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MEDITATION

Education, Pleasing To The Lord

"For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of Him; therefore also I have lent him to the Lord: as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord. And he worshipped the Lord there."

I Sam. 1:27, 28.

No, the beginning of godly education of the child Samuel was not with Hannah. I think that we strike here at the outstanding weakness of Christian Education today. We begin in history and not with God in eternity.

If we should follow the prevailing trend of our day we would begin with yearning, longing, supplicating Hannah. Oh, she did so desire a man child!

But all such begin is fundamentally pelagian.

Attend to Hannah's prayer in the second chapter: "The Lord killeth, and maketh alive: He bringeth low, and lifteth up"! And also the 35th verse, where the Lord is speaking: "And I will raise Me up a faithful priest."

No, we must not begin with Hannah. We must not begin with history where men and women are praying, longing, working and sweating to bring education for their children.

We must begin with God.

We wrote above this meditation: Education, pleasing to the Lord!

Well, nothing pleases God but His own work.

Behind all Godly Education stands God's eternal counsel.

That is so with regard to all things. How much more to the things that stand in direct connection with the Christ of God. We read of that Christ that the Lords' good pleasure shall prosper at His hand!

The living Christ is behind all Christian Education worthy the name.

So also here in the history of Hannah and Samuel. Hannah received grace in the eyes of the Lord.

And because of that wondrous grace, she longs and yearns and prays for a son.

And then we hear of education that pleased the Lord.



Education that is godly!

What wondrous boon from the Lord!

Samuel's godly education finds its never-begun-beginning in the wakes of eternity before the world was.

Samuel in all his glory is a beautiful thought of God.

And to bring that eternal thought to realization God will set His marvellous deeds in action.

Hannah is operated upon by Word and Spirit.

And she began to long and to pray to God.

We find here on her knees before the face of God in Shiloh.

The fat man, Eli, is watching her. He beholds moving lips but no words. But Hannah "was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the Lord, and wept sore."

How must we explain the bitterness and the sore weeping? This woman had an adversary. Elkanah, her husband, had a second wife. And she was a bad one. She plagued Hannah continually. Later, much later, in her glad song she will refer to this bad woman, and she will call Peninnah her adversary, her Satan. We read of that woman that she would provoke her sore, for to make her fret. You see, that bad woman had many children, but God had shut up the womb of poor Hannah.

Can you see the reason for her weeping and great travail before the face of the Lord?

But God had sent that spirit of supplication and of prayer. All true prayer is a gift of God. Make no

mistake: all, absolutely all, prayer that originates with man is abomination to the Lord. He only exults in the prayers which He originates in the depths of the hearts of His children.

So also here: God listens to poor Hannah, as she weeps bitterly: Oh God! give Thou me a son, and I promise Thee that as long as he shall have being on this sorry earth, he shall be returned unto Thee!

Thus she prayed, and she prayed often.

A petition and a promise to God!

If I may beget the son of my petition, Lord, I will give him back to Thee in godly education: Shiloh shall be his school!



And the Lord heard. Hallelujah! He always hears the prayers which He inspires. They are His own work, and He will crown those works. I think of the beautiful and Biblical thought: Strengthen that which Thou hast wrought!

Yes, He heard.

Hannah bare a son and she called his name Samuel: the petitioned of the Lord!

Names are important. Note how the history of Godly Education began on earth. In harmony with the eternal plan and thought: Samuel, the mother bears the wonderful name of Hannah, which means: grace!

Grace begets Samuel! Who would not sing?!

Covenant mothers! There is your name!

Yes, Hannah is a wonderful type of Covenant mothers of all the ages. They pray for their children even before they beget them. All the heavenly citizens which shall inhabit the new Kingdom are products of the Grace of God. Hannah, Anna the prophetess, Johanna: it is all grace, grace of God.

Oh, the mothers, the Christian mothers, mothers who are bearers of the grace of God, they are so important in the chain of salvation. God thinks so. Note that he prepared David, the man after His own heart, in the generations that came before: Ruth, the Moabitess. There must be a sweet singer of psalms in the time appointed. Behold, its preparation: the sweet maiden Ruth, in the fields of Bethlehem-Efratha!

Hannah's name is grace, and she also found grace in the eyes of the Lord.

And she begat her son, and called his name Samuel. Her subsequent action is in harmony with the former yearning and prayer. God hears her prayer, and now she will do her part in the Covenant: she will educate him in the fear of the Lord.

Hannah knows the Lord, and therefore she also knows the calling that came to her: this child must be returned unto Him that gave him.

He must have Education, pleasing to the Lord!

How differently does the wicked world and the sinful flesh act.

They say: here is the given: passion, the woman, and the will of man! And the result is: we beget us a child or we refuse to beget us a child. It lies with us! the triumphant (?) cry of the boldness of sin!

And as to Godly Education? The world will never want it for their children. These children are theirs, and they will do as they wish with regard to them. They will give them away, they will return them and lend them, but it is unto sin and the world. And they will build their Babylons of worldly Education! And they are imposing places.

But Hannah, i.e., Grace of God, does differently.

They will return them to the Lord. And that returning action will last "as long as he liveth". When Hannah breathed her last breath, it was the prayer: Lord, be merciful to my seed for Thy name's sake! God's people always pray for their children. They know that they belong unto God.

Hannah does differently.

No, Samuel would be a sorry fit in a Public School. That will never do. And so he goes to Shiloh.

And Shiloh is the House of God.

How superbly fitting! Samuel in Shiloh!

Oh, I know that Hophni and Phinehas are there and they are a bad lot. But it did not deter Hannah. There was no other House of God at that time in history, otherwise Hannah would have sent him there. It was all there was. In spite of the wickedness of Hophni and Phinehas, and in spite of the carnality of Eli, God dwelled in Shiloh. And Hannah knew it.

And so she made him a little coat, and she did so from year to year. And he went to the Christian School at Shiloh.

I thought on these things when I saw the vast parade of children passing my window on their way to the Christian School which had just opened its doors. Our Hannah's also think of the little coats, from year to year. And there they went: trim and fresh and young. They were on their way to Shiloh.

Education, pleasing to the Lord!



But it is so long ago. What is the meaning for us?

It is this: Shiloh is first in your heart. In your heart is the Home of God. And you are sending your children every day to the Christian School in your heart. That is, you return the children God gave you unto Him in your heart first of all. Peter would say much later: Sanctify the Lord God in your heart! And that means that your heart is made the Lord's sanctuary. So that all in that heart is dedicated to the Lord. You and all your heart's life is bowing down before the Lord's throne, and that throne is established in your heart.

Mothers! You know that you bear your children in your heart day and night! Well then, you give those children to God in your heart first of all. And second, you give them to God in your home. The atmosphere of your home is the atmosphere of Shiloh, the House of God. And third, you return your children unto God in Shiloh, and that is the Church of God. They go to church on Sunday, whether they want to or not. You establish habits for them. You prepare their little coat from year to year and you take them to Shiloh. You do not ask: My darling, would you like to go to church with Mother? Oh no! You say: Children, prepare yourselves, put on your little coats, and follow me to Shiloh.

And in all such doing, Hannah works out the government of Elkanah. He is the head of the family, and his wife, Hannah, is his right hand.

And, fourth, you send the little Samuels to Shiloh, and that is the Catechism. And you will *know* if they know their lessons. And you acquaint them with the proper atmosphere in Shiloh, and train them to answer to that atmosphere in perfect behavior in the House of God. And, fifth, you send them to Shiloh, and that is the Christian School. And Shiloh for us is the Protestant Reformed School if there is one in your neighbourhood. And if there is no Protestant Reformed School in your neighbourhood, you will try with your husband Elkanah to get one. You will join the Gideon bands to obtain one. But in the meantime you will not send your little Samuels to the public school. Oh no! God forbid! They are the petitioned of the Lord! Their background is the beautiful thoughts of Eternal Covenant Jehovah. They belong to Him, and therefore, they go to Shiloh, and that is the Christian School.

In fine, you and your husband Elkanah say all the days of the life of your children: Lord, here are Thy children! We have petitioned them of Thee, and Thou gavest them to us, and now we return them to Thee! Use them, O our God! use them in Thy blessed service at Shiloh!



And what is the fruit?

Well, for Samuel that he became a mighty man of the Lord. The text says that he worshipped the Lord there. Oh, let us always have the proper atmosphere for our children so that they may be able to worship the Lord there. Yes, Samuel became a mighty man of God. He became prophet, priest and judge of Israel.

The singer of Psalm 99 is bidden to chant of him: Samuel among them that call upon My name!

He must have been a mighty man of prayer. When things went bad with Israel, and the prophet Jeremiah would intercede, God said: "Though Moses and Samuel

stood before Me, yet My mind could not be toward this people." It shows that Samuel was a mighty man of God, and a mighty man of prayer. Do you not see the preparation of all this might in the sobbing, weeping, yearning and supplicating Hannah? Do you not see the preparation of mighty Samuel in his God-fearing mother?

O what a calling we have as fathers and mothers!

Fruit? For Israel he became a great blessing. He led them in the battle against their bitter enemies and they had the victory. And one of his last acts was the anointing of the good King David.

The name of Samuel was blessed in Israel.

That we then may bring up children that will be a blessing to the church! May God give it!



For Hannah?

I would have you sit down with your Bible and read her song of chapter 2. It will be worth your while.

She began to sing. And her song is beautiful. It gives all the praise to Jehovah. And that is comely.

When Hannah was used by God to bear God-fearing children, and when she saw them at Shiloh, that is, in heaven with God, she was satisfied. She had heaven in her heart, and if that prevails, you are going to sing.

A last glimpse of Samuel.

He was but a little lad, and very obedient. He took his place in the Christian School at Shiloh, and I would, as a last word, show you the great benefits of Christian Instruction, worthy the name.

He laid himself down in the place appointed, and the Lord began to call him: Samuel, Samuel!

He went to Eli, thinking that this teacher had called him. But this Christian School teacher sent him back to his place. This happened again and again.

At last the teacher perceived that the Lord had called the lad. And so he said to Samuel: Go, lie down, and it shall be, if He call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, Lord: for Thy servant heareth!

Now I would ask you to take away the historical cloak which clothes this incident, and see the wonderful worth of Christian Education: they teach the child how to answer the Lord when He calleth!

And what an answer!

It is exactly the answer we would have our children utter before the face of our God. Speak, Lord, Thy servant heareth, or, Thy handmaiden heareth!

When our children are taught to do this, we are happy with Hannah. And we, the Christian parents, are ready to sing the song of Hannah.

And we say with her: "My heart rejoiceth in the Lord!"

G. Vos.

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EDITORIALS

Comment I.

In the *Standard Bearer* of August 1 the Rev. A. Cammenga blames the undersigned for the appearance of an article with comment by Mr. K. Feenstra in the issue of July 1.

Writes he: "I am sorry to note that the contribution of Mr. Feenstra in the July 1st issue of the *Standard Bearer* was approved for publication without any comment."

And again a little further on in the article he writes: "And the *Standard Bearer*, on the other hand, has erred in that Mr. Feenstra's accusations were published without comment."

I contend, however, that the Rev. Cammenga is mistaken in his judgment. He must remember that the *Standard Bearer* assumes no responsibility for anything that a contributor writes. In fact, it has been the policy of the *Standard Bearer* from the beginning that the *Standard Bearer* editorially assumes responsibility only for the articles that the editor writes, and not for the writing of the associate editors. Each one is strictly responsible only for his own work.

It is possible, of course, that a certain article that is sent in by a contributor cannot be published and is rejected because of bad form. The style or the spelling may be so impossible that it cannot be published. But even this is hardly ever done by the *Standard Bearer*. I think that if the *Standard Bearer* is to have an open forum, the forum must be left as widely open as ever possible. If we leave it to the discretion and the whim of an editor whether an article shall be published or not, the danger is, of course, that the *Standard Bearer* becomes a closed paper, as was the case with the church papers of the Christian Reformed Churches in 1924 and the years immediately preceding. And therefore it has been my policy in the past, as anyone will admit that will take the trouble to peruse the pages of the *Standard Bearer*, to leave the open forum as widely open as possible, with the understanding, of course, that every contributor assumes responsibility for his own contribution.

The Rev. Cammenga, however, suggests that I should have added my own comment on Mr. Feenstra's article. But the brother must remember that it was not for me to do this. When the contents of any contribution is directed against me or against the truth as such, it is proper for me to comment on said contribution. But that was not the case here. The article of Mr. Feenstra was criticism of the writings of the Rev. Petter. And it was not my calling, nor, in fact,

the calling of the Rev. Cammenga (though, of course, he has the perfect right to answer Mr. Feenstra, if he wishes to do so), but it is the calling of the Rev. Petter to reply to the criticism of Mr. Feenstra of Redlands.

However, if the Rev. Cammenga chooses to do so, he may write again in reply to the contribution by Mr. Feenstra that appears in the present issue.

H. H.

Comment II.

The story is being circulated that I grossly misrepresent the views propounded by the Rev. A. Petter. It is even said not only that I misunderstand him, but also that I intentionally distort his views. This last statement is, of course, a lie, pure and simple.

Let me emphatically state here that I have nothing personally against the Rev. Petter; or, to state it positively, that I esteem him as a brother, and I challenge anyone to point out to me where in my articles I have written anything derogatory to his person. It is not his person, but his views that I did, and still do, oppose, and that, too, without any personal motives, but for the love of our Protestant Reformed truth.

As for misunderstanding the brother as some aver that I do, I must grant that possibility in the abstract. But in the concrete I must most emphatically deny it.

In the first place, I believe that I am able to understand English terms. And to me the term *condition* always denotes a prerequisite, whether to receive something or to have someone do something for anyone. In that sense I must understand the term in the sentence, "Faith is a condition." Nor can I grant anyone the right to use the term in a different sense than that of the *usus loquendi*.

Besides, the main issue of our controversy, namely, that faith is a condition, is nothing new, but represents a view that has been proposed and still is maintained by many that call themselves Reformed.

And finally, in my articles I have openly asked the Rev. Petter as well as others to show me in what respect I misrepresented him. Neither he nor anyone else has made the attempt. Hence, I cannot believe that I do misunderstand the brother.

If anyone is guilty of misrepresentation, it is not I, but the Rev. Petter. Repeatedly he has made the attempt, and that, too, in spite of my emphatic denial, to represent me as if I too believed in conditions. And the same is true of the controversy he had with the Rev. H. Veldman and the Rev. G. M. Ophoff.

Some would prefer to keep this controversy out of our papers and from the eyes of the public.

But why, pray?

In the first place, we must not forget that not I, but the Rev. Petter started this controversy in public in *Concordia*. It was he that began to defend *parties* instead of *parts* of the covenant, thus virtually proposing a relative difference between the Creator and the creature. It was he that defended conditions in the covenant of grace and that spoke of the covenant of works. And he it was that maintained that faith is a condition unto salvation. Now certainly these public propositions defended in *Concordia* could not possibly go unchallenged or be answered in private. What is taught in public must be publicly weighed in the balance.

But aside from this, can we as Protestant Reformed people no longer stand sound controversy about the truth? I do not believe it. And at any rate, I cannot possibly agree with those that would bar all controversy from our public discussion. As long as we avoid all personalities and hatred and carry on our debates only with a view to the truth, to defend it and to develop it, controversy is certainly for our benefit and to our instruction.

And therefore, with malice toward none I will continue to fight for our Protestant Reformed truth, both by the spoken and the written word as long as God leaves me in this tabernacle.

H. H.



THE TRIPLE KNOWLEDGE

An Exposition Of The Heidelberg Catechism

PART TWO

Of Man's Redemption LORD'S DAY XXIX.

2.

The Lutheran Doctrine Of Consubstantiation.

Reformed theologians denote the Lutheran view of the Lord's Supper by the term *consubstantiation*.

It is not exactly a Lutheran term, although it is accepted by the Lutherans as substantially a correct representation of their view. By the term we mean that the Lutherans teach in distinction from the "sacramentarians", as they call the Reformed, and in distinction too from the Romish doctrine of transubstantiation, that in the Lord's Supper the body and blood of Jesus Christ is really and substantially present in,

with, and under the signs of the bread and wine on the table of the Lord.

It is a well-known fact that at the time of the Reformation a schism arose between the Reformed and the Lutherans about the question of the Lord's Supper. Although the reformers agreed on all the great doctrines taught in the Scriptures, they could not agree on this point. And although several attempts were made to effect a reconciliation, they all failed. And that the controversy was rather sharp and bitter, at least on the part of the Lutherans, may be discerned from the very language of the *Formula of Concord*, a Lutheran confession adopted in the year 1576. For there we read in the introduction to the article on the Lord's Supper:

"For a solid explanation of this controversy it is first to be understood that there are two sorts of sacramentarians. For some are exceedingly gross sacramentarians; these in perspicuous and plain words openly profess that which they think in their heart, to wit: that in the Lord's Supper there is nothing more present than bread and wine, which alone are there distributed and received with the mouth. But others are astute and crafty, and thereby the most harmful of all the sacramentarians; these, when talking of the Lord's Supper, make in part an exceedingly high sounding use of our mode of speaking, declaring that they too believe in a true presence of the true, substantial, and living body and blood of Christ in the holy supper, which presence and manducation, nevertheless, they say, to be spiritual, such as takes place by faith. And yet these latter sacramentarians, under these high sounding phrases, hide and hold fast the same gross opinion which the former have, to wit: that, besides the bread and wine, there is nothing more present or taken with the mouth in the Lord's Supper. For the term (*spiritu aliter*) signifies nothing more to them than the Spirit of Christ or the virtue of the absent body of Christ and His merit which is present; but they think that the body of Christ itself is in no way whatever present, but is contained above in the highest heaven, and they affirm that it behooves us by the meditations of faith to rise on high and ascend into heaven, and that this body and blood of Christ are to be sought there, and in no wise in union with the bread and wine of the holy supper."

It is not easy to understand clearly just exactly what is the meaning of the Lutheran doctrine of consubstantiation. Do they teach that the literal and natural flesh and blood of Christ are masticated by the teeth and swallowed by the mouth together with the signs of the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper? Some of their statements do indeed leave the impression that this is their view. But in other parts of the Lutheran confessions it is emphasized that this eating

and drinking is after all some spiritual and supernatural process.

It is well known that the Lutherans base their view especially on a literal interpretation of the words spoken by the Saviour at the institution of the Lord's Supper in the night in which He was betrayed, especially the words as taken from Matt. 26:26-28: "Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood." Luther insisted that these words must be taken literally. And the same is emphasized in all the Lutheran confessions. Thus, for instance, in the *Formula of Concord*, under the article *De Coena Domini*, we read: "We believe, teach, and confess that the words of the testament of Christ are not to be otherwise received than as the words themselves literally sound, so that the bread does not signify the absent body of Christ and the wine the absent blood of Christ, but that on account of the sacramental union the bread and wine are truly the body and blood of Christ."

In the *Saxon Visitation Articles* we read in the chapter under the heading *De Coena Sacra*, Article 1: "That the words of Christ, 'Take and eat, this is my body;' 'Drink, this is my blood,' are to be understood in the simple and literal sense as they sound."

Proceeding from the literal interpretation of the words of Jesus at the institution of the Lord's Supper, the Lutherans teach the following:

1. That the body and blood of Christ is really and substantially present in the signs of the bread and wine at the Lord's Supper. This is plain from the *Augsburg Confession*, Art. 10: "Of the supper of the Lord they teach that the true body and blood of Christ are truly present under the form of bread and wine and are there communicated to those that eat in the Lord's Supper and received. And they disapprove to those that teach otherwise. Wherefore also the opposite doctrine is rejected." Again, in the *Formula of Concord* we read: "We believe, teach, and confess that in the Lord's Supper the body and blood of Christ are truly and substantially present, and that they are truly distributed and taken together with the bread and wine." And in the same *Formula of Concord* the errors of the sacramentarians are rejected, who teach: "That the body of Christ in the holy supper is not received by the mouth together with the bread, but that only bread and wine are received by the mouth, while the body of Christ is taken only spiritually, to wit, by faith." And again we read: "That the true and natural body of Christ which hung on the cross, and the true and natural blood, which flowed from the side of Christ, are exhibited and received." And once more in the same confession it is stated: "That the body and blood of Christ are received in the supper, not only spiritually, which might be done out of the supper;

but by the mouth, with the bread and wine; yet in an inscrutable and supernatural manner; and this for a pledge and ascertainment of the resurrection of our bodies from the dead."

2. This real and substantial presence of the body and blood of Christ in the signs of the Lord's Supper, however, must not be explained from any words of consecration spoken by man, but rather from the omnipotence of Christ, Who sitteth at the right hand of God, by the union of the two natures in Christ. For thus we read in the *Formula of Concord* in Article 5 under the chapter on the Supper of the Lord: "Now the foundations on which we rest in this controversy with the sacramentarians are the following, which, moreover, Dr. Luther has laid in his larger confession concerning the Supper of the Lord:

"The first foundation is an article of our Christian faith, to wit: Jesus Christ is true, essential, natural, perfect God and man in unity of person, inseparable and undivided.

"Secondly: that the right hand of God is everywhere, and that Christ in respect of His humility, is truly and in very deed seated thereat, and therefore as present governs, and has in his hand and under his feet, as the Scripture saith (Eph. 1:22), all things which are in heaven and on earth. At this right hand of God no other man, nor even any angel, but the Son of Mary alone is seated, whence also he is able to effect those things which we have said.

"Thirdly: that the Word of God is not false or deceiving.

"Fourthly: that God knows and has in his power various modes in which he can be anywhere, and is not confined to that single one which philosophers are wont to call local or circumscribed."

The Lutherans teach, as is well-known, the ubiquity of the human nature of Christ. Christ is not confined to heaven, but is everywhere according to the human nature after His ascension. By this they do not mean the same as divine omnipresence or immensity. But they signify that Christ, not only by His Spirit and grace, but according to His human nature is not confined locally to heaven, but is able to be present wherever He wants to be. And therefore it is possible for Him to be present in and under and with the signs of the bread and wine on the Lord's table. And they express this again in the *Formula of Concord*, in the rejection of errors. They reject the errors of those who teach: "That Christ's body is so confined in heaven that it can in no mode whatever be likewise at one and the same time in many places, or in all places where the Lord's Supper is celebrated." Or again, they reject the errors of those who teach: "That Christ could neither promise nor impart the substantial

presence of his body and blood, inasmuch as the essential property of the human nature itself which he had assumed could by no means bear or admit of this." Hence, they do not deny that the body of Christ is local, but rather maintain that it is local in a different sense from that in which our present bodies are local, so that Christ can be everywhere, both in heaven and on earth according to His human nature.

3. The Lutherans emphasize that the body and blood of Christ are received not by faith only, but also by the mouth, so that together with the signs of the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper they also eat literally the body and blood of Christ. Again we quote from the *Formula of Concord*: "We believe, teach, and confess that the body and blood of Christ are taken with the bread and wine, not only spiritually through faith, but also by the mouth, nevertheless not capernaitically, but after spiritual and heavenly manner, by reason of the sacramental union."

4. Finally, the Lutherans teach that not only believers, but also unbelievers receive, eat and drink the body and blood of Christ. And once more we quote from the *Formula of Concord*: "We believe, teach, and confess that not only true believers in Christ and such as worthily approach the supper of the Lord, but also the unworthy and unbelieving receive the true body and blood of Christ; in such wise, nevertheless, that they derive thence neither consolation nor life, but rather so as that receiving turns to their judgment and condemnation, unless they be converted and repent (I Cor. 11:27, 29).

"For although they rebel from them Christ as a Saviour, nevertheless they are compelled, though extremely unwilling, to admit him as a stern judge. And he no less present exercises his judgment over these impenitent guests than as present he works consolation and life in the hearts of true believers and worthy guests."

And in the *Saxon Visitation Articles* we read: "That the body and blood of Christ are received orally, not only by the worthy, but also by the unworthy, who approach them without repentance and true faith; though with different effect. By the worthy, they are received for salvation; by the unworthy, for judgment."

This, then, is the Lutheran doctrine concerning the Lord's Supper. We have intentionally quoted rather extensively from the official confessions in order to avoid misrepresenting their view.

Now as to the final scriptural basis of this whole conception, namely, the literal interpretation of the words of the Lord spoken at the institution of the Lord's Supper, we claim that it is quite impossible to take these words literally for the simple reason that

at the moment of the institution of the Lord's Supper the Lord was still present in His natural body and blood. His body was not yet broken, and His blood was not yet shed. It follows that the Lord cannot have meant to say that the bread which at the time He held in His hand was identical with His body and that the wine in the cup which at the time He offered to His disciples was identical with His blood. Hence, the figurative interpretation: "This signifies my body and blood," not only gives good sense, but is the only possible interpretation.

Besides, the natural flesh and blood of Christ are no more. In the *Saxon Visitation Articles* it is stated: "That the true and natural body of Christ which hung on the cross, and the true and natural blood, which flowed from the side of Christ, are exhibited and received." But this is impossible. The natural body and blood of Christ as He received them from the virgin Mary exist no more in that form and cannot be received and exhibited. His body was broken and His blood was shed, and he received an altogether different, a spiritual and heavenly body. And this spiritual and heavenly body belongs to heaven and is locally in heaven. And when Christ at the institution of the Lord's Supper offers His flesh and blood to eat and to drink, it can only be understood in the figurative sense of the word, in the sense, namely, that we partake of the sacrifice once offered on the cross. And this we do by faith only.

Moreover, that the eating and drinking of the flesh and blood of Christ is an act of faith alone is evident from John 6, a chapter that is often referred to as indirectly having reference to the supper of the Lord. For from this chapter it is evident that eating the flesh of Christ is equivalent to believing. This is evident from John 6:35: "And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." And again, in verse 51: "I am the living bread which came from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." But in verse 40 Jesus had said: "And this is the will of him that sent me, that everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day." And once more, in verses 53-58 we read: "Then said Jesus unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

This is the bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever." And again, in verse 47: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." It is very evident, therefore, that eating the bread of life and believing in the Lord Jesus Christ are identical. It is therefore not by literal manducation, but by faith alone that we can eat and drink the flesh and blood of Christ. And the Lord Himself in opposition to the sense put upon His words by the people of Capernaum said: "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." It is plain from these words that the literal eating of the flesh of Christ and the literal drinking of His blood have no significance whatsoever.

Besides, it is a well-known fact that in Scripture the word *is* must frequently be understood in the figurative sense. Thus in the sentence, "The seven ears are the seven years," the sense evidently is: "The seven ears signify the seven years." And the same is true of such propositions as: "I am the living bread; the seven candlesticks are the seven churches; the field is the world." And therefore it is certainly thoroughly scriptural to interpret the words of Christ, "This is my body," and "This is my blood," in the same figurative sense.

The conception of the Lutheran Church concerning the Lord's Supper constitutes a curious mixture of the physical and the spiritual. For after all, natural eating and drinking is a purely physical act. Yet, by this physical act, according to the Lutherans, we are supposed to eat and to drink the real and substantial body and blood of Christ. Yet at the same time they reject the idea that we can literally manducate the body of Christ and swallow His blood by that physical act, but insist upon it, that in the Lord's Supper we perform a spiritual and supernatural act of eating and drinking. Again, according to them unbelievers and unworthy receive the body and blood of Christ as well as believers and worthy; and it is certainly difficult to see how unbelievers and unworthy can perform a supernatural and heavenly act, even apart from the fact that the literal eating and drinking of Christ's body and blood could possibly be to the condemnation of the partakers. And therefore we must reject the Lutheran view of the Lord's Supper as unscriptural and impossible. And, as we remarked in connection with the Romish doctrine of transubstantiation, also the Lutheran conception of the Lord's Supper is exposed to the error that grace is in things. And the living Christ and all His grace can be received only spiritually and by a living faith.

H. H.

Een Open Brief Uit Hamilton

AAN DE DEPUTATEN VOOR CORRESPONDENTIE VAN DE GEREFORMEERDE KERKEN
(Onderhoudende Art. 31)

Ondergeteekende verzoekt uwe aandacht te bepalen bij de jongste geschiedenis betreffende onze gemeente van Hamilton. Is het mogelijk dat de Reformatie dit artikel kan overnemen uit de Standard Bearer?

Sedert verleden week is Ds. Hettinga, vrijgemaakte predikant uit Nederland en nu al geruimen tijd in Amerika en Canada, werkzaam alhier in de omgeving van Hamilton. Zijne Eerwaarde is uit Nederland alhier op bezoek om de vrijgemaakte huisgezinnen op te zoeken en dat wel naar aanleiding van verscheidene brieven door kerkeraden in Nederland ontvangen van deze emigranten. Ds. Hettinga, echter, is ook behulpzaam geweest in het organiseeren van gemeenten alhier. Verleden Zondag, Augustus 13, is er eene gemeente georganiseerd in Georgetown, ongeveer 43 mijlen van Hamilton, die bijna uitsluitend bestaat of uit leden van de Protestantsche Gereformeerde Kerk van Hamilton of uit leden die door onzen kerkeraad onder bearbeiding waren. Ds. Hettinga is verleden week in de onmiddellijke buurt van Hamilton geweest, is niet in contact geweest met den leeraar of den kerkeraad van onze gemeente, heeft met sommigen van onze leden gesproken. Het resultaat is dat sommigen van deze leden zich aangesloten hebben bij de nieuwe gemeente te Georgetown.

Dat Ds. Hettinga niet in contact is geweest met Hamilton's leeraar of kerkeraad is omdat hij, naar zijn eigen gezegde, daartoe geen belang heeft. En dat hij geen belang heeft in eene samenspreking met den leeraar of kerkeraad is naar aanleiding van wat Ds. Veldman gezegd heeft. De leeraar van Hamilton had uitgesproken dat, *indien* die broeder gemeenten organiseert zonder kerkelijke opdracht en indien hij de schaapskooi binnendringt zonder bij den wachter (Hamilton's kerkeraad) aan te kloppen, hij zich schuldig maakt aan Johannes 10:1, 14. Wil die leeraar leden van onze gemeente opzoeken dan mogen wij zijne credentie brief toch wel zien. Wil hij met onze schapen spreken dan is het toch eerlijker om zich aan te dienen bij den herder en kerkeraad van die schapen, dan om de schaapskooi binnen te dringen over den muur. Dit heeft Ds. Hettinga niet gedaan.

Dat de leeraar van Hamilton zich aldus uitdrukte was niet omdat hij een gesprek met Ds. Hettinga wilde vermijden, alhoewel zoo'n gesprek in geen enkel opzicht des woords een officieel karakter kon dragen. Wij zouden de Vrijgemaakte Kerken van Nederland niet mogen oordeelen in het licht van wat Ds. Hettinga mocht zeggen, en de vrijgemaakte broeders en zusters alhier zouden de Protestantsche Gereformeerde Kerken niet

mogen oordeelen in het licht van wat de leeraar van Hamilton ook mocht zeggen. Indien de leeraar den broeder uit Nederland verkeerd had beoordeeld dan had hij hem toch nog wel kunnen opzoeken. En hij had toch wel kunnen aankloppen bij Hamilton's kerkeraad. Dat de leeraar zich aldus uitdrukte was alleen om de gemeente leden te waarschuwen tegen het optreden van Ds. Hettinga. Hij vermoedde hoe de leeraar uit Nederland met de leden zijner gemeente zou spreken. Hierin heeft hij zich blijkbaar niet vergist. Ds. Hettinga, vrijgemaakte predikant uit Nederland, weet precies hoe hij met vrijgemaakte emigranten moet omgaan! Wat hij aan hen moet zeggen. Hij, deze menschen bezoekende, ook die leden zijn van de Hamilton Protestantsche Gereformeerde Kerk, handhaaft en verdedigt zijne opvatting van den doop, en herinnert hen aan het feit dat zij zich moeten wachten voor een schijn doop. Hij becritiseert het "bindend" karakter van de leer-uitspraak onzer laatste synode, maar gaat met ons op den inhoud van dat stuk niet in. Hij spreekt zijne verwondering uit dat men, in het licht van die bindingen, Avondmaal kan vieren. Hij komt bij ambtsdragers van onze kerken in Canada en vraagt: Broeder zoo en zoo, hoe kan u lid wezen van die kerken? En hij is behulpzaam in het organiseeren van een Vrije Gereformeerde gemeente ook ten koste van de Protestantsche Gereformeerde Kerk van Hamilton, een vrije gemeente waarin men hoegenaamd niet gebonden is maar waar de Protestantsche Gereformeerde leer niet geduld wordt. Dit alles neemt plaats zonder contact te zoeken met onzen leeraar of kerkeraad. Kerk vergaderend? Wij noemen het: Kerk verscheurend!

Thans wordt onze gemeente geroepen om partij te kiezen tegenover de nieuwe georganiseerde gemeente van Ds. Hettinga. Het oragniseeren van deze nieuwe gemeente was niet noodig. Men had kerkelijk onderdak, was lid van onze gemeente of onder onze kerkelijke bearbeiding. Het institueeren van deze gemeente is alleen te verklaren als eene weigering van hen om zich aan de Prot. Geref. leer te onderwerpen, in die leer te worden onderwezen; men kiest partij tegenover de Protestantsche Gereformeerde Kerken. Volgens deze nieuwe gemeente zijn de Protestantsche Gereformeerde Kerken dus valsch geworden. Geve de Heere de Protestantsche Gereformeerde Kerk van Hamilton Zijne genade om te blijven verkondigen: Gods soeverein welbehagen, des menschen verantwoordelijkheid en roeping om zich te bekeeren, des menschen volstrekte verdorvenheid, de particuliere verzoening des Kruises, Gods onwederstandelijke genade, de volharding der heiligen, de particuliere belofte. Hebt u, Ds. Hettinga, ooit iets anders van ons gelezen dan deze eeuwen lang gereformeerde waarheden? Is eene kerk, Ds. Hettinga, die deze waarheden leert en hare leden wil binden aan de leer van Gods soevereine en particu-

liere genade, valsch? De Heere oordeele tusschen u en ons, en de Heere geve onze kerk in Hamilton Zijne genade.

In verband met deze geschiedenis wenschen we u het volgende te vragen:

1. Heeft Ds. Hettinga opdracht ontvangen van de Vrijgemaakte kerken van Nederland om alzo op te treden? Is hem de kerkelijke opdracht gegeven om gemeenten te organiseren, en dan wel uit leden die tot onze gemeente behooren of onder onze bearbeiding waren?

2. Heeft Ds. Hettinga het recht om onze schaapskooi (Hamilton's gemeente) binnen te dringen, Hamilton's leeraar en kerkeraad te negeeren, om aldus met leden onzer gemeente te onderhandelen? Valt Ds. Hettinga niet daardoor onder het oordeel van Johannes 10:1, 14? Indien onze kerken, volgens het herhaaldelijk getuigenis van de Reformatie, de ware Kerk van Christus zijn in Amerika en Canada.

3. Wat zou uwe reactie wezen indien de Protestantse Gereformeerde Kerken aldus in Nederland zouden optreden? Wij meenen dat uwe synode van Amersfoort, 1948, besloten heeft om "deputaten te benoemen en hun te machtigen om met onze kerken in contact te treden, teneinde het scheppen van de relatie van corresponderende kerken voor te bereiden"—zie Supplement bij uwe Kerkenordening, bladzijde 21. Is Ds. Hettinga optreden en handelwijze alhier in harmonie met dit besluit?

4. Heeft de gemeente van Georgetown het recht van bestaan naast onze gemeente in Hamilton? Hebben wij dan twee ware kerken van Christus nu in dezelfde omgeving?

Namens de Kerkeraad van de
Hamilton Prot. Gereformeerde Kerk,
Pres. - H. Veldman
Scriba - T. Hart.

Translation:

AN OPEN LETTER FROM HAMILTON TO THE
DEPUTIES FOR CORRESPONDENCE OF THE
REFORMED CHURCHES
(Maintaining Art. 31)

The undersigned would call your attention to that which has lately occurred in the congregation of Hamilton. Is it possible that the Reformatie can take this article over out of the Standard Bearer?

Since last week Rev. Hettinga, liberated minister out of the Netherlands and now visiting for some time in America and Canada, has been busy in the vicinity of Hamilton. His Honor came from the Netherlands to visit several liberated families, occasioned by the fact that consistories in the Netherlands had received several letters from these immigrants. Rev. Hettinga,

however, has also cooperated in the organization of congregations in Canada. Last Sunday, Aug. 13, a congregation was organized in Georgetown, about 43 miles distant from Hamilton, which consists almost exclusively either of members of the Protestant Reformed Church of Hamilton or of members with whom the consistory of Hamilton was laboring. Rev. Hettinga was in the immediate vicinity of Hamilton last week, has not been in contact with the pastor or the consistory of our congregation, has talked with some of our members. The result is that some of these members have affiliated themselves with the new congregation of Georgetown.

That Rev. Hettinga did not seek contact with Hamilton's minister or consistory is because he, according to his own statement, had no desire thereto. And that he was not interested in a conversation with the pastor or consistory is because of what the Rev. Veldman had said. The pastor of Hamilton had declared that, *if* that brother organized churches without an ecclesiastical mandate and *if* he entered the sheepfold without appearing before the porter (Hamilton's consistory), he was guilty of the sin mentioned in John 10:1, 14. If that minister wishes to look up our members we may surely see his credentials. If he would speak with our sheep then it is surely more honorable and more honest to proceed to the shepherd and consistory of those sheep, than to enter the sheepfold by climbing over the wall. This the Rev. Hettinga did not do.

That the pastor of Hamilton expressed himself thus was not because he would avoid a discussion with Rev. Hettinga, although such a discussion could not bear an official character in any sense of the word. We would never be able to judge the Liberated Churches of the Netherlands in the light of what Rev. Hettinga might say, and the liberated brethren and sisters here would never be able to judge the Protestant Reformed Churches in the light of what the pastor of Hamilton might say. Such unofficial discussions can sometimes be very dangerous. If the pastor had erred in his judgment of the brother out of the Netherlands then he still could have come to him. And, he surely could have knocked at the door of Hamilton's consistory. That the pastor expressed himself thus was only to warn the members of the congregation against the appearance of Rev. Hettinga (zijn optreden). He suspected how the pastor from the Netherlands would speak with the members of his congregation. In this he apparently did not err. Rev. Hettinga, liberated minister from the Netherlands, knows exactly how he must converse with liberated immigrants! What he must say to them! He, visiting these people, also those who are members of the Hamilton Protestant Reformed Church, maintains and defends his conception of Baptism, and reminds them of the fact that

they must guard themselves against a "sham" baptism—een schijn doop. He criticizes the "binding" character of the declaration of doctrine of our late synod, but does not enter with us into the content of said declaration. He expresses his amazement that they, in the light of these "bindings", can celebrate the Lord's Supper. He visits office-bearers of our churches in Canada and asks: Brother so and so, how can you be a member of those churches? And he has co-operated in the organizing of a Free Reformed congregation also at the cost of the Protestant Reformed Church of Hamilton, a free congregation in which the members are not at all bound but where the Protestant Reformed truth is not tolerated. All this occurs without seeking contact with our pastor or consistory. Gathering the Church? We call it: Destroying the Church!

Now our congregation is called to choose, make a choice over against the newly organized church of Rev. Hettinga. The organization of this new church was not necessary. These people had a church roof over their heads, were either members of our congregation or being labored with. The institution of this congregation is to be explained only as a refusal to submit themselves to the Protestant Reformed doctrine, to be instructed in that doctrine; they have chosen the position over against the Protestant Reformed Churches. According to this new congregation also the Protestant Reformed Churches have become false. May the Lord give our Protestant Reformed Church of Hamilton His grace to continue to proclaim: God's sovereign good pleasure, man's responsibility and calling to repent, man's utter corruption, the particular atonement of the cross, God's irresistible grace, the perseverance of the saints, the particular promise. Did you, Rev. Hettinga, ever read anything else of us than these age-long reformed truths? Is a church, Rev. Hettinga, which teaches these truths and would bind her members to the doctrine of God's sovereign and particular grace, false? The Lord judge between you and us, and the Lord give our church at Hamilton His grace.

In connection with this history we would ask the following:

1. Did Rev. Hettinga receive the mandate (opdracht) from the Liberated Churches of the Netherlands to work as he does? Did he receive the ecclesiastical mandate to organize churches, and that of members who were either members of our congregation or being labored with?

2. Does Rev. Hettinga have the right to enter our sheepfold (Hamilton's congregation), ignore Hamilton's pastor and consistory, thus to labor with our members. Does Rev. Hettinga not thereby fall under the judgment of John 10:1, 14? If our churches, according to the repeated testimony of the Reformatie,

are the true Church of Christ in America and Canada?

3. What would be your reaction if the Protestant Reformed Church would work thus in the Netherlands? We understand that your synod of Amersfoort, 1948, decided to "name deputies and give them power to enter into contact with our churches, to the end that the relation of corresponding churches might be prepared"—see Supplement of your Church Order, page 21. Is the appearance of Rev. Hettinga in harmony with this decision?

4. Does the congregation of Georgetown have the right of existence next to our congregation of Hamilton? Do we now have two true churches of Christ in the same vicinity?

In the name of the consistory of the
Hamilton Protestant Reformed Church,

Pres. - H. Veldman
Clerk - T. Hart.

* * * *

Van Boeken

Dagfinale, door twaalf verschillende schrijvers.
Uitgever J. H. Kok, N.V., Kampen, Nederland.
Prijs f. 4.95.

Dit boek wordt genoemd "een avondboek voor jonge mensen". Het bestaat in zeer korte stukjes, bestemd om gelezen te worden door jonge mensen, voordat ze gaan slapen, één stukje voor elken avond van het jaar, ongeveer naar den trant van scheurkalender blaadjes. Allerlei onderwerpen worden aangesneden, de bijbel en bijbellezen, geloof en gehoorzaamheid, kerk en ambt, doop en avondmaal, wereldgelijkvormigheid, zending, kerkgang, arbeid, handel en nijverheid, liefde, verloving en huwelijk, kapitalisme en communisme, kunst, politiek, sport, bioscoop en dans, advent en oudejaar. Aan het slot van elk stuk wordt verwezen naar een passage uit de Schrift met de bedoeling dat de jonge mensen die zullen lezen.

In vele opzichten een mooi boek, rijk variërend van inhoud, en zeer eenvoudig geschreven. Ik hoop, dat het de vrucht heeft, dat de jonge mensen zoo leesgierig worden, dat ze, op den rand van het bed zittend, in één of twee avonden het heele boek doorlezen, het herhaaldelijk lezen, en dan grijpen naar gereformeerde literatuur over dezelfde onderwerpen, maar dan breeder behandeld.

Jammer, dat onze jonge mensen geen Hollandsch lezen.

Hartelijk aanbevolen.

H. H.

Contribution

Sept. 2, 1950

Esteemed Editor:

Having heard about the Declaration of Principles of the Protestant Reformed Churches drawn up by our last Synod and later read them, several questions arose in my mind. Especially so since they appeared in print without any explanation regarding their origin, purpose, etc. Now I personally have received some information about them, but there certainly must be many of our people who know next to nothing about their appearance. However, with the information I have I still have several questions. Since Synod formulated these principles that body would logically be the one to approach, but this being impossible I am asking these questions of the delegates to Synod, hoping that some one can give me some light on the matter. Possibly one of the members of the committee who proposed this declaration to Synod can answer them.

1. I am informed that the Mission Committee requested Synod to draw up a form regarding our principles for those (especially in Canada) who request organization. On the basis of this Synod drew up this declaration. Now my question is this: Is it church-politically correct to make such a declaration on the basis of a request of a committee? Doesn't this violate the rule of Reformed Church Polity that all matters must come to Synod via Consistory, Classis, etc.?

2. Is this declaration exclusively for those outside of our denomination, or also for our own people?

3. It seems to me that the declaration is mainly directed at the Liberated Churches. Only a small portion is given to the repudiation of the common grace theory, church hierarchy, etc., while a large portion directly and indirectly is devoted to the repudiation of the Liberated views of the covenant and baptism. Am I correct in drawing this conclusion?

4. I gather that these principles are meant to be an explanation of the Confessions, not another confession. Does this imply that our Confessions are ambiguous on these points so that these truths cannot be clearly proven from the Confessions without this declaration of principles? Does this then also imply that our missionaries, ministers and people are not able to state the same without them?

5. What is the difference between a declaration and a form? I've heard a few people call this a fourth form. What technically is a form or confession? What historically are the conditions that necessitated the formulation of confessions? Have the Reformed Churches ever set a precedent in making declaration of the Confessions? If so, in what conditions did they do so?

Will some one kindly give me an answer to these

questions. As Consistories we must bring an answer to our next Synod. Therefore we need as much light as we possibly can receive. Now I realize that Synod only can interpret its own actions. I don't expect the Acts of Synod to answer these questions either. But surely someone can shed some light on the matter.

Yours in the cause of His Church,
J. Blankespoor.

Note of Editor:

Reply in next issue of the Standard Bearer, D. V.

Contribution

Dear Brother,

Is it not somewhat strange, that after all the articles that were written by the Rev. Petter, wherein he teaches a conditional theology, that so many still say that the Rev. Peter does not mean it that way? And that he means something altogether different from what he writes. When you consider the educational background and the studies for years under the most capable and greatest theologians of the world, I say is it not strange, when a common church member writes an article defending the truth of unconditional salvation, that every word he writes is pregnant with meaning, even his motives are judged. You write and I quote: "For it is evident that the author's sole purpose is to attack a Minister of the Gospel, an office bearer in good standing, in order to expose him to the Churches as being heretical and in need of disciplinary attention". In this instance I feel you are judging motives, and you have no right to do this. For to expose Reverend Petter to the churches was far from my thoughts when I wrote the article in question. I did not have to do this, as the Reverend Petter did this himself, when he wrote the articles, but I do stand opposed to his conditional theology. I wrote: "And unless we are unconditionally saved there is no salvation at all."

It was therefore in the light of everything that was written by the Rev. H. Hoeksema and Rev. Ophoff and Rev. Veldman, which articles I underscore as having been in harmony with Scripture and our Confessions over against the conditional theology of Rev. Petter, that I wrote: "For do you not realize that you have lost the right to write under the heading of 'Among Our Treasures', for among our treasures, we have learned to sing, 'Welzalig hij die al zijn kracht en hulp alleen van u verwacht'. To me a conditional theology is just as much of an error as the common grace theology. I therefore cannot see wherein I have erred.

Further you write, "We personally want to assure Brother Feenstra that both through Rev. Petter's writings and our personal discussions with him about these matters, the Rev. Petter endorses, preaches and teaches all that the Reformed Churches as represented by our Protestant Reformed Churches stand for". There was something wrong then, was there not, for you to personally discuss with Rev. Petter "about these matters".

But, Reverend Cammenga, things are not fixed that way. Only by a public apology are matters straightened out. That is what you expect of me, too, is it not? Will you please explain to me where I erred, by rejecting the Conditional Theology of Rev. Petter, and underscoring the Unconditional Theology of the Reverends H. Hoeksema, G. M. Ophoff, and H. Veldman.

Yours in Christ,

K. Feenstra.

Ingezonden

EEN OPMERKING

Het is goed dat we bij de Gereformeerde beginselen scherp de wacht houden. Maar als we lezen wat broeder K. Feenstra schrijft in the Standard Bearer van 1 Juli, dan wordt het wel weer duidelijk dat we de volmaaktheid nog lang niet bereikt hebben. Laat ons nog eens zien wat hij schrijft. Hier volgt het: "O Brother Petter, may the God of all grace show you the terrible error of a conditional theology. For, do you not realize that you have lost the right to write under the heading of "Among Our Treasures"? For among our treasures, we have learned to sing, 'Welzalig hij die al zijn kracht, en hulp alleen van u verwacht. . . .' Kom broeder, wees wat voorzichtig, want ge beleedigt Rev. Petter, en ge bedroeft de lezers van The Standard Bearer. Moet hetgeen u aanhaalt uit Gods Woord als bewijs dienen dat Ds. Petter dwaalt? Wel broeder, laat dan eens weer van u hooren, want het gaat toch niet aan om hem te bestrijden met zijn eigen belijdenis, met hetgeen hij altijd zoo duidelijk geleerd heeft. Zou hetgeen Rev. Petter ons kracht duidelijk te maken niet slaan op de verplichtingen die de Heere ons opgelegd heeft? Dat wij aan zijne bevelen denken om die te doen. Doe dat en gij zult leven. U zegt dat een mensch geen stok en blok is, dat zijn we goed met u eens. Dat een zondaar dood is door de zonde en de misdaden, dat ontslaat hem niet van zijn plicht om God te dienen. Dat hij zoo ver-

dorven is dat hij dat niet meer kan, en ook niet meer wil doen, dat ontslaat hem niet van zijne verantwoordelijkheid. De Heere doet de mensch immers geen onrecht, als hij van hem eischt om datgene te doen dat hij niet meer kan volbrengen. Die dat leert is toch zeker wel goed Prot. Gereformeerd. Stelt Gods Woord het ons niet altijd voor dat wij den Heere zoeken moeten? En wij weten ook uit Gods Woord dat zij die den Heere zoeken alreeds van Hem gevonden zijn. Maar dan gaan we maar niet zoo zonder slag en stoot naar den hemel toe. Dit is wel duidelijk uit hetgeen de apostel Paulus ons zegt in Filippensen 3 vers 12, daar staat: Niet dat ik het alreede gekregen heb, of alreede volmaakt ben, maar ik jaag er naar, of ik het ook grijpen mocht, waartoe ik van Christus Jezus ook gegrepen ben. Broeders! ik acht niet, dat ik zelf het gegrepen heb. Maar een ding doe ik, vergetende hetgeen achter is, en strekkende mij tot hetgeen voor is, jaag ik maar het wit, tot den prijs der roeping Gods, die van boven is in Christus Jezus. Wij zijn op reis naar het hemelsche land, maar daar zijn we nog niet. Wat worden we in Gods Woord vermaand om wakende en biddende zijn. We zijn hier in het strijdperk; zonder strijd geen kroon. Daarom zegt Paulus: doet aan de geheele wapenrusting des geloofs, en ook dit gij hebt nog niet ten bloede tegengestaan strijdende tegen de zonde, en wandel met vreeze den tijd uwer inwoning. Volharden tot het einde. Niet verachten in de genade. Niet omzien naar hetgeen achter is. Gedenkt aan de vrouw van Lot! Die staat zie toe dat hij niet valle. Toen de Heere Israel verlost heeft uit het diensthuis van Egypte toen gingen ze niet maar zoo langs de gebaande wegen naar het beloofde land Kanaan toe. Neen, de Heere voerde hun eerst naar die bange en vreeselijke woestijn, waar geen water was om te drinken, en geen brood om te eten. Daar heeft de Heere hen beproefd of zij in zijne wegen wilden wandelen of niet. En wij weten hoe het toen gegaan is. Allen die uit Egypte gegaan zijn van twintig jaar oud en daar boven zijn in de woestijn gestorven, en ze hebben dat uitermate goede land waar ze naar toe zouden, dat van melk en honing was vloeiende, niet eens gezien. Behalve Kaleb de zoon van Jefoné, en Jozua de zoon van Nun; want zij hebben volhard den Heere na te volgen. Zelfs Mozes en Aaron zijn niet in alles getrouw geweest aan de bevelen des Heeren. In de eerste brief van Paulus aan die van Korinthe zegt hij dat deze dingen hun overkomen zijn ons tot voorbeelden, opdat wij geen lust zouden hebben tot het kwaade. Als we daaraan denken wat is het dan noodzakelijk dat we altijd weer vermaand worden, dat het ons altijd toegeroepen wordt, Bekeert u! Bekeert u, want de Heere onze God is heilig.

Henry De Mulder,
Rock Valley, Iowa.

THE DAY OF SHADOWS

David's Right Hand In The Rivers

The 22nd chapter of 2 Samuel is a song of David in which he passes in review all God's mercies toward him. As will be recalled, I have already presented some comments on this song of a general nature. Let us now attend more closely to some of the lines contained in its last section—the lines in which David, speaking to God, declares:

Thou hast kept me to be the head of the heathen: a people which I knew not shall serve me.

Strangers shall submit themselves to me; as soon as they hear, they shall be obedient unto me.

Strangers shall fade away, and shall be afraid out of their closed places.

As was already explained, the heathen of which David here makes mention were in the first instance the nations that dwelt within Israel's ideal boundaries not under the ban of God. Through David's warfare and in connection with it the Lord subdued the people one and all under David made them to submit themselves to him, render him obedience, and pay him tribute as his vassal-kings and with him as their head.

As was explained, the heathen of which these lines make mention were all the nations that dwelt on the west side of the Euphrates—Israel's ideal boundaries on the east. Through David's warfare and in connection with it, the Lord subdued these peoples one and all under David, made them to submit themselves to him, and pay him tribute as his vassal-kings. It means that as king of God's chosen people—the people of Israel—David reigned also in the midst of the heathen—Israel's enemies—of the heathen of his empire. And a vast empire it was, stretching, as it did, from the River Euphrates on the east to the Mediterranean on the west and on the south to the River Nile.

With these ways of God with David before our eye, we can understand the Lord's saying by the mouth of the prophet (Ps. 89:20-27):

I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him.

The enemy shall not exact upon him! nor the son of wickedness afflict him.

And I will beat down his foes before him, and plague them that hate him.

But my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him: and in my name shall his horn be exalted.

I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers.

He shall cry unto me, Thou art my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation.

Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth.

But the thoughts here expressed are too great to allow us to end with them in David. In the final instance the king in Israel's throne is Christ. His hand did God set in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers. Him did God make His firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth. He set His own right hand in the heavenly, far above all principalities, and power and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world but also in the world which is to come: and hath put all things under His feet and gave Him to be the head over all things in the church" (Eph. 1:20-23).

David's empire was vast, comparatively speaking. As the anointed of the Lord in Israel's throne, he had dominion over many heathen nations. But, to quote from a previous article from my pen, Christ's dominion extends to the utmost bounds of the universe. It includes every creature, animate and inanimate, rational and irrational, angels, devils, and men. All things have been put into His hands. Vested is He with all power in heaven and on earth, and by virtue thereof he reigns in the midst of His enemies the world over, and simultaneously through the ages of this dispensation of the world gathers His church, which is His body and of which He is head and Saviour.

Christ being a king of such dominion and power, well may the prophet (Ps. 2) ask, "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?"—the people, the nations of the earth (vs. 1). Their kings and rulers take counsel together, against the Lord—the triune Jehovah—and against Christ His anointed King. They say: Let us break their bands assunder, and cast their cords from us (vs. 2); that is, despising as they do, Christ's claim upon their homage and obedience, they resolve to free themselves of His dominion and of the dominion of His God (vs. 2).

But their ragings are vanity. He that sitteth in the heavens laughs: Jehovah holds them one and all in derision (vs. 4). He will speak to them in His wrath and terrify them in His sore displeasure (vs. 5). His terrifying speech will be to the effect that he has established His King—Christ Jesus—upon the hill of His holiness—the Mt. Zion that is above; that this king is His Son, begotten of God this day; that, accordingly, for the asking, God will give Him the heathen for His inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. He will break them with a rod of iron; dash them—these anti-Christian kings and their kingdoms—in pieces like a potter's vessel, in a word, utterly destroy them, first, in the point of view of right, through His obedience unto the

death of the cross; second, actually, as the King exalted (vss. 6-9). And this in glaring evidence of the vanity of their raging.

Let now therefore the kings of the earth be wise, and the judges of the earth instructed. Let them serve Jehovah with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Let them kiss the Son—God's King—revere Him, submit themselves to His authority and trust in Him—lest He be angry, and they perish in the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little (vss. 10-12). Blessed are they that put their trust in Him (vs. 12c).

Underlying this psalm is the distinction between Christ as King of His church whom He bought with His blood and to whom He has been given to be the head over all things in it; and the same Christ as the Lord of all things including the worldly states and their rulers with Satan their prince. The church, which is His body, He rules by His indwelling Spirit, grace and word.

As to the kings of the earth and their kingdoms, they, too, are in His hand, so that He uses them in all their wickedness for the promotion of the ends of His kingdom, while at the same time making them to pass away—dashing them in pieces, in the language of the psalm—as He has done with them. As Jehovah's king on Zion's hill He thus reigns also in the midst of His enemies.

These Messianic explanations alone can satisfy the meanings of the words of this psalm (Ps. 2). Plainly the psalm is a direct prophecy of the exaltation of Christ at the right hand of God and of His reign in that exalted position. But the prophecy takes its rise in David and the historical events that cluster about his person as Israel's king. The kings of the earth—Ammon's king and Moab's king and the lords of the Philistines and the Syrian Hadarezer and the king's tributary to him, in a word, all the heathen kings of his earth—fearing his growing power, took counsel against him as bent on his destruction. But the Lord then, too, laughed. For He had anointed David His king upon Zion, and had promised to set his hand in the sea, and His right hand in the rivers and to establish His throne forever. And so the nations plotting his ruin were doomed. He, the Lord's anointed, broke them in pieces. In his own language, "I have pursued mine enemies, and destroyed them; and turned not again until I had consumed them, and wounded them, that they could not arise: yea, they had fallen under my feet. For thou hast girded me with strength to battle: them that rose up against me hast thou subdued under me. Thou hast given me the necks of mine enemies, that I might destroy them that hate me. They looked, but there was none to save; even unto the Lord, but he answered them not. Then I did beat them as small as the dust of the earth, I did stomp

them as the mire of the street, and did spread them abroad (Ps. 18:37-42).

That also in his wars with the heathen of his world and in his victories over the heathen David typified Christ is proved by all the promises given him. The words of these promises are too great to have all their meanings exhausted in David. They could reach their fulfillment only in Christ.

G. M. Ophof.

SION'S ZANGEN

Niet Ons, O Heere! Niet Ons

(Psalm 115; Eerste Deel)

"Niet ons, o Heere! niet ons, maar Uwen naam geef eer, om Uwer goedertierenheid, om Uwer waarheid wil."

Wat een hemelsch begin!

Hieraan zult ge de genade onderkennen!

Want dit getuigenis gaat dwars tegen onze zondige natuur in. Van nature zeggen wij het juist andersom: Het is ONS, o Heere! Het is ONS!

En het is niet Uw naam, maar het is onze naam die eer en heerlijkheid moet ontvangen!

We zullen ons een NAAM maken. Gedenkt aan den toren van Babel.

En waarom?

Omdat de trotschheid ons levensmotief is. Het vleesch, het zondige vleesch leeft de grootschheid des levens.

Maar wanneer de genade ons gevonden heeft, dan worden de rollen omgekeerd.

Dan wordt het geheel anders. Dan gaat ge net andersom oordeelen als te voren.

Aangaande Uzelven? Dan zegt ge: O God! wees mij, den armen zondaar, genadig!

En aangaande God?

Dan zegt ge: Niet ons, o Heere! niet ons, maar Uwen Naam geef eer, om Uwer goedertierenheid en Uwer waarheid wil!

Let er op, dat dit een gebed is! Daar zit iets ontzaglijks in.

Stelt het U voor: hier bidt een mensch om zijn grootste nooddrift: Hij hunkert er naar, dat Gods Naam geprezen wordt.

En deze mensch beseft, dat hij niet bij machte is om dit zelf te doen. Hij bidt God om er toch voor te zorgen, dat niet hij, maar dat God Zelf alle eer ontvangen mag.

Dit eerste vers toont, dat de zanger begrepen heeft wat het eenigste doel van alle dingen is: de eere Gods.

Er is maar één doelwit voor deze gansche wereld, en er is hetzelfde doel voor de wereld die aan 't komen is, en die door de wedergeboorte aller dingen straks zal pralen, en dat ééne doel is: dat God alles zij en in allen!

Dat heeft de zanger gevat!

Niet ons, maar Gij, o God!

Geef eer aan Uw Naam, o Heere!

Dat zal waar zijn!

Gods Naam is de uitdrukking, de openbaring van Zijn Wezen. De Heere heeft laten zien hoe en wat Hij is door Zijn Naam te openbaren.

En de heerlijkheid van dien Naam is uitgestort over alle de werken Zijner handen.

Als ge wilt weten hoe en wat God is kunt ge, b.v., uitvinden door de natuur rondom U te bestudeeren. Overal vindt ge de voetstappen Gods. In alle kleuren, geluiden, vormen, reuken, klanken, bewegingen, ja overal en in alles kunt ge God bestudeeren in Zijn werken.

Maar 's Heeren Wet nochtans, verspreidt volmaakter glans, dewijl ze 't hart bekeert!

Indien ge uit wilt vinden hoe schoon en hoe lieflijk 't aanbidd'lijk Opperwezen is, dan moet ge naar de Wet en de Profeten. En die zullen het U in geuren en klanken vertellen.

Op alle bladzijden van Gods dierbaar Woord zult ge de verschijning van het Volmaakte Wezen vinden.

En het zal Uw hart in vlam en vuur zetten. En aan 't einde gekomen van zulk een studie, zult ge uitroepen met den zanger: Niet, ons, o Heere! niet ons!

Maar geef toch eer en heerlijkheid aan Uw Eigen Naam!

God heeft Zijn Naam het duidelijkst laten zien in den Bijbel, zeiden we.

Waarom?

Omdat de Bijbel ons het aangezicht van God toont in Christus den Heere.

En de schoonheid van God is onbeschrijflijk in dien Zoon van Zijn eeuwige liefde.

De Heere God is zóó groot van schoonheid en van vermogen, dat geen menschelijke taal het kan uitdrukken.

Er staan een paar woorden bij dien eersten uitroep om ons op het spoor te brengen: om Uwer goedertierenheid en Uwer waarheid wil!

De goedertierenheid Gods, wat is zij?

De goedertierenheid Gods is de deugd Gods, waarin

Hij gedrongen wordt door Zijn Eigen Wezen om goed te zijn voor Zijn volk. Er is een lieflijke, doch almachtige drang in God, een hartstocht, zoo ge wilt, om goed te zijn voor de Kerk. God wil met een eeuwige wil, dat die Kerk straks in alle schoonheid zich zal baden.

Hij gebruikt allerlei beelden in Zijn Woord om ons te vertellen van dien drang in Zijn Wezen, en om ons te vertellen van die schoonheid en lieflijkheid die Hij ons geven zal, of al gegeven heeft. Let op een van de psalmen: ge wordt vergeleken bij een duif in 't zilverwit, of het goud dat op haar vederen zit, het goud, dat glinstert en schittert onder de zonnestralen. Of ge wordt vergeleken bij een getooide Bruid die zonder vlek en zonder rimpel zal pralen tot in eeuwigheid.

Gods goedertierenheid?

De drang in God om goed voor U te zijn?

Och arme! Hoe zal ik het hart van dien drang verhalen?

Luistert! Ge zijt zóó vuil en zóó slecht, dat ge eigenlijk naar de hel moest, om daar in afgrijselijke leelijkheid weg te kwijnen tot in alle eeuwen eeuwigheden!

Maar wat doet die Heere?

Hij gaat Zelf naar de hel toe; Hij wordt Zelf een vloek voor U, mijn broeder; Hij gaat de verdoemenis in voor U, mijn zuster!

En Hij doet dat in Jezus, den Redder onzer zielen!

Non nobis, Domine, sed tibi sit gloria!

G. Vos.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On September 20, our beloved parents,

Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius Pastoor

hope to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary.

As children we are grateful to our Covenant God for having spared them for each other and for us. As the Lord blessed them with His sustaining grace in the years past, both in joy and sorrow, our prayer is that He may continue to do so in the years to come.

Their grateful children:

Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Helmus

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Pastoor

Mr. and Mrs. William Pastoor

Mr. and Mrs. Otto Huizinga

and sixteen grandchildren.

Grand Rapids, Mich.

FROM HOLY WRIT

Exposition Of Hebrews 10:19-25

I.

Beginning with this article we hope to write a short series of essays on the passage of the Word of God recorded for us in Hebrews 10:19-25.

This passage of the Word of God is at once instructive unto godliness in Christ Jesus as well as an exhortation unto a more perfect reliance upon the great grace and mercy in Christ our Lord. The whole passage bears a hortatory and warning character. In it the readers, and we with them, are warned against falling back into unbelief and exhorted unto believing boldness and full assurance of faith.

These verses are indeed pregnant with thought. They are simply replete with Old Testament symbolism, with the symbolism used by holy men of God moved by the Holy Spirit to make known the way and plan of salvation through earthly forms and symbols. We do well to take notice of these forms and to believe that they are God-given aids to us to give us a clearer understanding of the only way unto God, the Father.

The text that we refer to in this article reads as follows: "*Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest (holy place) by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh, and having a great (a high) priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in the full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. . . .*" Vss. 19-22.

Looking at the text before us we notice that the symbolic elements in the text, which call for our believing consideration are:

1. The idea of the "holy place" and of "boldness to enter into it."
2. The Scriptural meaning of the "veil" in the temple and how this veil is related to the "flesh" of Christ.
3. What is it that makes Jesus so uniquely a High Priest in the house of God in distinction from the High Priests of the Old Testament temple or tabernacle?
4. What is the meaning of "hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience" and bodies washed with pure water?
5. And lastly, what does this all mean for us in "drawing nigh unto God with a true heart in the full assurance of faith"?

Probably the best way to organize all these ques-

tions into a meaningful and fruitful discussion is to begin with the matter stated under 5, namely, what is implied in *drawing nigh unto God*.

Now it ought to be clear to the intelligent reader, that in order to understand what it means to *draw near unto God*, it is necessary to understand, that, according to all of Scripture and particularly in the book of Hebrews, God is always confronting us with Himself as the *living God*.

Thus we read in this chapter, the 31st verse, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the *living God*." And in a more indirect way, the same reality concerning God is expressed in Hebrews 4:12, 13. For the Word of God is quick (living,—*Zoon gar o logos tou Theou*) and powerful (active) and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of (quick to discern) the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight; but all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do".

Surely this is a strong picture of the living God as He confronts us with His holy Word. That God is the living God is surely evident from the living Word. Only the *living God* speaks such a living Word in Jesus our Lord. The Word of God convicts of sin, righteousness and of judgment, but it also is the God-inspired Word that is profitable to instruction, correction, admonition and reproof. And this Word is the very tangible evidence in the heart and conscience of every man who hears that God is the *living God*. He is not a dead god! He does not have eyes and does not see, and ears and does not hear, a mouth and that does not speak. But He is the living God, who comes to stand before us in all the glory of His divine perfections.

It is this God with *Whom we have to do!*

The original Greek states this literally thus: "With whom the matter or account with us is". When we bear this matter in mind, namely, that God is the living God, then the message of the writer to the Hebrews really comes to stand before us in over-awing relief. It means that we must and may and can and should draw near unto the living God, the God whom all the angels worship and adore!

Unto Him we are to *draw near!*

Surely this must not be taken in a mere geographic sense. This refers to a drawing near in the spiritual sense of the word. It is an act, or activity of faith that is energized by love and that finds its seat in the "heart".

This drawing near we do from *believing hearts*. The text emphasizes that the following concerning the heart:

1. That we must draw near with *true hearts!*

2. That this drawing near is a matter of a heart that is *sprinkled from an evil conscience*.

3. That drawing near must thus not be done with doubt and hesitance and fear, but that it must be done in the *full assurance* of faith.

It is upon this theme of faith, and the full assurance of faith as a drawing nigh unto God, that the writer to the Hebrews will further illucidate in the remainder of this epistle. Particularly masterful and instructive is what we read in Hebrews 11. But this latter we only remark in passing.

What calls for our attention now is what is implied with *true hearts*. Drawing nigh unto God is not merely a matter of a rational-moral creature. It is a matter of the spiritual side of man's moral nature. It is out of the heart that the issues of life are. This is not merely true of the good heart, but this is equally true of an evil heart. As the heart is so is the man. This Jesus teaches us in Matthew 15:19 concerning the evil heart: "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornication, thefts, false witness blasphemies. These are the things which *defile* a man." And also the good man brings forth good deeds from a "true heart" by faith.

Now a true heart is opposed not to an *unreal* heart, but rather to a heart that is *ethically* false. An *ethically false* heart is one that does not believe in Christ Jesus, does not keep the commandments from gratitude and hence does not live to God's praise. A *true* heart stands right with God, because the love of God is shed abroad in it. It is a heart in which the Holy Spirit of Christ *dwells*, and is a heart which receives the Spirit with all of His benefits.

Such is a *true* heart.

It is with such a heart that God is worshipped in spirit and in truth. Here the *dominion* of sin is broken. Sin does not here reign. Here from a good heart those who receive the gift of righteousness reign through one, namely, our Lord Jesus Christ. Such is a true heart. In it the truth dwells, the darkness has been dispelled and true light already shineth. Such a man is not a liar, nor is he a hypocrite, but he is a true worshipper of God. His heart is true, genuine, real. He loves God and His commandments and trusts Him as the God of His perfect and complete salvation.

Of such a heart the writer to the Hebrews speaks.

But there is a second element emphasized in the text. It is the matter of a heart *being sprinkled from an evil conscience*. And this matter of a heart sprinkled from an evil conscience is not merely a truth by itself next to that of a true heart, but is rather a very essential element in a *true* heart—a heart where sin has lost its dominion. For we would remind you that

a true heart is one that is sincere in purpose. It is one that believes in Christ with a hearty confidence. It is a heart that appropriates Christ and His Holy Spirit with all of His benefits. Such a true heart is a *pure* heart. It is one that is purified from the *guilt* of sin.

In general we may state, that to be purified from the guilt of sin, means that we have the *assurance* of the forgiveness of sins through the redemption in Christ Jesus. Having this we sing in joyful and glad strains: O, the blessedness of the man whose sins are forgiven, whose iniquity is covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute sin. And having this glad assurance songs of deliverance fill the night watches! For in having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience the awful, the terrifying sense of damn-worthiness is gone. Rather we then have the sense, the comfortable assurance of the favor of God!

More particularly we notice that this our having true hearts, hearts that are sprinkled from a evil conscience, is a sprinkling which we *undergo by faith*. It is true we undergo this sprinkling by means of faith, by means of the act of faith. Believing (*pisteuontes*) we undergo this sprinkling, that is to say, God works in our hearts the glad assurance of the forgiveness of sins. When this is our portion and surely with this portion as our inheritance the lines have fallen unto us in pleasant places, then we know that our sins are gone up to the very moment, up to the very present. The Greek here uses the perfect passive participle. (*rerantismenoi*). This tense expresses action *completed up to the present*.

Hence, this is a constant activity of faith, it is an *unbroken line*. It refers to an uninterrupted operation of the Spirit which we at once undergo and which at once we also receive by faith. The sprinkling is the operation of the Spirit by means of the Word and Sacraments, while our receiving it by faith is also the operation of the Holy Spirit in our hearts by which we claim these mercies of forgiveness as our own!

Indeed, therefore, shall there be such a drawing near unto God in the full assurance of faith, then there must be an uninterrupted activity of faith which received the constant gift of forgiveness, so that one knows himself righteous before God.

Then one says: Although my conscience accuses me that I have kept none of God's commandments, yea, that I have transgressed them all, and am constantly prone to all evil, yet I believe that I am as righteous before God as if I had never sinned, yea, as though I had fulfilled all righteousness, since I received the righteousness of God in Christ with a believing heart!

(to be continued)

G. Lubbers.

IN HIS FEAR

Beginning with this issue the undersigned has been asked to write for this rubric in our *Standard Bearer*. And although this rubric has appeared in the *Standard Bearer* for several years already, and is therefore not new to the readers, this is nevertheless a new beginning. A new beginning it is both from the point of view that the undersigned has not previously written, except occasionally, in any of our periodicals, and certainly from the point of view of the fact that to read "In His Fear" is far different than writing for this rubric. We must therefore make one another's acquaintance as reader and writer.

And the key to becoming acquainted is understanding. We must reach an understanding with regard to three factors, chiefly. First of all, we must be agreed and understand well the purpose of this rubric, its aim, the limits of its contents. In the second place, we should be agreed as to the way in which that purpose is to be attained. And finally, we should agree as to the attitude to be assumed over against what shall be here written. Concerning each of these factors we shall say a few words in this introductory article.

Purpose

If you will take the trouble to check back to the time when the present division into rubrics was introduced, you will discover that this section of our magazine was intended to cover the field of education, meaning, of course, Christian Education, in the strict sense of the term. To a large extent this limitation has been observed, and the various writers who preceded the undersigned wrote on various subjects of an educational nature, although not always.

With this issue the field is broadened. My mandate from the editor defines the purpose of this rubric as being to write on so-called "practical" subjects, subjects which concern the life of the child of God in the midst of the world, in home, in church, in school, in private and in public life. We have a wide choice of subjects, therefore, and we shall try to touch on live issues.

And "in His fear" must, of course, be the mark of the life of the Christian. The fear of the Lord our God, Who is one Lord, must be the guiding principle of all that we do as His children in the midst of the world. Fear, we may remind ourselves, should not here be taken in the evil sense of the word. The slave fears his master, and at his approach he crouches with fear of punishment. The defendant fears the judge, and he trembles at the thought that this judge with

one sentence has control over his life and death. In that sense men speak also in our times of freedom from fear. And indeed, in that evil sense the term denotes something of which we wish to be free. But in the Old Testament Scriptures especially we read repeatedly of the fear of Jehovah. Thus you read in Proverbs 1:7: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; but fools despise wisdom and instruction." And again in Proverbs 9:10: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; and the knowledge of the holy is understanding." Thus the poet of Psalm 86 petitions: "Unite my heart to fear thy name." And finally, we read in Psalm 25:14: "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant." Now it is very plain that "fear" in this connection must not be understood in the sense of terror. Certainly the terror of the Lord is not the beginning of knowledge or of wisdom; nor is the prayer of the child of God, "Unite my heart to be terrorized by thy name." Nor, surely, is the secret of Jehovah with those who are filled with terror before Him.

But it is in this Scriptural sense of the term as we have cited it in the above passages that the title "In His Fear" is a fitting one indeed for such a practical rubric. But then we must understand that by the fear of the Lord is meant, objectively, the entire revelation of the Lord from the point of view of His precepts. And "in His fear" means then that we are instructed in and consequently walk in the sphere of that revelation of our Lord's precepts. It means that there is and must be harmony between our being and life and those precepts of the Lord.

And subjectively the fear of the Lord really implies all that is implied in our religion as it is implanted in our hearts. All our faith, our hope and love, our confidence and trust in Jehovah, is expressed in that one word: *the fear of Jehovah*.

Really on those two elements of the fear of the Lord the whole sense and purpose of such a rubric as this hinges. And both are necessary. Except there be present faith and hope and love and confidence and trust,—gifts of the grace of God,—there can be no positive purpose in speaking of the revelation of Jehovah's precepts. And it is the positive purpose of this rubric,—in that sense, namely, that we must all be educated, it is still an educational rubric,—that we should be trained in the precepts of the Lord. Yes, we must all still be trained and continually be trained, children and parents, young and old, in those precepts of the Lord, in order that our faith may respond, "Lord, unite my heart to fear thy name."

Principle and Practice

It must therefore be evident by now also that in our method we shall be guided by the rule that there

is always a very close relation between principle and practice between Christian principle and Christian practice, or, if you will, between things doctrinal and things practical.

And yet it may be well that we understand this rule and agree upon it from the beginning. For in our day doctrinal things and practical things are often contrasted, placed at opposite poles in our thinking. How often does one not hear the complaint made that so and so is far too doctrinal in his preaching and that this minister should preach more practical sermons? Or how often, even in matters of church polity, does it not occur that one will say that a matter is true in principle or in theory, but that in practice the opposite is true? And thus principle and practice are frequently divorced.

The result of such an attitude is without fail that soon, if not immediately, after one forsakes a certain soundly Scriptural principle, and no longer founds his practical life upon that principle, the practice also becomes faulty, sinful, and empty or superstitious. We would therefore propose the following propositions, which may serve us as a guide in this matter of principle and practice.

1. There is never a practice which does not have behind it a principle. Even those who pride themselves on being practical, down-to-earth, hardheaded realists, in distinction from men of principle, are nevertheless acting upon some principle, whether they state their principle or not.

2. Fundamentally, we can speak of only two principles,—the principle of faith and the principle of sin. For “all that is not of faith is sin.” There is no half-way ground, no neutral territory. There is only a right or a wrong. And in writing of the fear of the Lord for God-fearing people this must above all be kept on the fore-ground.

3. All other things being equal, that is, the faith and hope and trust being equal, he is better equipped to live a life in His fear, who is more firmly founded in sound doctrine.

4. There is never a principle which is not practical, or, positively stated, all principles are practical.

It must therefore be clear that if we are to walk in His fear, we must first of all be instructed in His fear. Scriptural and Reformed principles must be clearly expounded and clearly understood, in order that we may have a firm basis for all that we do. And therefore we shall in the course of our writings frequently be obliged to turn to Scripture and the Confessions and ask the question before ought else: “What is the principle of the thing?” And having done that, we shall never have to grope around and wonder what our calling is. For there is no contrast, after all, between principle and practice. Christian living is simply Christian principle applied. And it

shall be our goal, after inquiring into the principle of the thing, to try to apply that principle of Holy Writ to various aspects of our present day life.

Attitude

We must therefore be careful as to the attitude we assume when such expositions of principle and applications of principles are made. Writings such as these are apt to touch us where it hurts, touch both you and myself. They shall do that because of the fact that we are not at all perfect, but have much need in all our way in the midst of this world of being trained in the fear of the Lord.

Our attitude must be in the first place an attitude of humility. We must above all be ready to bow before the Word of God, when it becomes clear to us what the principle taught in God’s Word is. We may in no sense question it, argue against it, stamp it as idle theory or idealism. But in faith we must receive that Word as the end of all debate. And in that connection as Protestant Reformed people we must be willing also to be yoked by our Reformed Confessions, even as we profess them to be Scriptural.

And when principles, Scriptural and confessional, are applied, when it becomes clear what the importance of a certain principle is for our life, we must also be careful in our attitude. Certainly we may not treat things merely as matters of philosophical discussion. By all means we may not read with our mental eye upon the neighbor. But our attitude must be expressed in the question: “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” and in the prayer: “Give me grace that I may do it, and may more and more forsake the evil of my way as it is made clear to me in the light of Thy Word.”

Then we shall learn the fear of the Lord. Then we shall know the Lord. Then we shall be wise unto salvation. Then we shall experience the truth of that blessed Word: “The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and His covenant is with them that He might cause them to know it.”

H. C. Hoeksema.

MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The Annual Membership Meeting of the Standard Bearer will be held Thursday evening, September 28, in the basement of the First Prot. Ref. Church. Board members are to be elected, reports will be given by Secretary and Treasurer, and other business conducted that might come before the meeting.

Please reserve this date and plan to attend.

Reformed Free Publ. Ass’n.

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Standard Bearer—The	H.H.	4	1				
Supralapsarianism and Infralapsarianism	H.V.	346	15				
Continued	H.V.	371	16				
Continued	H.V.	394	17				
—T—							
Teeken Christi—Het	G.V.	121	6				
Tot Weenen Geroepen	G.V.	265	12				
Triple Knowledge—The (Lord's Day 27)							
Continued from Vol. 25	H.H.	54	3				
Continued	H.H.	78	4				
Continued	H.H.	102	5				

Report of Classis West

MET IN OSKALOOSA, IOWA, SEPTEMBER 6, 1950

This Classis was called together by Rev. J. Van Weelden. Psalter 24 is sung, the Chairman reads Romans 12 and offers prayer.

Roll-call reveals that eleven congregations are represented, but three of them lack an elder representation. Classis' attention is called to this matter. Complete representation is urged. The credentials are accepted and the meeting constituted.

Rev. L. Vermeer assumes the presidency for the day and Rev. J. Van Weelden records the minutes. He addresses a word of welcome to the delegates present and then calls for the minutes of the former meeting which are read and accepted.

The Sermon-Book Committee (Revs. Howerzyl and Gritters) reports that the work is unfinished, due to the fact that a few of the pastors have not sent in their sermons. The Committee is requested to make punched-leaf copies of the sermons and distribute them throughout the congregations for reading purposes. The Committee is continued and the pastors urged to send in their sermons at once.

The Jubilee Booklet Committee, (Revs. Petter and Hoeksema) reports that it has finished its work and the Booklet should appear in the near future.

Rock Valley sends an instruction to the effect that we prepare Sermonettes for the Boys in the Armed Forces. Rock Valley reminded Classis that our Government hopes to main-

tain a large standing army, that the spiritual conditions under which our Boys must live is extremely undesirable and that it is the calling of the church to feed its flock at all times and that the preparation of such Meditations is the only small way in which we can supply our men with food for soul and thought. Classis did not seem to think the time was ripe for such action, hence Classis decides to table this matter until the next meeting.

Various communications are considered and appropriately answered.

Two of the Classical Committee members' term expired and Classis votes H. C. Hoeksema and S. Cammenga into the Committee. The Classical Committee is therefore at present composed of the pastors: P. De Boer, J. De Jong, H. C. Hoeksema, and S. Cammenga. Three members Deputaten Ad Examina are voted too, they are P. De Boer (three year term), A. Petter (two year term), J. De Jong (one year term). And their respective secundi are J. Howerzyl, M. Gritters and H. C. Hoeksema. These brethren will be presented to the forthcoming Synod. In re the secundi the Classis decides that they be placed in the order of voting results and the delegates not able to attend secure an alternate in that order.

Church visitors voted as follows: by appointment Revs. L. Doezema and L. Vermeer visit the California and Montana churches; Revs. De Boer

and J. De Jong the rest of the churches, with Rev. M. Gritters alternate for the last two brethren.

Visiting our Classis was Rev. Hettinga from Harlingen, the Netherlands. Rev. J. De Jong is asked by the Chairman to introduce him and thereafter the visiting pastor addresses the Classis briefly. The President responds with like greetings.

Next meeting of Classis will take place at Hull, Iowa, first Wednesday in March.

Questions DKO 41 are asked. A consistory asks for advice in re a matter of discipline and neglect of the means of grace. Classis gives its answer.

The Chairman thanks the Ladies for their services.

Rev. J. De Jong closes the meeting with prayer to God.

M. GRITTERS, Stated Clerk.