He eternally and sovereignly willed, foreordained, prescribed the existence and being and development of all things in heaven and on earth and in the waters under the earth, of the things rational and irrational, animate and inanimate, organic and inorganic, the life of man and beast, of tree and plant, of all things that move and have being, and that of the entire creation. We also called attention to the fact that this is everywhere taught in Holy Writ. We did this deliberately. We did this to show that the Word emphasizes everywhere the eternal and unconditional and sovereign counsel of the Lord. It has been said of our Protestant Reformed Churches that we, in our thinking and preaching, proceed from the counsel of God. Indeed, worse things could be said of us. However, "cor ecclesiae" is indeed the heritage of our churches. And, let us understand that, doing so, we surely stand solidly upon the revealed and infallible Word of God. And therefore we shall continue, the Lord willing, to quote abundantly from the Divine Scriptures in this series of articles on the Counsel of God.

#### *God's Counsel In Specific Sense.*

When we speak of the counsel of God in the specific sense we refer to this counsel of the Lord as it determines the eternal destiny of all His moral creatures, angels and particularly men. This phase of God's counsel is commonly known among us as Predestination. The word, "predestination", means literally that the Lord has predestined, determined before hand the eternal destiny of all His moral-rational creatures. This predestination, as having for its objects God's chosen heirs of eternal life, is known as Election. And the other aspect of this phase of the counsel of God, as it concerns those that perish, is called Reprobation.

The concept, predestination, consisting of election and reprobation, is thoroughly Scriptural. First, the doctrine of election is everywhere taught in the Word of God. This is true, on the one hand, of the Old Testament. Of Israel we read that they have been chosen of God to be His peculiar possession. We read in Hosea 13:4-5: "Yet I am the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no god but Me: for there is no Saviour beside Me. I did know thee in

the wilderness, in the land of great drought.' " In Amos 3:2 and 8:7 we read: "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities. . . . The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never forget any of their works." In Jeremiah 31:3 and 37 we read: "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee . . . Thus saith the Lord; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord." Notice also how the sovereign and unconditional love of God toward His own, as well as the significance of the word, covenant, is set forth in Ezekiel 16:1-14: "Again the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations, And say, Thus saith the Lord God unto Jerusalem; Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite. And as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all. None eye pitieth thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee; but thou wast cast out in the open field, to the lothing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born. And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live. I have caused thee to multiply as the bud of the field, and thou hast increased and waxen great, and thou art come to excellent ornaments: thy breasts are fashioned, and thine hair is grown, whereas thou wast naked and bare. Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I swore unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest Mine. Then washed I thee with water; yea, I thoroughly washed away thy blood from thee, and I anointed thee with oil. I clothed thee also with broidered work, and shod thee with badgers' skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with silk. I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain on thy neck. And I put a jewel on thy forehead, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thine head. Thus wast thou decked with gold and silver; and thy raiment was of fine linen and silk, and broidered work; thou didst eat fine flour, and honey, and oil: and thou wast exceeding beautiful, and thou didst prosper into a kingdom. And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it was perfect through My comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God."

Also in the book of Deuteronomy do we have repeated references to God's election of His people. In chapter 4:37 we read: "And because He loved thy fathers, therefore He chose their seed after them, and brought thee out in His sight with His mighty power out of Egypt." In 7:6-8 we read: "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the Lord loved you, and because He would keep the oath which He had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.' ' And in 9:4-6 and 10:15 we read: "Speak not thou in thine heart, after that the Lord thy God hath cast them out from before thee, saying, For my righteousness the Lord hath brought me in to possess this land: but for the wickedness of these nations the Lord doth drive them out from before thee. Not for thy righteousness, for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land: but for the wickedness of these nations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that He may perform the word which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Understand therefore, that the Lord thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiff-necked people . . . Only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and He chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day."

And, finally, the doctrine of election is beautifully expressed in the prophecy of Isaiah, as in 43:1-4: "But now saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and He that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour; I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in My sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee; therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life."; in 44:1-2: "Yet now hear, O Jacob, My servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen: Thus saith the Lord that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob, My servant; and thou Jesurun, whom I have chosen."; and in 45:4-6: "For Jacob My servant's sake, and Israel Mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known Me. I am the Lord, and there is none else, there

is no God beside Me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known Me: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside Me. I am the Lord, and there is none else."

On the other hand, the doctrine of election is also clearly taught in the New Testament. "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."—Rom. 9:13; "Knowing, beloved brethren, your election of God."—I Thess. 1:4; "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love:"—Eph. 1:3-4; "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."—I Pet. 1:1-2; "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; "—Col. 3:12; "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory."—II Tim. 2:10; "Paul, servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness;"—Titus 1:1; "The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus my son."—I Pet. 5:13; "The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth . . . The children of thy elect sister greet thee. Amen."—II John 1:13; "And except those days should be shortened there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened . . . For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect . . . And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."—Matt. 24:22, 24, 31; "And shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them?"—Luke 18:7; "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth."—Rom. 8:33; "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last day."—John 6:37-39; "Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not:



the works that I do in My Father's Name, they bear witness of Me. But, ye believe not, because ye are not of My sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one."—John 10:25-30; "I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with Me hath lifted up his heel against Me."—John 13:18; "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."—Acts 13:48.

Also Reprobation is taught in Holy Writ. In the first place, we may certainly say that the doctrine of Election necessarily implies that of Reprobation. This lies in the very nature of the case. That the Lord elected surely implies that He elected some and not others. To maintain the one means that one must maintain the other. We must either maintain both or deny both. And this implies not only that if we deny the doctrine of Election we must also deny the doctrine of Reprobation, but also that if we deny Reprobation we must repudiate the doctrine of Election. A church which fails to emphasize the truth that the Lord has rejected men from before the foundation of the world also fails to stress the Scriptural teaching that God has elected some in distinction from others.

Secondly, the doctrine of Reprobation is taught in Holy Writ, either by implication or directly. Thus we read in Deut. 7:6-8, a passage which we have already quoted: "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself, *above all people that are upon the face of the earth*. The Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people. But because the Lord loved you, and because He would keep the oath which He had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt." Especially in the gospel of John is the truth of Reprobation emphasized. The fact that, according to John 6:37-39, it is the Father's will that Christ should lose nothing of all which the Father had given Him, certainly stresses the truth that not all have been given unto Christ, and that, therefore, He came into this world with the specific intention and calling to save some and that in distinction from others. In John 10:26 we hear the Saviour say unto the unbelieving Jews that they believe not because they are not of His sheep. This is truly a terrible word. Jesus does not say that they are not of His sheep because they believe not, but that they believe not because they are not of His sheep. Hence,

from before the foundation of the world they were not appointed to be Christ's sheep. And in John 12:18, another passage which we have already quoted, Christ declares that "I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen." Hence, Christ knows whom He has chosen, but He does not speak of all; among them was also Judas, the son of perdition.

Thirdly, the doctrine of Reprobation is literally taught in the Holy Scriptures. Such is the undeniable teaching of the Word of God in Romans 9:13, 17, 18, 21-22, and we again quote these passages: "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated . . . For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew My power in thee, and that My Name might be glorified throughout all the earth. Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth . . . Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to shew His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?" In this passage we are taught that the Lord hated Esau with a sovereign hatred, before he had done any evil, that He hardens whom He wills to harden, and that He endures with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, vessels, therefore, whom He has eternally willed to destroy.

And, finally, the doctrine of Reprobation is taught in Holy Writ in all those passages where we read of the sovereign operation of the Lord in the hearts and lives of those who perish. Such, e.g., is the teaching of the Word of God in the well-known passage of II Cor. 2:14-17: "Now thanks be unto God, Which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge by us in every place. For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things? For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ." This passage of the Scriptures speaks for itself. We should note that the apostle declares here that God always causes them to triumph in Christ. And the reason why the preaching of the gospel always triumphs is because it is always successful, always does that whereunto it is sent, whether as a savour unto life or as a savour unto death. And we should note that, whether the gospel is a savour unto life or unto death, it is, in each instance, a sweet savour unto life or unto death. That God, through the gospel, quickens the one but also hardens the other surely presupposes the doctrine of Reprobation. This is also taught in Isaiah 55:10-11: "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and return-

eth not thither, but watereth the earth and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it." Notice, also in this passage, that the Divine purpose determines the result of the preaching of the gospel, that it always accomplishes that whereunto it is sent. Well-known is the passage of the Word of God in John 12:37-41 (see also Mark 4:11-12): "But though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him: That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again. He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Esaias, when he saw His glory, and spake of Him." And who is not acquainted with the truly terrible word of God in Matt. 11:25-27: "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in Thy sight. All things are delivered unto Me of My Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." In this passage the Lord Jesus Christ actually thanks the Father because He has hid the things of salvation from the wise and prudent. This action of the living God, hiding these things from the wise and prudent, must not be conceived of as merely a negative action, the "not-revealing" of these things unto them. This is indeed a positive action of the Lord, whereby He blinds the hearts and minds of these ungodly, and that, mind you, according to the sovereign purpose and counsel of the Lord, for, we read: "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in Thy sight." Hence, also this passage teaches the doctrine of sovereign Reprobation, God's eternal decree with respect to those that perish. The Lord, therefore, not only saves His own, but He, with equal Divine sovereignty and deliberation, hardens the others through the same preaching. We will have more to say about this in this series of articles, but it is well to bear the truth in mind, that, through the same preaching of the gospel, the Lord works efficaciously, irresistibly, not only in the hearts of the elect, but also in the reprobate ungodly. To teach an offer of salvation to all implies, therefore, that, while the Lord offers the gospel of salvation unto them, He at the same time works in their hearts and makes it impossible for them to accept this offer. How this, on God's part, can be a

sincere offer of salvation, our churches utterly fail to understand, yea, reject as preposterous and absurd. However, Holy Writ emphatically teaches the doctrine of Predestination, and this includes Election and Reprobation.  
H. Veldman.



## Prof. B. Holwerda's Address

The Liberated in the Netherlands a short while ago commemorated the founding of their theological school. There were several speakers. Their addresses have been published in *De Reformatie*. One of the speakers was Prof. B. Holwerda. According to the professor, the Synodicals have come to the Liberated with a proposal for reunion on the basis of the Three Forms of Unity but in total disregard of the interpretations of these Forms by both Liberated and Synodicals. The professor's address is a severely critical reply to that proposal. It is with the professor's address that I am occupied in this article from my pen. The reasons will become plain as I proceed.

Let us hearken to the professor. He writes (quote):

"In our warfare for the church we have the promise that angels now and by and by cooperate with us but we have that promise only so long as we hold fast the testimony of Christ, and continue to put it forth as absolute. The moment we set it forth as relative according to the style of the false church we perhaps achieve a collaboration with many people, but the collaboration with angels ends."

Remark. This statement *as such* is so true as to deserve to be preached from the housetops, so to speak. But, of course, it is with the professor's application of this truth that we deal in his address. He applies it, though not explicably, in so many words, to the "promises-of-God-given-to-all-the-baptized" covenant-theology of the Liberated. The position he occupies as the author of his address is that the aforesaid covenant-theology is the very testimony of Christ, bodily taken from the Scriptures and that therefore its logical contrary — that "promises-of-God-given-only-to-the-elect" covenant-theology of the Synodicals (and of the Protestant Reformed) is strictly anti-Scripture. The whole address turns on these two contrary covenant-views. Apart from these theologies the professor's address is without meaning. This will become crystal clear as we get more and more of the content of the address before us.

Fact is, then, that what the professor is telling us in the above-cited paragraph from his pen is verily this: that in our (Liberated) warfare for the Church we have the promise that angels co-operate with us so long as we (Liberated) hold fast our "promises-of-God-given-to-all-the-baptized" covenant-theology. That

theology we must persist in putting forth as absolute, that is (according to the professor) as the very testimony of Christ. The moment we (Liberated) make it relative by putting it forth as human opinion, our collaboration with angels ends."

Here the professor gives us a definite answer—and an answer in the affirmative—to the question whether there is such a thing as a Liberated covenant-theology—a theology identified by those who hold it with the very Word of God and set forth as the only true interpretation of the Confession. There is such a theology indeed. The professor tells us so. A statement occurs in the professor's address from which it appears that this theology is also binding in his communion.

But has not Dr. Schilder been telling us something quite different recently? We recall what he said, don't we? Here are his words, "Now this time I am not going to say a word about the theology of the Liberated of 1944." (the covenant-theology of the Liberated, the professor means). "I (Dr. Schilder) know not that thing . . . . In fact in 1924 I gave an official lecture per radio from Kampen, the Theological school (Hoogeschool), in which I argued the point that also the Liberated (Secessionists) of 1834 had no theology (covenant-theology, the professor should have said) of their own, but simply wanted to return to the Canons of Dort. That in found to be their honor. And I would not like to see that diploma of honor kept from the Liberated of 1944, who are no robbers of the liberty of others."

So, then, taking Dr. Schilder at his word, there is not such a thing as a Liberated covenant-theology,—a theology identified by those who hold it with the Scriptures and set forth as the only true interpretation of the Confession, and binding on the members of the communion of Liberated churches. All that the Liberated have as binding is the Scriptures and the Confession uninterpreted.

How are these contrary statements—the one from Prof. Holwerda, the other from Dr. Schilder—to be harmonized? That is simple. The doctor means not at all to be telling us that he and the Liberated, at least the majority of them, share not the convictions of Prof. Holwerda; that, in other words, there is no such thing as a Liberated covenant-theology—a theology identified by all those who hold it with the very Scriptures and set forth as the only true interpretation of the Confession, the Three Form of Unity. I see now that what the doctor is telling us in the above-cited paragraphs is simply this: that the covenant-theology of the Liberated is not *legally*—mark you, *legally*—binding, meaning thereby that as yet the Liberated churches have not by synodical decision officially adopted it. The doctor does not know that "thing", that Liberated covenant-theology as *legally binding*. The Liberated of 1944 returned to the Three Forms of Unity but refrained from making the

pretation of it *legally* binding. All they have, therefore, in the way of *legally* binding papers is the Three Forms of Unity. And this, to Prof. Schilder's mind, is the glory of the Liberated churches. But why is it? Why should it be? I don't understand. Isn't the professor in common with the Liberated in general identifying that covenant-theology of theirs with the Scriptures? He is. Doesn't he, in common with the Liberated in general, regard it as the only true interpretation of the Confession? He does. Didn't he, as moved by conviction, choose to be deposed in his office rather than subscribe the logical contrary of that theology—the covenant-theology of the Synodicals? He did. As we shall see, presently, Prof. Holwerda is of the conviction that "gone are his churches," and gone is the school, if the Liberated make relative (put forth as human opinion) what God has set forth (the covenant-theology of the Liberated) as absolute (as the testimony, as the Gospel, of Christ. These are His very words. What the professor says here is really equivalent to saying that his churches are gone and his (theological) school doomed to extinction, should that covenant-theology of the Synodicals ever replace the covenant-theology of the Liberated in the communion of Liberated churches. Does Prof. Schilder share also that conviction? He must. Why, then, should it be the glory of the Liberated churches that all they have as legally binding is the three Forms of Unity and not also their interpretation thereof, which is their covenant-theology? I don't understand. The reason cannot be that it is wholly unnecessary for the Liberated to make their covenant-theology *legally* binding in that this theology is being wholeheartedly accepted by all that today calls itself Liberated even to the last officebearer and to the last layman. As we shall see, it is plain from Prof. Holwerda's address that such is by no means the case. Again, the reason can't be either—this, too, is plain from the address of Prof. Holwerda—that the danger of infiltration of Synodicals into the ranks of the Liberated, threatening the very existence of their churches and school does not exist, so that it is safe to allow the door to remain wide open. But perhaps it is the stand of the leaders among the Liberated that when it comes to covenant-theologies, members of a communion of churches should be free to believe as they choose. But why should there be such freedom with respect to covenant-theologies but not when it comes, let us say, to Christologies? These leaders may say that it is still much too early to make legally binding any covenant-theology in that as yet there is no consensus of conviction regarding such things. Views have not yet crystallized. Much more time is needed, perhaps decades or even centuries, for earnest study and searching of the Scriptures. But if that is true, if it is true for the Liberated, why did they part company with the Synodicals and bring them-

selves into existence as a separate communion of churches? In taking that action, in allowing themselves to be deposed in their office rather than subscribe the covenant-theology that is contrary to theirs, they were moved by conviction, weren't they? the conviction that the covenant-theology of the Liberated is, in the language of Prof. Holwerda, the testimony of Christ. And, verily, all their dissertations on the matters at issue—as many of them as I have read—glow with that conviction. And the matter, at its root, is really simple. Basically it is a question whether the promises of God are given to the baptized elect and non-elect alike, or to the elect baptized members only. Certainly, it should not require centuries or even decades to determine which of these two theologies has the sanction of the Scriptures. Unless we belong to that class of people of which the apostle speaks when he says, “ever learning and never coming to the knowledge of the truth.” Still another question is this: how to the minds of the Liberated can their covenant-theology not be legally binding, if, according to their conviction, it is the interpretation of the legally binding Confession; and, what is more, if officially they have rejected the logical contrary of their theology. And so it still is a conundrum to me how it can and why it should be the honor of the Liberated churches that they refrain from taking the stand that their covenant-theology is legally binding or that they refuse to make it legally binding, if they think it not to be legally binding already.

These are questions that I simply ask in passing. What I am trying to do is to harmonize the above-cited conflicting statements—the one from the pen of professor Holwerda and the other from the pen of Dr. Schilder. And I believe I have succeeded therein, yet not quite. There is a statement occurring in the address of Prof. Holwerda that still puzzles me somewhat. It is this, “For now more than ever it is a question of whether keeping the testimony of Christ (keeping the Liberated covenant-theology) will continue to be binding absolutely (in the communion of the Liberated churches).” The professor here postulates as a question whether the Liberated covenant-theology will continue binding on the Liberated. What does he mean by “binding”? He can't very well mean that this covenant-theology *at present is legally* binding; that at some time in the past the Liberated churches by synodical decision officially adopted that theology. The professor can't mean that. And for two reasons. 1) No such action has been taken by the Liberated churches. 2) Such a statement from the professor's pen would militate against what Dr. Schilder is telling us, namely, that the covenant-theology of the Liberated is not *legally* binding.

So the kind of binding that the professor is talking about is ethical binding, a binding of the con-

science, that is, a binding that is rooted in the conviction that the theology in question is the testimony of Christ. Such is the prevailing conviction at present among the Liberated. However, now more than ever, says the professor, it is a question whether this conviction will persist in his communion, whether, in a word, the Liberated covenant-theology will continue ethically to bind the Liberated. Herewith I have fully succeeded, I believe, in harmonizing the statement of Prof. Holwerda and that of Dr. Schilder respecting the status of the Liberated covenant-theology in the communion of Liberated churches.

That theology is *ethically* binding in the communion of the Liberated and binding in this respect only: it is not *legally* binding. What it means that the Liberated covenant-theology is ethically binding in the professor's communion of churches has just been explained. It means that it is binding on the consciences, and, of course, binding on the consciences only of as many among the Liberated who share the professor's conviction—the conviction that the covenant-theology of the Liberated is the testimony of Christ. How large is this element? The professor does not say. It is safe to conclude that he does not know. But he does know that there are many in his communion who, if they be taken at their word, *do not* share his convictions. Here is his statement, “To my mind the struggle at this moment is much more difficult than in 1944. Then both sides (Liberated and Synodicals) took an absolute stand. (Want toen was er over en weer althans nog een absolute positiekeus;) but today many are coming under” what the professor calls “probleemstelling”. What the professor means is that instead of resolutely and with spirit and conviction putting forth the covenant-theology of the Liberated as the Testimony of Christ, these people in their skepticism of the rightness of this theology set it forth as a problem calling for solution and, of course, raising many deep and unanswerable questions. And what these skeptics aim at, so we learn from the discourse of the professor, is the reuniting of Liberated and Synodicals on the basis of the Three Forms of Unity. These skeptics do untold harm. In the language of the professor, they rock the foundation of the church along the whole line.

But there are still other statements from the professor's pen indicative of the presence of skeptics in his communion and also in the communion of the Synodicals. I quote, “I shall not say anything good of the content of the doctrine (of the Synodical) ever, and never shall I sanction the disciplinary measures then agreed upon (by the Synodicals). But in all the annoyance that we (Liberated) had to endure, there was at least one bright spot: we knew what we had to strive against (against the covenant-theology of the Synodicals). On both sides (on the side of the Liberated and on the side of the Synodicals) the matter

(the covenant-theology peculiar to each) was put forth as absolute. (That is, as was just said, the Synodicals insisted that their covenant-theology alone had the sanction of the Scriptures. And the Liberated did likewise with respect to their covenant-theology). On both sides it was said (that is, the Liberated as well as the Synodicals said) that the point at issue was the keeping of the Gospel of Christ (the keeping by both Liberated and Synodicals of the covenant-theology peculiar to each) not to be played with in the church." But, alas, such is no longer the case, the professor means to say, either in the communion of the Liberated churches or in the communion of the Synodical churches. (The parenthesis in the above quotation are from my pen, G.M.O.)

There is now this question: What is the professor doing about those skeptics in his communion? Let us first raise and give answer to this question: what should the professor be doing about them? about those skeptics?

It being his conviction that the covenant-theology of the Liberated is the testimony of Christ, and seeing, too, that he is just as convinced that the Liberated churches are the true church, so that, should those skeptics get their way, the true church, as to its institutional life, would disappear from the face of the earth, and with it the school of that church, the professor, certainly, should take action against those destroyers of the Lord's vineyard. First, he should overture Synod to declare that, in contradistinction to the covenant-theology of the Synodicals, which is also the covenant-theology of the Protestant Reformed, the covenant-theology of the Liberated is the true doctrine of the Scriptures and the only right interpretation of the Three Forms of Unity. Second, if the decision of Synod were favorable to the professor's cause, which he believes to be the cause of God, so that his covenant-theology became *legally* binding in his communion, he should protest against the skeptics on their consistories and if need be make a case against them on the Classis and on the Synod. But for some inscrutable reason that no man can fathom, Dr. Schilder does not want action of the kind just described. For according to the doctor the glory of the Liberated, of the true church, is that its members do not bind one another legally. Indeed, but in the meantime his churches—the true church—disappears from the face of the earth just because its members won't bind one another legally.

I just said that the professor (Holwerda), despite his convictions, takes no action (as that just described). But he does do something. He sits down and cries about the situation. He does more than that. Between his sobs he directs volleys of criticisms against the Synodicals for tempting the Liberated with their proposal for reunion on the basis of the Three Forms of Unity only, that is, in total disregard of their interpretation

of those Forms. The professor is sorely provoked with the Synodicals. He has several things against them. Says the professor, "Formerly they (the Synodicals) put forth their doctrinal deliverances (their promises-of-God-given-only-to-the-elect covenant-theology) as valid with the authority of God's Word; they said: the churches (Synodical churches) could and might not do differently; they dealt not simply with a relative human opinion, the absolute truth of God was at stake. And although it pained their hearts, they might of God do not different. For the sake of God's will they had to maintain that doctrine also with the key-power given by Christ to His church. That was held before us in all kinds of variations: the Synod spake with the authority of Christ. It maintained the truth over against the lie. And when opposition to that truth revealed itself, it said: yonder they (the Liberated) add a second sin to the first: they rebel not merely against the truth, but also against the authority of Christ."

The professor asks, "Wherein lies the seriousness of the situation? Herein, that it appears, that some do recognize the false church in the moment that she declares war, but do not recognize her in her character when she comes with overtures of peace.

"As I see it the struggle now is more difficult, but also more necessary than a few years ago. For then they came from yonder side with a wrong doctrine and a wrong discipline, but in it all there was an awareness that the church speaks and acts with absoluteness . . . . And therefore our opposition to it all was also absolute. But since '46 the sly devaluation of all ecclesiastical papers (written credal forms) began. And they kept the direction of the course of these papers floating in the air. Instead of our being frightened by this doing even more, some allow themselves to be captivated thereby. Yonder they let go of the absolute "kerkstijl". (By "kerkstijl" the professor means the true deportment, behaviour, way of action, of the church militant faithful to her calling); and that evil is beginning to infect us also.

"For you know the history as well as I. The clear 'prophecy' of 1942 they have veiled in the mists of substitution-forms. And yonder no one anymore thinks of maintaining this doctrine also with the weapons of discipline. At present the church-doctrine is being openly attacked, but no one is prepared to name the heavy term 'schism' or to maintain it is bulls of deposition. Yonder (among the Synodicals) they gradually are not any longer prepared to maintain with the authority of Christ what they set forth as His testimony.

"Is that progress as compared with 1944? It is only retrogression. They do not retract a single paper (written credal Form), but no one takes the official papers serious any more. . . . This is the worst that



can overcome a church. That is a complete loss of the "kerkstijl"; that they no longer dare to maintain, what they hold to be the testimony of Christ." So far the professor.

It is a sad picture that the professor here hangs before us. According to the story of this picture, the Synodicals have ceased to maintain the doctrine of their "Points",—the teaching that the promises of God are given only to the elect—with the weapons of discipline. And they now come to the Liberated with proposals for reunion on the basis of the Three Forms of Unity in total disregard of the interpretation of these Forms by both Synodicals and Liberated. But shortly before these proposals were made, the Synodicals appointed Dr. Polman to the chair of systematic theology in the original Kampen school—a chair formerly occupied by Dr. Schilder. It makes the impression that in framing those "Points", and in making them legally binding on the churches, the Synodicals aimed solely at freeing the school of Dr. Schilder. If that is true, it is terrible. It bespeaks a political intrigue in the church of the worst brand, the playing of hocus pocus with the truth to get rid of a man. And that is sheer wickedness.

But our Liberated brethren should understand that, morally, they are totally disqualifying themselves as admonishers of their brethren, the Synodicals, doing so by their refusal to understand that their own covenant-theology *is* legally binding in their communion or by their refusal to make this theology binding if they think it not binding already. For, by this omission on their part they not only deny - officially deny - what they hold to be the testimony of Christ - their own covenant-theology - but they make it impossible for themselves to exclude by the weapons of discipline the skeptics from their ranks. It means that they stand by and look on while the true church disappears from the face of the earth and all because they will to imagine that the glory of a church is that its members do not bind one another legally.

Isn't it true that, such being their imagining, Prof. Holwerda, he to be consistent, should be pouring words of praise on the Synodicals instead of words of reproof? For the Synodicals are living up to his denial, aren't they? the ideal of we-do-not-legally-bind-one-another. Verily, the Synodicals are living up to that Ideal, *if the report of the professor is true*. They have allowed their interpretation of the Confession—that promises-of-God-given-only-to-the-elect covenant theology of theirs—a theology that by synodical decision they officially adopted—to become a dead letter in their communion solely in the interest of reunion on the basis of the Three Forms of Unity minus that covenant-theology and also minus the covenant-theology of the Liberated. Respecting these theologies they, the Synodicals, according to the professor, are willing to com-

promise. It means that they want these theologies as walls of separation between Liberated and Synodicals levelled to the ground. And that is to be accomplished by compromise, and all in the interest of reunion. But that, too, of course, is wickedness.

But that precisely is what the Liberated also want, isn't it? Their watchword is: we-do-not-bind-one-another, isn't it? Well, then, should they not be welcoming those overtures of peace, and heartily indorse those proposals for reunion coming to them from the Synodicals, and in cooperation with the Synodicals effect such a reunion with all speed? They should indeed. Their failure to do so, their attacks upon the Synodicals for coming to them with such overtures and proposals and their readiness nevertheless to unite with us, who, too, have that promises-of-God-given-only-to-the-elect covenant-theology, is at present their great inconsistency.

But they can free themselves of that inconsistency. How? By making *legally* binding their own covenant-theology and then by taking action against the skeptics in their own ranks with the weapons of official discipline; thus by renouncing that ideal of we-do-not-legally-bind-one-another, and, as renouncing that ideal, by fighting the good fight of faith first, and by all means first, in their own communion; that is, by fighting for what they hold to be the testimony of Christ—their own covenant-theology; by fighting for this testimony in their own communion also as armed with the weapons of official discipline. For how can they sit still with members in their own communion denying and attacking the Testimony of Christ? If they do sit still with that Testimony denied and attacked, they, themselves, are guilty of denying it. But let them fight for that Testimony—the Testimony of Christ, their own Liberated covenant-theology. Doing so, walking worthily of their calling as they conceive of it, their covenant-theology soon, very soon, will be legally binding in their communion, if it is not legally binding already.

And let them not say that their covenant-theology—that testimony of Christ—is not of sufficient importance that it should be necessitating such a fight. For to their minds it is the very Testimony of Christ on account of which they allowed themselves to be deposed in their office. So let them fight that fight in order that they may no longer be guilty of the very things that they denounce in their brethren.

I want to enlarge on these matters in a following article. There are lessons of essential importance in all this for us Protestant Reformed. I have need of pointing out these lessons. Besides, Prof. Holwerda says things in his address that bear repeating because *as such* they are so true. And therefore I have need of repeating those things for our own benefit.

G. M. Ophoff.



## SION'S ZANGEN

### Van Ganscher Harte

(Psalm 111; Eerste Deel)

We beginnen met een nieuwen psalm. Het is een lofpsalm, en een lofpsalm die van ganscher harte gezongen werd. Geve God ons hetzelfde kleinood, en dan om wat van dien psalm te zeggen.

Het is een der alphabetische psalmen, d.w.z., een psalm waarin de beginletter van elk vers, of soms van een clause, begint met een der letters van het Hebreeuwsche alphabet.

Hallelujah!

Ziedaar het begin!

En dat zal ook het einde zijn van alle dingen, vanuit het oogpunt dergenen die de zaligheid zullen beërven. O, ja, ik weet wel, dat God ook geloofd zal worden in den dood der rampzaligen, mar als wij het hallelujah op onze lippen nemen, dan is het toch vanwege het heil, dat wij gezien, dat wij ontvangen hebben.

Hallelujah! Looft den Heere!

De letterlijke beteekenis van dit woord is: Looft gij den Heere! Het is een oproep om den Heere te loven. En het houdt allereerst toch wel in, dat de zegger of de zinger het zelf doen zal.

Dat blijkt overduidelijk uit wat volgt.

"Ik zal den Heere loven van ganscher harte!"

Wat wil het zeggen om den Heere te loven?

Eenvoudig uitgedrukt: om het Hem aan te zeggen hoe groot en hoe lieflijk Hij is in Zijn wonderen en deugden.

En het loven van den Heere is de eigenlijke arbeid voor alle creaturen, en dan staat de mensch Gods in het eerste gelid. In het eerste gelid, omdat Hij naar den Beelde Gods geformeerd is. En dan heb ik het oog op het beeld des Zoons. We worden veranderd van heerlijkheid tot heerlijkheid naar dat zelfde Beeld door des Heeren Geest.

En als dat ons deel is dan doen we wat Jezus doet tot in alle eeuwigheid. In 't grootst gevaar heeft Hij het Zijn God en Vader beloofd (psalm 22) en Hij zal het ook doen. Jezus gebruikt alle eeuwigheid om het Zijn God en Vader te vertellen hoe groot en hoe lieflijk Hij is.

En als gij van Christus zijt, dan leert Hij het U ook. Dat is alles wat de Geest van Christus ons leert, in verband met alle dingen en gedurende al Uw leven op aarde. En als de gordijnen die ons nu scheiden van het volmaakte opgelicht worden, dan zult ge doorgaan met het doen wat Jezus doet, maar dan in heerlijke volmaaktheid. Daar zult ge Uw wensch verkrijgen, Uw geheimste wensch vanuit Uw diepste hart.

En die wensch is om God te verheerlijken met lichaam en ziel, met tong en hart tot in alle eeuwigheid.

Dat dit de eeuwige bezigheid van Gods volk zijn zal, weten we nu al. Er is niets op aarde te vergelijken bij het smaken van de kruimkens van dien arbeid. Een klein beetje doen we het nu. Maar we zullen het daar altijd doen, en we zullen daar niets anders doen.

Dat is de reden waarom in de Openbaring van Johannes we geduriglijk lezen van dat Hallelujah zingen der engelen en van de schare die voor Zijn troon staat.

En daarom is het eerste wat het hemelsche koor op aarde bij Bethlehem zong dan ook dat Hallelujah. Die engelen kunnen niet anders dan God loven.

Die Hallelujah zingt is een theologisch mensch. Die houdt niet van het pelagiaansche geknoei der menschen. Die heeft het hemelsch a-b-c geleerd.

En wie dat leerde die zucht nu: och, dat nu al wat in mij is Hem prees!

Hallelujah! Dat is: zorgt er toch voor, gij die mijn stem hoort, dat gij den Heere looft en prijst.

Het is de Heere die geloofd moet.

En Jehovah is Zijn liefste Naam.

Jehovah wil zeggen, dat Hij getrouw is van eeuwigheid en tot in eeuwigheid. En die trouw schittert vooral op den bangen en zwarten achtergrond van onze ontrouw. Leest de overstelpende gebeden van Daniel in dit verband en ge zult het zien, dat deze Godsman de ontrouw opsomt van zichzelf en van zijn volk, om dan over te gaan in een opsomming van Gods wondere vergeving en van Zijn trouw aan Israel nooit geknecht. We zingen er van: Het is trouw al wat Zijn hand beval!

O ja, we zingen van Jehovah, van den trouwen VerbondsGod!

En dat zal de zanger van dit lied doen *van ganscher harte!*

Soms lezen we van koningen in Israel die den Heere dienden, doch niet met een volkomen hart.

Zoo kan men ook den Heere loven maar niet van ganscher harte.

Ge hebt ze gezien, want ge staat soms voor een spiegel.

Er is een spreken en een zingen van God bij ons gevonden, terwijl het hart verre weg was van loven. Soms gedachtenloos, en dat was noch de minst zondige openbaring. Soms loven van God met de mond, terwijl het hart bitter was, hetzij tegen God of tegen den mensch. We zijn vaak *gruwelijke* zondaren.

Als men God looft van ganscher harte dan is er geen ruimte voor iets anders.

En zeg nu niet, dat dit niet kan. Want het kan wel, en het moet ook. Zeg nu niet, dat men toch niet altijd met een psalmboek in zijn hand en in de kerk kan vertoeven, want dat bedoelt de zanger niet. Ge kunt het Hallelujah zingen van ganscher harte in den

greppel die ge aan 't graven zijt. Ge kunt zingen Gode ter eer in alle omstandigheden. En God eischt het ook. Van ganscher harte wil zeggen, dat ge een eenvoudig mensch zijt. Dat er eigenlijk maar één drijfveer op den bodem van Uw hart ligt en die drijfveer is de zucht om Gode welbehaaglijk te zijn.

Menschen die dit geleerd hebben zullen U vertellen, dat die drijfveer zich laat gelden in verband met alles wat men deed. Ze zullen die drijfveer bewijzen door te wijzen op hun berouw over de zonde en de zonden. Als ze om genade bidden en geen recht, dan erkennen ze, dat alles godsdienst had moeten zijn. Dat is de ervaring van een eenvoudig mensch.

Zulks vindt ge niet op de mesthoop der goddeloozen, en die mesthoop is hun hart. Daar vindt ge de zonde aller zonden en dat is de hoogmoed. En de hoogmoed stinkt. Dat weet de wereld zelfs.

Nooit zal een goddelooze werkelijk zeggen tot zijn ziel: Mijn ziel: looft den Heere!

Waarom niet? Hij haat Hem.

En de zanger zal den Heere van harte, van ganscher harte, zingen "in den raad en de vergadering der oprechten."

O, hij zal God den Heere ook loven in de wereld. Maar zijn innigste verlangen is om een gehoor te hebben die hem verstaan kunnen. En dan moet hij naar de oprechten, hetzij dan in hun raad of in hun vergadering; het maakt weinig verschil waar hij den Heere looft, als hij maar God loven mag voor het aanzicht en de ooren van hen wiens naam *oprecht* is.

Wat is een oprechte?

Een oprechte is iemand die er van buiten net eender uitziet als van binnen.

God is de Oprechte buit uitnemendheid, en ook zoo zeg ik het niet goed, en zou iemand kunnen denken, dat er oprechtheid gevonden kan worden die niet uit God is, eene oprechtheid die we dan zouden kunnen vergelijken bij God. Ik moet het zóó zeggen: Bij God is de eenige oprechtheid. Het is een van Gods deugden. O, ja, God is diep; er zijn onnaspeurlijke diepten in het goddelijke Wezen. Maar toch weten we, dat God altijd Dezelfde is, waar Hij dan ook Zich laat zien. God is niet anders in Zijn diepste hart, dan waar dan ook in Zijn schepping of Zijn herschepping. Of ge God nu ontmoet in de zalen van het hemelsche Jeruzalem of in de huilende wildernissen der hel: overal vindt ge Denzelfden God. Hij valt nooit tegen. Ge zult nooit kunnen zeggen: dat had ik niet van Hem verwacht! God is eerlijk en oprecht. Van binnen in Zijn diepste Wezen, en aan de buitenste rand van Zijn openbaring is Hij dezelfde God. En alles wat ge dan aan Hem ziet en hoort is lieflijkheid en goedheid en volmaakte deugd.

En die oprechtheid wordt geschonken aan het volk Gods.

En dat wordt hun geschonken door des Heeren

Geest en Woord. En als ik hier schrijf van *des Heeren* Geest en Woord, dan heb ik het oog op Gods Zoon. Want Jezus is ook oprecht. Daarom moest Hij aan het kruis.

En die Jezus geeft aan Zijn broederen ook diezelfde oprechtheid. Jezus wederbaart en bekeert U en dan zijt ge een oprecht en een eerlijk mensch. Doch die kostelijke deugd wordt U slechts in beginsel geschonken. Uw nieuwe mensch is geheel oprecht, maar die nieuwe mensch wordt omgeven door den ouden mensch. En die is verre van oprecht. Die oude mensch is onoprecht en oneerlijk. Ziedaar Uw tragiek. En strijd.

Nu dan, als de Heilige Geest en het Woord van God over U vaardig wordt om te jubelen van den lof des Heeren, dan is er geen plaats waar ge liever wilt zingen dan onder de oprechten, in hun raad of in hun vergadering. In den kring van de uitgezochten onder hen, of in de groote vergadering, het maakt geen verschil. Als ge slechts verkeerden moogt met Uw gezang onder de oprechten.

Want zij verstaan U. En wellicht zult ge hen aan 't zingen maken.

En nu zullen we luisteren naar het gekweel van dien zanger onder de oprechten. De rest van den psalm is bijna uitsluitend de beloofde lof des Heeren. Overal waar hij staart ziet hij lovensstof. Luistert! Het is een hemelsch lied.

"De werken des Heeren zijn groot!"

Zeg nu eens, dat we den tijd zouden hebben en het verstand om die zes woorden uit te putten, hoeveel duizende van jaren zouden we behoeven om dien arbeid te voltooien?

En dan vooral in onzen tijd waar de geleerden de voetstappen van God aan 't volgen zijn op schier alle gebied! Neen, ze vinden God niet, en ze behoeven God niet, ze willen God ook niet. Maar zij zien Zijn voetstappen, en zij zijn verschrikt geworden. Er is groote verbazing op 't heden onder de wetenschappelijken.

De werken des Heeren zijn groot!

Dat zal waar zijn! Ziet toch rondom U! Overal waar ge ziet en speurt, merkt ge die grootheid van Gods werken. Het is gebeurd, dat Sion klaagde tegen God, en toen heeft God Sion toegeroepen om net maar even naar omhoog te zien naar het heir des hemels! En wat we daar lezen doet ons duizelen. En dat is bij lange na niet het grootste werk, dat God deed en nog doet. Daar zegt God dat Hij het heir des hemels voortbrengt en ze allen *bij name* noemt! En dat er niet één gemist wordt.

Denkt een oogenblik aan de ontelbare milliarden van atomen. En God heeft een naam voor elk een hunner. Ga dan maar door en ge zult grootere wonderen horen.

Edoch, dat zijn de grootste werken van God niet. O ja, we zullen ervan spreken en ook zingen, maar als we in den raad en in de vergadering der oprechten zijn,

dan hebben we het doorgaans over grootere werken dan deze. Dan gaat het over de opstanding uit de dooden. Dan gaat het over Jezus en over het hart Gods met Zijn eeuwige liefde die Hem bewoog om goddeloozen te rechtvaardigen.

En wat zal ik nog meer zeggen? Moet ik ook spreken van Zijn opzoekende liefde? Van Zijn troost, vermaning, terechtzettingen? Van Zijn gaven die onuitsprekelijk zijn?

Vraagt het mij niet. Ik zal antwoorden door de woorden van een anderen zanger: Hoe machtig vele zijn hare sommen! Ik kan er niet bij!

De werken des Heeren zijn groot: *zij worden gezocht van allen die er lust in hebben.*

Daar hebt ge het kenmerk van ware godsvrucht.

Er is een volk, dat lust heeft aan de werken Gods. Dezelfde gedachte vindt ge bij Jesaja als hij een volk beschrijft, dat "Uwer gedenkt op Uwe wegen". En dat wil zeggen, dat zij den ganschen dag aan God denken, Zijn werken gadeslaan, en vroolijk zijn in het doen van gerechtigheid. Zie Jes. 64:5.

Lust hebben aan Gods werken spelt een lust hebben aan God allereerst. Gemeenschap met God te hebben stellen zij boven hunne heerlijkste genietingen. Met Hem wandelen zij, vertellen Hem alles wat zij ervaren; Hij is hun lied, hun psalmgezang. En inplaats van te klagen en te jammeren over hun harde lot, is het hun begeerte om den geheelen dag Godes werken gade te slaan, en daarvan te spreken bij elke gelegenheid. Zie daar ware godsvrucht.

Let op de uitdrukking: zij worden gezocht! Dat volk zoekt Gods werken uit. De wetenschappelijken zijn ook zoekers en vorschers. Ze hebben hun laboratoria en zeer kunstige en fijne instrumenten. Doch als zij bezig zijn met al hun onderzoekingen, zoowel als nadat zij hun "findings" boekstaven, hebben zij in 't geheel geen ook gehad voor God Wiens werken zij gadesloegen.

Hoe geheel anders met dit volk.

Ze hebben meestal geen instrumenten om te hooren, te zien, te wegen en te meten, maar zij hebben het instrument van een liefhebbend hart, dat verlangt naar God. En zij luisteren ook, ook tellen zij de sommen van al de wonderwerken Gods.

En luistert dan naar hen: hunne tent weergalmt van hun lied, zij juichen, ook zingen zij!

Zij hebben Gods werken gezocht. Zij hebben ook gevonden. Weet ge wat het eigenlijk beteekent? Dit: zij zochten naar God en zij vonden Hem. Ik zal het anders en beter zeggen: God deed hen zoeken en Hij liet Zich van hen vinden. Zoekt Hem vroeg! Die Hem vroeg zoeken, zullen Hem vinden!

"Zijn doen is majesteit en heerlijkheid."

De Heilige Geest geeft ons hier een beschrijving van des Heeren doen. Het doen Gods is enkel majesteit en heerlijkheid.

Wat is majesteit?

Het woord beteekent datgene wat uitstaat, het zwelende van pracht, datgene wat uitstekend is. Als iets heel mooi, aanbiddelijk schoon is, dan schijnt het op U toe te treden, dan spreekt het U aan, en dan komt ge onder de beheersching ervan.

En zoo is het nu met des Heeren werken. Zijn doen is majesteit. Vergun me, dat ik een voorbeeld gebruik. Daar is het weerlicht en de donder. Tot zelfs het stomme schepsel toe beeft en staat verwonderd als de God der eere dondert. Zijn doen is majesteit. De donder en de bliksem zijn majestieuze werken Gods.

En zoo is het met als Gods werken, als we maar oog en harten om te zien en harten om op te merken.

Zijn werken zijn majestieus omdat Hij de volmaakte God is. God kan niet dan schoone, lieflijke en wondere werken doen. En de reden waarom komt ter sprake wanneer we stilstaan bij de vraag wat "heerlijkheid" is. Want de tekst zegt dat Zijn doen niet alleen majesteit is maar ook heerlijkheid.

Heerlijkheid is een deugd Gods. En het is die deugd, waarin alles aan Hem glinstert en schittert van schoonheid, wijsheid en kracht. En die deugd Gods noopt het schepsel dat die deugd gadeslaat om te loven en te prijzen. God wil geloofd worden, en daarom heeft Hij Zich geopenbaard aan ons en aan de engelen Gods. Hij wil op den troon zitten in den eindelijken hemel, omringd van troongeesten en volmaakte menschen die op hun beurt Christus omringen, en vanuit de harten van die allen wil Hij heerlijkheid ontvangen. Dat wil zeggen, dat alle die creaturen het Hem aanzeggen hoe groot en lieflijk Hij is uit Zijn doorluchtig heiligdom.

En in beginsel geschiedt dit nu al: getuige deze psalm. Het is er de dichter juist om te doen om God te loven. En wij zingen het hem na.

G. Vos.



#### ANNIVERSARY

On Saturday, November 26th, 1949

Mr. and Mrs. Fred LaGrange  
celebrated their 35th wedding Anniversary.

We thank God that He has sustained them through these years and pray that they may experience His grace in the years to come.

Gratefully:

Mr. and Mrs. A. Meyer

Mr. H. Meyer

Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Meyer

Mr. J. Meyer

Mr. and Mrs. G. Meyer

Grand Rapids, Michigan

## A Psychopathic Hospital for Mentally Defective Children

Through a brother minister I received the following letter, with the kind request to publish same in our Standard Bearer. You will note that there is also a request attached to it for an editorial, containing, no doubt, an endorsement of some kind of this proposed plan.

I would say that such an editorial is entirely unnecessary.

It is my conviction that if our brethren and sisters in the Lord read the information in the following letter, they will with one accord subscribe to this proposed plan. Imagine: there is no place at present for mentally defective children where they may be cared for, even as our grown-ups are during all these years that are past. If we would have such a child of our own, all we could do is to keep it with us, and that is, of course, the proper way. But there may be and there often are such conditions that it is not proper and expedient to keep such children at home, and how wonderful then if we could send them to a *Christian* Psychopathic Hospital for Children, where Christian doctors and nurses take care of them for us. A beautiful gesture in Christ, I would call it.

Do read the following letter, dear readers, and put yourselves behind this plan when the opportunity is given to you.

The Lord Jesus will never forget what you have done for His little lambs who were born with, or who later received, a mentally defective mind. God be very kind to them!

Here is the letter:

### TO THE CHRISTIAN READER:

In the city of Chicago and also in Grand Rapids, movements are under way to erect facilities to care for the mentally defective children. Both of these groups have conferred with our Board of Trustees about what can and should be done about this problem. The Board of the C. P. H. came to the conclusion that if a children's building is erected, it should be done right in Cutlerville.

Reasons for this decision were that the number of facilities which are necessary to adequately care for such children are already in existence in our plant. Hence, this would reduce the cost by a considerable amount.

The Board has set machinery into motion to contact all our people of the Reformed Denominations to make it possible to erect such a building. This is going to be done by means of a letter that will be mailed to all

our Reformed, Christian Reformed, Protestant Reformed, and Netherlands Reformed Churches. We expect to mail this material in the early part of December.

The editors of the Church Herald, The Banner, and The Wachter have consented by means of the papers to inform our constituency about this project. For this reason we also request that an editorial be written in your church papers about the latter part of November or the first week in December. If this can be done, your people also will be acquainted with what is coming.

That there is need for such a building is evident by the fact that from a limited Grand Rapids area alone, twenty-seven cases were presented to the Board, and because we have received your devoted assistance in all our work in the years past, we are happy that we can look for your cooperation in this matter at this time.

Thanking you in advance for this courtesy, I am in name of the Board,

Yours sincerely,

S. A. Van Harn  
Ass't. Sec'y. Treas.

P.S. If the information I have given here is not sufficient for your purpose, kindly feel free to call, and we will supply all the information at our disposal.

G. Vos.

\* \* \* \*

### ANNIVERSARY

On December 3, 1949, our beloved parents

Mr. and Mrs. Henry Visser

hope to commemorate their 25th wedding anniversary. We extend to them our most hearty and sincere congratulations.

We thank God that He has spared them for each other and for us and pray that we may have many more years together.

Their grateful children:

Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Visser  
Henry  
Albert  
Bertha  
Cornelius  
Peter  
Herman  
Hermina  
Arie  
Jeanette  
Mary  
Leslie

Manhattan, Montana