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MEDITATION

Woman, Why Weepest Thou?

"But Mary was standing without at the tomb weeping: so, as she wept, she stooped and looked into the tomb; and she beholdeth two angels in white sitting, one at the head and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her: Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou?

John 20:11-17.

Weeping Mary!

Standing at the open mouth of the grave of her Lord, Who had taken captivity captive! She weeps here at the open grave from whence, at this very moment, no doubt, the other Galilean women were hastening to the disciples and brethren, with fear and great joy, to tell the glad Gospel story of the resurrection of Jesus, the crucified one!

How utterly incongruous! How this marvelous fact of the glorious resurrection, which shall turn all our sorrows into eternal and abiding joys, is hid from the weeping eyes of Mary!

The mighty angel of the Lord had suddenly descended from heaven not long prior to this time; he had rolled away the stone from the door of the tomb, and had sat upon it; he had proclaimed the Word of peace to the woman, telling them: Fear not *ye*, for I know that ye seek Jesus, the crucified one. He is not here but is risen, come see the place where the Lord has lain.

And Jesus Himself had appeared to the hastening women on the way, telling them to go and tell the glad tidings to His brethren. . . .

But Mary was standing without at the tomb weeping at such a time as this.

It is the time when all the prisoners are set free,

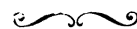
death rejoice in victorious hope, and when all the when they who dwell in the valley of the shadow of angels of God worship Jesus, the First-begotten from the dead, saying: Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honor, and glory, and blessing. Ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands of angels lift up their glad voices and chant and sing in joyful lays at this very moment. Is it the moment, that believing Abraham, and all the patriarchs with and after him, saw afar, and. . . .rejoiced!

It is the time to which we, as the New Testament saints from Gentile lands, look back and see and confess that we have born anew unto a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Because of this glad day of all days we gather on each First Day of the week and sing a new song, saying unto our Lord and King: Worthy art Thou Lord Jesus, Thou faithful Witness, Thou First-born of the dead, and Thou Ruler of the kings of the earth to receive the Kingdom of David, our father, forever!

But Mary was standing at the tomb weeping.

At such a time as this. . . .

Woman, why weepest thou?



My Lord it was! saith weeping Mary.

Him, they have taken. And I know not where they have placed Him. . . .

He, the Lord, Who had the power to cast out the demons out of me, a poor, sinful and wretched woman. Seven devils had gone forth from Mary Magdalene. Her soul, which had been possessed by demons had been set free from these powers of hell. Joy and gladness had again become the cherished portion of this liberated Mary of Magdala. And for the joy of this great salvation from the very power of the devil, Mary, together with other women of whom Jesus had been the beneficent Liberator from sicknesses and demon-possession, was ever afterward ministering to the wants of Jesus from their substance.

O, let it never be forgotten, that from that moment life had taken on a new meaning for this Mary of Magdala. In a sense, she had ceased to live, and all her life was now wrapped up in her Lord and Liberator, as she understood Him.

Her soul cleaved to Jesus. Nothing was ever to separate her again from His love. In Him she had a glad future. From now on all would be well. And, what is more, nothing would ever disturb it. . . .

But things had begun to change. Jesus had set His face to go to Jerusalem. And when they were on the way, Jesus had walked in silence before them, so silent and awful in the trouble of His soul, that the disciples and the Galilean women had become deeply disturbed.

Ah, but this shall never happen to Him, what He had told them, taking them aside by the way, namely, that the Son of Man would go up to Jerusalem to be delivered into the hands of the elders, scribes and chief priests; that He will be delivered into the hands of the Gentiles, be mocked, scourged, condemned to death, be crucified. . . .

But the impossible had happened!

Oh, Mary had seen the cruel crucifixion. Had not she and Mary, the mother of Jesus, and Mary the wife of Cleopas, stood beside the Cross early in the day, before the three hours of darkness had fallen over all the earth. And had she not stood, with all the Galilean women and with all the acquaintances of Jesus, from afar, yet as near as they dared, when the Roman soldiers bring the vinegar to Jesus' parched throat and tongue, and He, her Lord, had said: I thirst? And had she not heard Him cry with a loud voice: Father into Thy hand I commit my spirit?!

And then, Jesus, her Lord, had bowed His head and died. And the kind hands of Joseph of Arimathea and of Nicodemus, both men from the Sanhedrin, yet believers true, had taken Jesus from the Cross, and had buried Him in the tomb where never before the dead had lain. And again, had not Mary been present on this day of awful events to the very end. Had not she and the other Mary observed the burial of Jesus, observed how the body was placed tenderly in the grave by loving and believing hands? And, then, while the sun sank in the west and the Sabbath drew nigh, had not Mary of Magdala and the other Mary sat down over against the tomb. . . .

Too much had happened in one day for Mary to be able to see it all in its proper light. And, pray, how could she understand it all? But one thing is certain, Mary's Lord was not cast forth as an accursed one to defile the land, or to be eaten by the dogs as a Jezebel, but He had had the honorable burial of the Kings.

Assured that all was well, and that the body of Jesus was tenderly placed in the grave, Mary Magdalene had returned to the holy city to rest, according to the commandment.

But Mary's love and devotion must find its fit expression in the anointing of Jesus. So early in the morning, while the first break of the dawn is on the eastern horizon, Mary hastens with the other women to the sepulchre. And when they arrive Mary sees the stone removed and concludes, that the grave has been broken open by the enemies, and that the body of Jesus, her Lord, had been stolen. She had ran and told this erroneous report to Peter and John saying: They have taken the Lord out of the sepulchre and we know not where they have placed Him. . . .

John and Peter had hastened to see what had happened. John had seen the clothing and believed. Peter had gone out thinking about all these things. The women, in the meanwhile, had heard the report from the angel, had met Jesus on the way, and were now hastening to tell the Good News to the brethren.

But Mary was disconsolate.

She is like the woman in the Song of Songs, who pours out her heart in disconsolate strains, saying: By night on my bed, I sought Him whom my soul loveth: I sought Him, but I found Him not. . . . The watchmen that go about the city found me; to whom I said, Saw ye Him whom my soul loveth?

My Lord have they taken, and I know not where they have placed Him. Disconsolate Mary, too distracted by grief and woe to have noticed that the night is past and that the day has come. . . .

Whom seeketh thou?

Turn thee about, and let thy soul live.

I adjure thee, O Daughter of Jerusalem above, by the roes and hinds of the field, look behind thee.

And weep no more!



Mary!

Thus it is that Jesus addresses this daughter from the city of Magdala. And the sound of Jesus' voice, calling her name, awakened in her a joyful recognition.

Oh, the intense happiness of that moment for Mary.

Joyful and spontaneous she replies in mutual love: Rabboni!

Her Lord and Savior she has found. He has come to awaken her out of the grief, that will not be comforted. Only the finding of her Savior can satisfy the panting longing of her disquieted and disconsolate soul. . . .

But here is far more. Here is more than mere finding. Here is instruction of love!

Mary must learn the lesson that her Lord had not been stolen at all. Cruel and ruthless hands and loveless souls who mocked all her love, had not taken away her Lord at all. The conclusion at which she had jumped an hour earlier at the grave was not true at all. Her report to Peter and John had been wholly

erroneous and contrary to the glad fact of the resurrection.

Mary. . . .Rabboni!

In that one glad moment all the mist had rolled away from before the tear-filled eyes of this beloved daughter of Jerusalem. Her Lover had not forgotten. In tender and saving love He comes to greet her as the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of peace.

All her sorrow is turned to joy, and her tears shall be wiped from her eyes. But in this glad moment she must learn the full truth of all that has come to pass, in this sorrow that endureth for the night but which is followed by the joy that cometh in the morning.

Mary. . . .Rabboni!

Touch me not, Mary. . . .

Ah, do not be disappointed, my beloved sister. It is no reason for sorrow but rather for joy that you must not touch me, not cling to me, not will to hold me fast, in attempting to keep me here forever at thy side.

It is profitable for you that I go up to the Father at His right hand.

Remember how, when I was with you, I spoke to you of these things. I will surely go to the Father. I go to prepare a place for you and for all thy fair sisters, for they are Virgins. I have cleansed you, my beloved, in my perfect sacrifice on the Cross. I have not yet gone up, but I go up.

Presently when I shall have gone up, then you may see your desire fulfilled. . . .

Then shall thou, and all of the church, be beautiful upon the mountains of Zion and Jerusalem, O Princes daughter, thou whose body is like a round goblin, wherein no mingled wine is wanting, thou whose waist is like a heap of wheat set about with lilies. . . .

Touch me not, Mary!

Rabboni!



Go tell my brethren!

Stay not thy feet upon the way to the city that is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt! Hasten upon thy way, fairest maiden, and bring the tidings of the Bride-Groom.

Tell them, that I am passing through.

Ah, tell them, that the king's business requireth haste.

Nay, my being for three days and three nights in the heart of the earth was not a slackening of the pace of the great love, that brings all mine own elect to the Great Day of My coming. Behold I come quickly. I will, that ye all may presently be where I am, and that ye may behold my glory! Even in the moment of your great sorrow I hastened through the pangs of

death. And, listen, my beloved brethren, death has been swallowed up to victory. Death did not swallow me up, but it became the womb of the morning! Day is born out of night, thy Day-Star from on high has arisen out of the depths of darkness.

Oh, jealousy is cruel as Sheol, but love is as strong as death. The flashes thereof are flashes of fire, a very flame of Jehovah. Many waters cannot quench my love, neither can floods drown it. . . .

Tell it to my brethren.

Tell it to them, whom I am not ashamed to call my brethren. I, indeed, came to become partaker of your flesh and blood, that I might conquer him, who had the might of death, that is the Ach-Foe, Satan. He would quench my love for you. He has poured all the waters of his fury and wrath over my soul. He has laughed at me in the depths of Sheol. Oh, his jealousy was cruel, his cunning was great. But many waters did not quench my love for you. . . .

I am going up.

All is for your profit.

I shall come again to receive you unto myself in the glory of our Father and of our God. . . .

Then shall it be said: thou that dwellest in the gardens, thy companions hearken for thy voice: cause me to hear it.

Make haste, My Beloved. . . .

Tell, my brethren!

Geo. G. Lubbers.

THANKFUL COMMEMORATION

Monday, April 2, marks the fifty-fifth anniversary of the anniversary of the marriage of our dear parents,

John S. De Boer

and

Elizabeth De Boer (nee Fennema)

It is with deep gratitude to God for all the blessings of grace the Lord bestowed upon them during all these many years of holy marriage, that we as their children remember this occasion. Our parents have always sought our welfare in every possible way. Above all we are grateful for their daily striving to direct our footsteps in the fear of the Lord. To God be all the praise through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Their grateful children:

Mr. and Mrs. Simon De Boer

Rev. and Mrs. Peter De Boer

Mr. and Mrs. Clarence De Boer

Fourteen grand-children

and two great grand-children.

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EDITORIALS

The Declaration Of Principles

I think that thus far I have clearly shown from the Confessions that the promise of God is unconditional, that it is meant only for the elect, whether you conceive of them as in the counsel of God or as believers, that is, as those in whose heart God efficaciously works faith, and that therefore faith is not a condition, but a mere instrument or means of God whereby the elect are brought into saving contact with the promise of God.

We will now continue the Declaration, for it can only be beneficial that our churches are thoroughly acquainted with its truth.

The declaration continues as follows: "And that the election of God, and consequently the efficacy of the death of Christ and the promise of the gospel, is not conditional is evident abundantly from the following articles of the Canons.

"Canons I, A, 10: 'The good pleasure of God is the sole cause of this gracious election; which doth not consist herein, that out of all possible qualities and actions of men God has chosen some as a condition of salvation; but that he was pleased out of the common mass of sinners to adopt some certain persons as a peculiar people to himself, as it is written, For the children being not yet born neither having done any good or evil, etc., it was said (namely to Rebecca): the elder shall serve the younger; as it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. Rom. 9:11, 12, 13. And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. Acts 13:48.' "

In the first place, let me remark that in this article of the Canons the word *cause* occurs, which, according to Prof. Schilder, can refer only to time, and not to eternity. But in this article the word *cause* occurs evidently as referring to the eternal counsel of God: "The good pleasure of God is the sole cause of this gracious election."

But what I wish to emphasize in this connection is especially the fact that in this article for the first time the term *conditions* is put in the mouth of the Remonstrants. They taught "that out of all possible qualities and actions of men God has chosen some as a condition of salvation." Now it is well known to what the Remonstrants referred by these conditions. They meant that foreseen faith and obedience and faithfulness and perseverance are conditions in the counsel of God unto salvation. And it stands to reason that if foreseen faith on the part of man is a condition of salvation in the counsel of God, it must be so in

actual reality. The Rev. J. G. Feenstra in his "De Dordtsche Leerregelen" writes on this article of the Canons as follows:

"The Remonstrants maintain very nicely the name: good pleasure. The Bible does the same thing. And they want to appear as angels of light. When they come on wooden shoes, you hear them come, and that may not be allowed. They taught, that the pleasure of God consists in this, that God out of all possible conditions chose the act of faith and obedience. Rejection of Errors, I, 3. That God did not demand heavier conditions is according to His good pleasure. That He reckoned the incomplete as complete, is according to His good pleasure. But the conditions remain. And with this the entire thought of the good pleasure is completely removed."

And again he writes:

"The good pleasure of God excludes every condition, all merit and fitness. Good pleasure is unconditional. God chose out of the corrupt human race whomever He will. And He does not have to give account to us. And of no one did He ask counsel. We cannot check up on God. We may not criticize Him, nor may we defend Him, for both are sinful."

This is indeed Reformed language, and clearly teaches that there are no conditions on the part of man which he must fulfill in order to obtain salvation at all.

The Declaration continues:

"In Canons I, B, 2, the errors are repudiated of those who teach 'That there are various kinds of election of God unto eternal life: the one general and indefinite, the other particular and definite; and that the latter in turn is either incomplete, revocable, non-decisive and conditional, or complete, irrevocable, decisive and absolute.'"

The meaning of this is plain. It is based upon the same teaching of the Remonstrants that God elected on the ground of foreseen faith. Hence, they teach that election is in the first place, general and indefinite. This, of course, would include all men: in a certain sense all men are elected. For the death of Christ is meant for all men without distinction. There is no particular atonement. On the other hand, election is also called particular and definite, that is: God chose those of whom He foresaw that they would believe in Christ. But even this election is not decisive. It is either "incomplete, revocable, non-decisive and conditional, or complete, irrevocable, decisive and absolute." For when you once introduce conditions into the salvation of man and into the counsel of God, you must keep that salvation and counsel conditional to the very end. It is not only election on foreseen faith which the Remonstrants taught, but that faith can be lost and the believer can become faithless. And therefore election

is also based on foreseen obedience and foreseen perseverance. And therefore, it remains conditional until the end. Upon condition that man believes, upon condition that man walks in the way of God's precepts, on condition, therefore, of his being faithful, and on condition that he perseveres unto the end, man is saved. The whole matter of salvation becomes conditional from beginning to end, once you have maintained the proposition that faith is a condition unto salvation.

The Declaration continues:

"And in the same chapter of the Canons, B, 3, the errors are repudiated of those who teach: 'That the good pleasure and purpose of God, of which Scripture makes mention in the doctrine of election, does not consist in this, that God chose certain persons rather than others, but in this that he chose out of all possible conditions (among which are also the works of the law), or out of the whole order of things, the act of faith which from its very nature is undeserving, as well as its incomplete obedience, as a condition of salvation, and that he would graciously consider this in itself as a complete obedience and count it worthy of the reward of eternal life.'"

We will not repeat what we said before about the Arminian that faith according to the counsel of God is a condition of salvation. That this error is Arminian is very plain from the above article of the Canons. The Rev. Feenstra in the above quoted work writes:

"The Remonstrants teach:

"I. That God did not elect *certain persons*.

"II. That God might have proposed several different *conditions*.

"III. That God has chosen *faith* as a condition.

"But:

"IV. Thus the merit of Christ becomes without effect.

"V. The Scriptures teach otherwise."

The Declaration continues:

"Again, in the same chapter of the Canons, B, 5, the errors are rejected of those who teach that 'faith, the obedience of faith, holiness, godliness and perseverance are not fruits of the unchangeable election unto glory, but are conditions, which, being required before hand, were foreseen as being met by those who will be fully elected, and are causes without which the unchangeable election to glory does not occur.'"

Again, it is not necessary for us to repeat what we have said before. But I want to call your attention to the fact that when once faith is made a condition unto salvation, you have to continue to speak of conditions unto the very end. Not only faith, but also holiness, godliness, and perseverance are conditions that must be met unto the salvation of the people of God.

The Declaration continues:

"Finally, we refer to the statement of the Baptism Form: 'And although our young children do not understand these things, we may not therefore exclude them from baptism, for as they are without their knowledge partakers of the condemnation in Adam, so are they again received unto grace in Christ.' That here none other than the elect children of the covenant are meant and that they are unconditionally, without their knowledge, received unto grace in Christ, in the same way as they are under condemnation in Adam, is very evident."

The force of this argument is very evident. Our children are without their knowledge partakers of the condemnation in Adam by nature. What does this mean? It means nothing else than that without their knowledge they are under the guilt of Adam, and born incapable of doing any good and totally depraved. This certainly is not an objective sentence of God, which they must accept in order to be actually under guilt and actually in corruption, but is actually reality. But in the same way, that is, without their knowledge, the children of the covenant are received unto grace in Christ. Also this cannot mean that they have an objective bequest on the part of God unto salvation, or an objective offer of the promise, of which all the children of the covenant in the dispensation of the historical line of the covenant are participants on condition that they believe and obey. Because, in the first place, as we have said before, children cannot fulfill any conditions. But in the second place, and what is more to the point in this connection, is the fact that if this were the meaning the comparison would not hold whatsoever. The comparison is between actual condemnation and actual corruption on the one hand, and actual grace in Christ on the other. And therefore, when the Baptism Form states that our children without their knowledge are partakers of the grace in Christ and receive that grace, it certainly must mean that they are partakers of actual grace, that they are regenerated and have the faculty of faith given to them by God. But that this cannot refer to all the children that are born in the historical line of the dispensation of the covenant, but only to the elect, is also plain. For in this sense all the children of the covenant head for head are certainly not received unto grace in Christ.

The Declaration continues:

"That faith is not a prerequisite or condition unto salvation, but a gift of God, and a God-given instrument whereby we appropriate the salvation in Christ. This is plainly taught in the following parts of our confessions.

"Heidelberg Catechism, Qu. 20: 'Are all men then, as they attain the true knowledge of this great mystery, the Holy Ghost kindleth in our hearts an upright faith, which embraces Jesus Christ, with all his merits,

appropriates him, and seeks nothing more besides him. For it must needs follow, either that all things, which are requisite to our salvation, are not in Jesus Christ, or if all things are in him, that then those who possess Jesus Christ through faith, have complete salvation in him. Therefore, for any to assert, that Christ is not sufficient, but that something more is required besides him, would be too gross a blasphemy: for hence it would follow, that Christ was but half a Savior. Therefore we justly say with Paul, that we are justified by faith alone, or by faith without works. However, to speak more clearly, we do not mean, that faith itself justifies us, for it is only an instrument with which we embrace Christ our Righteousness. But Jesus Christ, imputing to us all his merits, and so many holy works which he has done for us, and in our stead, is our Righteousness. And faith is an instrument that keeps us in communion with him in all his benefits, which, when become ours, are more than sufficient to acquit us of our sins.'

"Confer also Netherland Confession, Articles 33-35, quoted above.

"Again, confer Canons of Dordrecht II, A, 8, quoted above.

"In Canons III & IV, A, 10 we read: 'But that others who are called by the gospel, obey the call, and are converted, is not to be ascribed to the proper exercise of free will, whereby one distinguishes himself above others, equally furnished with grace sufficient for faith and conversions, as the proud heresy of Pelagius maintains; but it must be wholly ascribed to God, who as he has chosen his own from eternity in Christ, so he confers upon them faith and repentance, rescues them from the power of darkness, and translates them into the kingdom of his own Son, that they may show forth the praises of him, who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light; and may glory not in themselves, but in the Lord according to the testimony of the apostles in various places.'

"Again, in the same chapter of the Canons, Art. 14, we read: 'Faith is therefore to be considered as the gift of God, not on account of its being offered by God to man, to be accepted or rejected at his pleasure; but because it is in reality conferred, breathed, and infused into him; or even because God bestows the power or ability to believe, and then expects that man should by the exercise of his own free will, consent to the terms of salvation, and actually believe in Christ; but because he who works in man both to will and to do, and indeed all things in all, produces both the will to believe, and the act of believing also.' "

Let me first of all call your attention to the proposition which we mean to prove by these parts of the Confession. It is this: "Faith is not a prerequisite or condition unto salvation, but a gift of God, and a God-

given instrument whereby we appropriate the salvation in Christ."

This is proved first of all from the quotation from the Heid. Cat., Qu. 20. For there we are taught that only those are saved who are ingrafted into Christ, and receive all His benefits by a true faith. The fact is that to be ingrafted into Christ is a passive idea. Man has nothing to do with it. We are ingrafted into Christ by a true faith through an act of God alone. And by that act of faith we receive all the benefits of Christ. It is true that in the German original we read: "Und alle Seine Wohltaten ahnehmen." That is: "and accept all his benefits." But this does not make one particle of difference. For, in the first place, unless we are first ingrafted into Christ, we certainly can never perform the act of faith whereby we accept the benefits of Christ. But, in the second place, according to the rest of the Confessions, as in Canons III & IV, Art. 14, even the act of faith is a gift of God. And therefore, in no sense of the word can faith be called a condition, but it is certainly a God-given instrument, whereby we receive Christ and all His benefits.

The same is true of the Netherland Confession, Art. 22, where it is said that faith "is only an instrument with which we embrace Christ our Righteousness." And once more in the same article: "Faith is an instrument that keeps us in communion with him in all his benefits." Now it ought to be plain to all that can read and understand that condition and instrument are certainly not the same, but denote radically different conceptions. A condition is something which man must fulfill in order to obtain salvation and to receive the promise. But an instrument is a God-given means whereby we are placed into contact with the promise and with the whole of salvation. Faith, therefore, is certainly not a condition, but is an instrument according to the clear language of our confessions.

And the same is true of the articles of the Canons to which we referred above. God has chosen His own from eternity. And upon them He confers faith and repentance, rescues them from the power of darkness, and translates them into the kingdom of His own Son, that they may show forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into His marvelous light. And again, according to Art. 14 of this chapter of the Canons, faith is a gift of God that cannot be accepted or rejected by man at his pleasure, but is efficaciously wrought in him. Nor is it thus, that faith as a power or ability to believe is bestowed upon man, and that then, after he has received the power of faith, man is able by the exercise of his own free will to consent to the terms of salvation and to actually believe in Christ. On the contrary, both the power of faith and

the actual believing are gifts of God, which He works in the believer continually.

That all this is certainly not the same as the proposition "faith is a condition" ought to be plain to all that can understand the Confessions.

H. H.



Answer to Brother Monsma

In reply to brother O. Monsma, I can be brief.

1. I refuse to enter into anymore controversy with the Rev. Petter.

2. As to the brother's second question, we all believe that God changes the "condition" of His children, by nature dead in sin, from death into life, from sin into holiness, and that in that "condition" he works out his own salvation with fear and trembling. This refers to the wellknown distinction between "state" and "condition."

It is, therefore, perfectly Reformed to speak of "condition" in the sense of "mode or state of being."

But it also ought to be clear that there is a sharp difference between saying that we do something *in a condition* which God has wrought in us, and saying that God will do something *on a condition* which we must first meet.

In the latter sense faith is not a condition.

H. H.



Of Books

The Life Story of Dr. Lee S. Huizenga, by the Rev. L. J. Lamberts; Wm. B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan. Price \$2.50.

This is a very interestingly written account of the life and labors of Dr. L. S. Huizenga, from his boyhood days in the Netherlands, through his student days, his labors in the Indian mission field, up to his departure from this earthly tabernacle when he labored as a missionary in China.

The book is written by a very personal, intimate and warm friend of Dr. Huizenga as is evident throughout this biography. It makes very easy and interesting reading and will, no doubt, find many readers.

It is striking that most of the book is devoted Dr. Huizenga's preparation for the foreign field, and only a comparatively small part to his actual missionary labors in China. This, although it is a fact that Dr.

Huizenga did devote an uncommonly large share of his life to preparatory work, as we happen to know from personal experience, is, nevertheless, a weakness of the book.

H. H.

* * *

Lange's Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, Exodus-Deuteronomy; Zondervan Publ. House, Grand Rapids, Mich. Price per vol. \$3.95. Two volumes.

What we remarked about the volumes of Lange's Commentary already published by the Zondervan Publishing House, holds good for the volumes we are now reviewing and recommending to our readers. It is a scholarly and conservative commentary, characterized, on the whole by sound exegesis and honest dealings with the text. The work is enriched by many notes.

It is, of course, impossible, in reviewing a work of this matter, to offer a detailed criticism. It is but natural that, in an exegetical work such as this, we find some views expressed with which I cannot agree. As an illustration, I may refer to Lange's explanation of the passage through the Red Sea (Exodus, p. 28), an interpretation which, however, is criticized in a note.

But this does not in the least detract from my expression of high regard for this scholarly work.

H. H.

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Het Boek Leviticus, door prof. Dr. W. H. Gispen. Uitgever J. H. Kok, N.V. Kampen, Nederland. 401 paginas. Prijs f. 15.25.

Dit is, m.i., een zeer degelijk en grondig uitgewerkte, zoowel als conservatieve commentaar op het boek Leviticus.

In een inleiding verdedigt de schrijver het oorspronkelijk auteurschap van Moses, ofschoon daarmee de kwestie, wie de eind-redactor van het boek is geweest, nog niet is opgelost. De voornaamste beteekenis van het boek Leviticus vindt de schrijver hierin, dat: "het predikt ons, Christenen, de wijze, waarop de zonde wordt bestreden in Israel door de God van Israel, door zijn instellingen (het offer, de reinigingen; de sociale zonde door het sabbat- en jubeljaren; de sexuele zonde door de wetten van kuisheid), door zijn belofte en bedrieging etc. En in deze bestrijding van de zonde predikt het ons Christus: het zoen-en reinigingsmiddel, de grote Priester, Profeet, en Leeraar, de Koning, die ons door Zijn verordeningen regeert." p. 27.

Interessant is wat Dr. Gispen schrijft over de ziekte van melaatschheid op pp. 198-203.

Een waardig bijdrage tot de verklaring der Heilige Schrift.

Hartelijk aanbevolen.

H. H.

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Deuteronomium I, door Dr. J. Ridderbos. Uitgever, J. H. Kok, N.V. Kampen, Nederland. Prijs f. 4.25.

Deze verklaring van het boek Deuteronomium komt voor in de serie "Korte Verklaring der Heilige Schrift". In een inleiding behandelt de schrijver o.m., ook het critische vraagstuk aangaande het auteurschap en den oorsprong van het boek. Van belang is hetgeen Dr. Ridderbos schrijft, mede in de inleiding, over het verbond, zegen en vloek of wraak des verbonds.

De verklaring zelf is duidelijk en in glashelderden stijl geschreven. Hier en daar hadden we gaarne een beetje bredere verklaring gezien.

Dit eerste deel bevat de verklaring op de eerste zestien hoofdstukken van Deuteronomium.

Van harte aanbevolen bij onze Hollandsche lezers.

H. H.

* * *

De Dordtsche Leerregelen, door Ds. J. G. Feenstra; tweede druk. Uitgever J. H. Kok, Kampen, Nederland. Prijs f. 4.50.

Deze Gereformeerde verklaring van de Vijf Artikelen Tegen de Remonstranten door iemand, die onze gereformeerde belijdenisschriften blijkbaar grondig kent en liefheeft, bevelen we van harte aan bij ons Hollandsch lezend publiek.

In een inleidend woord biedt Ds. Feenstra o.m. ook een critiek op de bestrijding van de Dordtsche Leerregelen en de predestinatie door de dialectische theologie.

We hadden gaarne een bredere verklaring gezien van de verwerping der dwalingen.

H. H.

NOTICE

The Board of the Protestant Reformed Christian School of Grand Rapids "Adams St.", is in need of teachers for the 2nd, 3rd and 8th grades. The need is urgent.

Please address your application to:

Educational Committee
Protestant Reformed Chr. School
1156 Adams St., S. E.
Grand Rapids 7, Michigan.

The Issue Clearly Drawn

Prof. K. Schilder has drawn the issue very clearly in his recent articles in the *Reformatie* on the Declaration which has been approved by Classis East and rejected by Classis West. The undersigned does not intend to discuss these articles. This rests in the capable hands of the editor of the *Standard Bearer*. However, we do wish to write a few lines in connection with the fact that the issue has been clearly drawn.

Professor Schilder is not merely opposed to the Declaration. He is also opposed to the binding decision of our classical meeting of October, 1950. He does not acknowledge any differences between the Liberated Churches and our churches and suggests that all so-called differences are merely doctrinal and dogmatical opinions of individuals. Hence, he advocates that nothing binding be laid before liberated immigrants when they seek admittance into the fellowship of our churches. If we maintain the Declaration and also the binding decision of the October classis (the professor very correctly identifies the two), so the professor continues, our churches will commit hari-kari, ecclesiastical suicide. The undersigned, however, is of the conviction that, if we do not maintain them, we commit hari-kari.

Permit me to begin with this question: Are we and must we remain distinctively Protestant Reformed? The professor denies this. The immigrants in Canada deny this. Do we have a distinctively Protestant Reformed calling? And, if we have such a distinctively Protestant Reformed calling, how must we maintain it, and this particularly over against those who deny this? Have we been following Rev. Hoeksema merely as a man, and have we merely been following his personal opinions through all these years, since 1924? Or, has it been our conviction that he has been and is being used by God to reveal unto us the beauty of the Scriptures and of the Reformed truth? Let us, in these momentous days, take inventory, recall the past, and analyze the struggle which we have fought as Protestant Reformed Churches. I appeal to our people, in Classis East and in Classis West, to ask themselves the question: Why were we cast out of the Christian Reformed Church and what have we been maintaining all these years? Have we not been privileged by the Lord to champion the truth that the grace of God is sovereignly particular, that it is particular according to the sovereign pleasure and will of the Lord. To say that the grace of God is particular is not peculiarly reformed; to say that it is *sovereignly* particular is reformed. And because we believe that the grace of God (there is only one grace) is sovereignly particular, we have applied this truth consistently all along the line. It is for this reason that we have refused to ac-

cept the theory of an offer of salvation, and have proclaimed that the gospel is not only a savour of life unto life but also of death unto death, and this according to the good pleasure of the Lord. Hence, the gospel is never grace to all the hearers. But, applying the truth of God's sovereignly particular grace consistently, we have also proclaimed that the same must apply to the sacraments. This explains why we have rejected the Heynsian error of a general promise (this is the main tenet of Heynsianism, not that of a preparatory, subjective grace). We have indeed maintained the truth that Divine election is the heart and core of the Church of God. Twenty-seven years ago we preferred expulsion from the Churches wherein we formerly had a name and a place, rather than deny what we believed to be the truth according to the Word of God and our Confessions. If twenty-seven years ago we had been confronted with the Declaration as a statement of that which we believed to be the truth of Scripture and the Confessions, not one among us would have hesitated. Let us recall these days and analyze anew the struggle which gave birth to our Protestant Reformed churches.

Today we are called to work among the immigrants in Canada. Professor Schilder has clearly drawn the line. And permit me to add: also the immigrants in Canada have clearly drawn the line. First, one listens in vain among them for emphasis upon the truths of God's election and reprobation (except those very few who came to Canada some four or five years ago, but refused to take a stand for our Protestant Reformed Churches when it involved them in taking a stand over against Liberated immigrants). The doctrine of election is mentioned with great hesitation and that of reprobation is completely silenced. The theory of a general promise is generally advocated. And, according to these immigrants, this means that God does not baptize a child in His wrath but in His favor, that the sacrament of baptism is for every child a token of Divine grace, mercy, and love. Besides, they wish to join our churches as liberated, do not wish to be bound to any binding decision. This is true throughout Canada. This was clearly evinced at our classical meetings which were held last October, January, and February. I challenge anyone to prove the contrary. They intend to retain the liberty to maintain and propagate their own views as members of our Protestant Reformed Churches. And in this they are fully supported out of the Netherlands.

Indeed, the issue is clearly drawn. First, let no man say (as has been rumoured) that the undersigned is responsible, either wholly or in part, for the collapse of our Protestant Reformed church in Hamilton. If I am responsible for Hamilton's debacle, then every minister and elder who were delegated to our October, 1950 classis must share equally this responsibility. Hamilton's Liberated left us, *not because of the De-*

claration, but because of the binding decision, originally adopted by the consistory last June 5, and enforced by the October classis. Every delegate at that October classis, excepting one delegate from our congregation of Chatham, voted to maintain this binding decision. All I did in Hamilton was merely to enforce it. This is the reason for Hamilton's collapse. Hence, every minister and elder of classis East, who voted to maintain this binding decision, must share equal responsibility with me. And, this also emphasizes the point that Hamilton's suspension and virtual deposition of the undersigned was a suspension and deposition of every Protestant Reformed minister of our churches. Secondly, I must refute the theory that Hamilton's debacle must be regarded as a local affair. Anyone who reads the Reformatie and has been following the articles of Prof. Schilder on the Declaration will realize the absurdity of this theory. Permit me to emphasize: I was suspended *as a Protestant Reformed minister* by the people of our church of Hamilton *as Liberated*. At no time did anything personal ever enter into the matter of my suspension. To quote the official decision of the consistory at its meeting of January 12, 1951, I was suspended *because I refused to submit to the basis as willed by the consistory*. This basis was the rejection of the binding decision which was enforced by the classis of October, 1950. It was simply a case of a congregation and consistory which had called me and promised to bind themselves to me (as a Protestant Reformed minister), later violated its promise, and disposed of me without one word of appreciation for me or our churches, and demanded that I bind myself to them. This is the record. Having accepted the call to Hamilton because I believed that the Lord laid it upon me, and with the desire and resolve to serve our Protestant Reformed churches, the undersigned wonders not a little why the opponents of the Declaration never refer to my suspension in any of their writings. To accept the call to Hamilton was difficult. To be treated like scum and offscouring by the congregation of Hamilton was worse. But, to wonder whether I have the backing and support of our churches is surely the most difficult of all.

I repeat: the issue is clearly drawn. Are we to remain Protestant Reformed? I wish to ask Rev. De Jong and Rev. Petter, and possibly others, the question: "Do we have a distinctively Protestant Reformed calling? Must we maintain that calling? And how must we maintain that calling when we labor among people who deny that calling? How can we best labor among them and preserve our distinctiveness?" Are we and must we remain Protestant Reformed? If we abolish all binding, permit people to join our churches who maintain their own conception of the general promise, we will grow. We will grow numerically. But, *we shall cease to exist as Protestant Reformed Churches*.

Are we ready to give up our heritage, to renounce our distinctiveness? Are we ready to permit the infiltration into our churches of a conception the rejection whereof constitutes the very origin and heart and cause and right of our existence? What is to be our answer in these momentous days of decision? And let us not make the mistake in the attempt to show that these immigrants are reformed, calvinistic, and biblical and as such should be welcome into our fellowship by quoting many things from their leaders with which we can and must agree. The undersigned repeats what he has said and written in the past: a preacher or writer must be judged, not in the light of the reformed things he speaks or writes, but in the light of the things which are contrary to the reformed truth. Do we recall our own struggle of the last twenty seven years? Do we recall how the leaders and preachers of the Christian Reformed Church declared agreement with the truths of election and reprobation, particular atonement, efficacy and irresistible character of the grace of God? Let us then please bear in mind: these immigrants teach a conception of the promise which we have been rejecting ever since 1924. And, they insist on the liberty to continue to maintain this conception and spread it in our churches. Prof. Schilder may insist that we, to reveal ourselves as a church of Jesus Christ, should receive them into our fellowship. We, however, reiterate that to do so would be to commit hari-kari. This would be suicide for our Protestant Reformed Cause. Much has been written to show why we can best serve our churches by adopting the Declaration. I conclude with this question: Will someone please show us how we can best serve our churches by not adopting it? Because, as far as the undersigned is concerned, my one concern is the churches whom I love and am privileged to serve.

H. Veldman.

IN MEMORIAM

The Mission Committee extends its sincere sympathy to the bereaved family of its former member

Mr. Henry Lotterman

whom the Lord suddenly took from active service in the church militant to the church triumphant on February 16, 1951.

As member of the Mission Committee he served our churches faithfully for the past several years.

May the King of His Church comfort the bereaved relatives with His grace and Spirit.

The Mission Committee:

R. Veldman, President

C. Hanko, Secretary.

OUR DOCTRINE

Days or Periods

I.

VARIOUS ATTEMPTS TO "HARMONIZE" THE SCRIPTURAL ACCOUNT OF CREATION WITH THE "FINDINGS OF SCIENCE".

The ideal or allegorical interpretation.

This theory of the account of creation is called the "ideal" because it maintains the idea if not the historical narrative of creation according to Holy Writ. Genesis 1 is not a historical description of the work of creation but a poetical setting forth of this creative work of the Lord. The six days of creation must not be regarded as chronological periods of time of longer or shorter duration, but merely different viewpoints from which the created world is repeatedly viewed in order that we might gain a clearer picture of this mighty work of the living God. The six days of creation, according to Genesis, are not to be regarded as really occurring successively, but they merely present to us the causal connection between the various creatures, the *logical* (not temporal) order of the different creatures, and also describe to us how the angels, successively, gained knowledge of the Divine work of creation. What this means is not difficult to understand. Although it is true, then, that all things were created at once, this does not necessarily mean that the various things are not connected and related. Hence, this logical order of the various creatures is held before us in the Scriptural account of creation—the six days do not present to us a temporal order of events, but merely a logical order, the causal connection between all the different works of God's hands. Neither must he believe, so it is said, that the angels always enjoyed a complete knowledge of the creative work of the Lord. They gradually attained unto this knowledge. And this gradual attainment unto this knowledge by the angels is described unto us in the Scriptural account of creation.

However, over against this ideal presentation of the work of creation we may lodge serious objections. First, is it not amazing that the foolish and vain philosophy of this world will go to such great length to make difficult an historical account which is so obviously clear and simple. One may not understand this work of the Lord or fathom the Divine origin of all things. This lies in the nature of the case. But the narrative as set forth before us in Genesis is surely so clear and plain that, although the finite mind will

never be able to fathom it, yet a child can grasp it and a child can be told the Scriptural story of the creation of the world. We should never make matters intricate and involved which are obviously simple and clear. And this surely applies to this vain attempt to explain the Divine origin of the world. Surely, it must be clear to anyone who will read Genesis 1 that the Scriptures there present to us an historical narrative of the work of creation in time. And this is certainly abundantly sustained by Holy Writ, as in: "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it"—Exodus 20:11; "Thou, even Thou, are Lord alone; Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and Thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth Thee"—Nehemiah 9:6; "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall praise Thy works to another, and shall declare Thy mighty acts. I will speak of the glorious honor of Thy majesty, and of Thy wondrous works. And men shall speak of the might of Thy terrible acts: and I will declare Thy greatness"—Psalm 145:3-6. Secondly, if Genesis 1 and 2 must not be regarded as an historical narrative, what about the chapters that follow in this book of Genesis? Surely, Genesis 3, etc., follows historically upon the first two chapters. If Gen. 1 and 2 are not historical, the rest of the chapters of this book may not be historical either; and what, then, we ask, is historical?

The mythical theory of creation.

This theory does not merely reject the historical narrative of creation as revealed in the Scriptures, but also the idea as such of creation, and regards the record of Genesis 1 as merely a myth, a legend, a piece of fiction, embodying a religious lesson. The things themselves, as recorded in the first book of Moses, are not necessarily real; Scripture simply speaks as it does figuratively. When we read, e.g., that the Lord made coats of skins for Adam and Eve, this does not mean that He actually did that, but merely that He somehow clothed them. Some go so far as to deny that we have any history in Genesis 1 but exclusively a myth, a legend. The Scriptural narrative simply tells us how certain writers conceived of the first dwelling-place of man, and how they conceived of the entrance of sin into the world. History we do not have here. Others did not wish to proceed to such extremes, maintained that Genesis does not give us an historical account, but declared that the presentation of this account is mythical. It is true, then, that that which is recorded in Genesis 1 is historical, but we do not know whether the things actually occurred as nar-

rated in the first book of Moses. The first chapters of Genesis, it is asserted, do tell us of the original state of rectitude, of man as he was put to the test by the Lord, of the entrance of the devil to tempt man, of a falling in sin and the subsequent driving out of man by the living God. That is the history, the facts, which are recorded in Holy Writ. But this does not imply that these facts actually occurred as revealed to us in Holy Writ. We do not know whether there was actually a garden of Eden, or whether there was actually a tree of life or a tree of knowledge of good and evil in that garden, whether there was actually a serpent in Paradise and whether that serpent actually spoke. Scripture simply reveals to us these historical facts in figurative language. Even as we cannot form an idea, conceive of the heavenly things as they shall be, so also we cannot conceive of the things as they once were in the original state of righteousness. And just as the Scriptures describe to us these heavenly realities in terms which are adapted to our present earthly life, so also the Scriptures describe the things as they were in paradise in terms which are adapted to our present life and thinking. There was a tree in Paradise but we do not know what kind of a tree it was; there was a temptation but we do not know how that temptation actually occurred. Besides, it is said, what difference does it really make? The important thing is that we grasp the higher reality which is revealed to us in figurative language. All we need do is believe that the man was originally righteous, that he lived in fellowship with the Lord, that he was tempted and fell into sin. The rest is merely incidental. (See Volume V, page 205, of the Standard Bearer).

In this connection we may also call attention to the fact that some years ago a certain Dr. Geelkerken in the Netherlands denied the historical and objective reality with respect to the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and of evil, the serpent, the seed of the serpent, maintaining that these were not historically real but simply Scripture's way of teaching us certain truths.

Against this presentation of the Scriptural account of creation we may lodge all the objections which we lodged against the ideal or allegorical theory. When the Word of the Lord speaks of the heavenly Jerusalem and of that city's golden streets, everyone knows that the language is figurative. On the other hand, it is equally clear that Scripture's account of the creation of the world as set forth in the book of Genesis must be viewed as an historical account of the work of creation. Besides, against his mythical theory we would repeat: If these things of Genesis 1 are not real, what then, is real? Who, then, will determine what is true or fictional and legendary? The same thing could then also be said of many other things in Holy Writ, such as: Israel, Israel's deliverance out

of Egypt, Mount Sinai, the Rock, the Manna, Christ, etc. To proceed from the assumption that Scripture reveals these matters to us in figurative language is surely a very arbitrary approach to Holy Writ, and simply deprives us of whatever certainty one may possess with respect to the one and only book of Divinely infallible inspiration. We do well to hold to the literal and natural interpretation of Holy Writ unless the Scriptures themselves inform us that the interpretation must be based upon a figurative explanation of the text. For example, we are told in the Word of God that the heavenly Jerusalem has golden streets, but we are also informed that the heavenly and eternal realization of God's covenant and salvation is such that human heart could never conceive of it, and that it could never enter into the heart and mind of man, and also that flesh and blood can never enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Besides, is it not true, that as far as the heavenly renewal of all things is concerned, we expect exactly *heavenly things*, and heavenly things are surely different than the things earthly; but, as far as the earthly Paradise is concerned, we deal with earthly things. Because we are earthly we cannot form a conception of that which once shall be in heavenly glory, and the heavenly renewal of all things must be described to us in terms adapted to our earthly life and thinking; but, also because we are earthly, we can form a conception of the things as they once were in the earthly Paradise. Scripture's account of creation must stand as recorded in Holy Writ. If we do or cannot believe the account in Holy Writ, what, then, shall we believe?

The restitution theory.

This conception would make separation between Gen. 1:1 and Gen. 1:2, and assumes that a long period of time elapsed between the creation of the heavens and the earth as recorded in verse 1 and the so-called secondary creation as described in the following verses. The Hexaemeron, or creation-week, begins really with verse 3, describes only the restoration and preparation of the earth for man. This restitution theory, therefore, ascribes a long period of time to the chaos of verse 2 and attempts to explain in the light of that chaos all the different phenomena which the science of geology presents to us. Geology is that science which deals with the structure of the crust of the globe and all the substances which compose it. The geologist digs into the earth and comes up with all kinds of "scientific findings". This long period of time was characterized by several catastrophic changes, which resulted in the destruction described by the words "waste and void". They would read verse 2: And the earth became waste and void. And then, out of this chaos, God created a habitable world for man. In fact, some even declare that the earth was originally in-

habited by the angels, and that the fall in the angelic world caused the chaos whereof we read in verse 2.

This restitution theory, however, is pure philosophy and is not acquired from a careful and honest reading of the Holy Scriptures. Fact is, the Word of God tells us that God created the heavens and the earth "and all that in them is" in six xdays—Gen. 2:1, Ex. 20:11.

The concordistic theory.

This theory of the creation of the world maintains that the days of creation were periods of time, periods of thousands of years. To this theory we will now call attention somewhat in detail.

THE CONCORDISTIC THEORY

Defended by Dr. H. Bavinck.

This concordistic theory of the creation of the universe has been defended, among others, by the late Dr. H. Bavinck (see his "Reformed Dogmatics", II, 478, f.f.)

He declares, in the first place, that Genesis 1:1 must apparently be regarded as occurring before the six actual days of creation. He affirms that the restitution theory with respect to the fall of the angels and the resultant chaos of the earth (without form and void) is fallacious and does not rest upon anything which can be read in the Word of God (see "restitution theory" above). But, on the other hand, he also declares that the creation of the heavens and the earth, the chaotic condition of the earth (without form and void), cannot be placed upon the first day, declaring that the first day was not formed by the original darkness and the subsequently created light, but by the first exchange of light and darkness. The darkness of verse 2, he continues, was not the first evening, but only after the light was created did it become evening and then morning. And the morning concluded the first day, which had begun with the creation of light. The late professor also declares that, even if we wished to regard Gen. 1:1 and 2 as occurring on the first day, because of what we read in Ex. 20:11 and 31:17, this first day would be a very unusual and extraordinary day, which began with the first moment of creation and then was dark for some time. This reasoning of the professor, therefore, proceeds upon the basis that the six days, whereof we read in Genesis 1, were characterized by the fact that it was evening and morning, and therefore by the exchange of light and darkness. However, verse 1 cannot refer to the first of these six days for the simple reason that there was no exchange of light and darkness, that darkness covered the face of the deep, and that light was created on the first of the six days. Hence, if we wish to accept the testimony of Ex. 20:11 and 31:17 in the sense that the Lord created the heavens and the earth in six days,

together with all that they contain, then the first day surely becomes a very unusual and extraordinary day, inasmuch as it began with the first moment of creation and then was dark for some time. However, Dr. Bavinck also declares that the exegesis of Genesis 1 is possible which regards also the six days as periods. But to this we will call attention, the Lord willing, in our subsequent article.

H. Veldman.



Vain Repetitions in Prayer

Let us turn to Matthew 6, verses 7 and 8, and read here the word of God as follows: "But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard of their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him."

Christ here instructs His people not to use vain repetitions in prayer. The original text uses a word that means to repeat the same thing over and over; to use many idle words; to babble, prate. God's people must not fall into this error in prayer, as do the heathen.

Yet it would be wrong to conclude that Christ here lays His people under a law forbidding long prayers. Lengthy prayers are not as such distasteful to God. Christ's very own practice while He walked among us on this earth forbids this view. The Savior would spend whole nights in prayer in the mountain apart. And so Christ's followers, too, must pray without ceasing, cry unto God day and night, which they do in their afflictions. And we have Christ's own word for it that God shall speedily avenge His elect who cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them. Nor does this Scripture passage teach that it is as such wrong to repeat a phrase or sentence in prayer. Every one of the twenty-six verses of Psalm 136 closes with the exultant cry: "For His mercy endureth forever."

Finally, it also would be a mistake to conclude from this bit of instruction that it is wrong in God's sight to petition Him for the same things all the while. Let us consider that there is but one bread of life—the Lord Jesus; but one grace—His grace; but one Spirit—the Spirit of Christ; but one kingdom—His heavenly kingdom; and but one will—the will of the Father. And upon these things—the things promised—the things above—true prayer is always and exclusively concentrated.

It is the vain repetitions in prayer against which Christ cautions His people, the babbling, the prating

in prayer. Now it is true, to be sure, that when a man prays thoughtlessly without his mind focussed on His prayer, he must be said to babble, however sound his prayer may be in a doctrinal point of view; or when he prays without any regard to the sense and meaning of the words that he utters, he babbles; or, when he repeats the same things merely to draw out his prayer to a length dictated by custom. A man certainly must be said to babble in prayer when through prayer he seeks forbidden things, the things on earth, and accordingly is activated in his prayer by a carnal motive; or when he prays for the things heavenly—such as grace—but with a double heart, that is, with his affection set on the bread that perishes and not on the heavenly gift. That man wavers. He is double-minded. He is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. Let not that man think, says James, that he shall receive anything from the Lord.

True prayer is so difficult. For to be truly praying is to be with God in His sanctuary, fellowshiping with the Father through Christ, as crucifying the members which are upon the earth and with the whole heart set upon the things of Christ's heavenly kingdom. What man can truly pray? There is but one who can pray—and that one Christ. As the merciful highpriest He prays *for* His people, and He prays in and through His people by His Spirit. Only as living members of His body, grafted in Him by a faith living and indestructible, because He prays for them, do His people pray to the Father.

But we must be definite in explaining this Scripture passage. We can be, for Christ is definite in His presentation of it. "But when ye pray use not vain repetitions as do the heathen." Let us take notice, "as do the heathen". The heathen pray, too. It is not a question whether a man prays. All men do. It's a question to whom a man prays, to the Father or to an idol. The heathen do the latter. Accordingly, their prayers are babbling. They use vain repetitions. A striking example of such praying is contained in the first book of the Kings, the eighteenth chapter. Here is described a contest between Elijah, the lone prophet of God, and the prophets of Baal, four hundred in number. Who was to be God, Jehovah or Baal. That was the issue. The God who in response to the prayers of his devotees answered by fire consuming the sacrifices was to decide. The prophets of Baal called on their deity from morning until noon. They said one thing over and over. It was, "O Baal hear us". But there was no voice and no answer. They became frantic. They leaped up and down before their altar, cried aloud and cut themselves with knives and lancets till the blood flowed out upon them.

Christ gives us the explanation of these strange and dreadful capers. These Baal priests thought that they should be heard for their much speaking. Their

antics thus bespoke a terrible effort to induce Baal to give answer. For they were directing their entreaties to an idol. Think on what they had done with God. They had changed His glory into an image made like to corruptible man. They had, in a word, drawn God down to the level of the creature, of a man, with all the vile passions, weaknesses and limitations of a man. And Baal was that man. Hence, as the prophet Elijah mockingly suggests, Baal might be pre-occupied in his spirit so as not to be hearing them. Or he might be on a chase or on a journey. Or it might be that he was asleep so that he had to be awakened. Or he might be decided not to yield to their entreaties, so that his mind had to be changed by their persistent cries. It might be, too, that he was undecided so that his mind had to be made up for him by their persistent teasing.

Baal being but a man, these heathen were behaving toward their deity in much the same way that a spoiled child will carry on with regard to weak and doting parents. Such a child makes known its request and receives "no" for an answer. But the child means to have its way; so it takes recourse to teasing. If that gets it no results, it creates a scene. It vexes, harasses and plagues until the parent, driven to distraction by its wicked importunities, finally yields.

So behave the heathen with respect to their gods who are no gods. They think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be ye therefore not like unto them. Christ's meaning is clear. Do not ye tease your Father. Do not imagine that it is necessary to inform Him, or to attract His attention, or to arouse His pity by your cries. Do not think that by vain repetitions you can impose your will upon Him, so that as plagued and harassed to distraction by your carnal importunities, He is finally in His weakness induced to yield to you by reason of your teasings and gives you the thing upon which you have your carnal affection set even against His better knowledge. All such prayers are a terrible insult to your Father.

Christ states the reason: "For your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before you ask. To clarify this statement fully and completely we must by all means discern who it is of whom Christ here speaks. He speaks of the Father, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of His redeemed family, the church of the elect. And consider who this Father—the Father of this family—is. He is not an idol, but de is the eternal, the incomprehensible, the infinite and infinitely wise God, whose wisdom is unsearchable, and whose ways are past finding out, the holy and the righteous God who dwelleth in a light unto which no man can approach; the Almighty God, who measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, meted out the heavens with a span, comprehended the dust of the earth with a measure, and weighed the moun-

tains in scales and the hills in a balance and before whom all the nations are nothing, the great God, who doeth all His good pleasure and worketh all things according to the counsel of His will.

And consider who these children are. They are the children of This Father who is God and none else, the object of His eternal love, chosen by Him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before Him in love; predestinated by Him unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will and to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He made these children of His, by nature dead in their trespasses and sins, accepted in the beloved. And how the Father loved these children. He has them engraved in the palms of His hand so that they are ever before Him. He laid all the sins of His children upon His only begotten Son, Christ Jesus, and wounded Him for their transgressions; and then raised Him up from the dead on account of their justification, and set Him, the Christ, with all His people in heaven, where He blessed them with all spiritual blessings.

O, the unutterable foolishness therefore of these children teasing their Father, like so many spoiled children, harassing Him by their carnal importunities to get Him to do *their* will. How unutterably wicked! What an insult to the Father. For our Father knoweth what things we, His children, have need of. To be sure, He knows, being what He is, the only true God, whom to know is life everlasting. He knows because, being God and not a man, He sovereignly determined all the needs of His children in His mercy and wisdom, and because, according to this wise and good and loving and sovereign determination, He created all our needs. And being God, He supplied Himself with all the things necessary for the fulfillment of the needs of His children. And in His love of His children He is eternally and thus unchangeably decided to give us the things we need and none other.

And therefore, if we are truly His children, we will consider that He knows what things we have need of, not we. And as so considering, we will go to the Father and say: "Father discover to me my needs." And He will answer that prayer through His Scriptures as applied to our hearts by Christ's Spirit. He will say: My child, thou needest Me, who am thy reward, exceeding Great. Thou hast need that my heavenly kingdom come; for I have created in thee the need of my kingdom. Thou hast need that my will be done, not thine. Thou hast need that My name be hallowed, for thou lovest Me in the love that I pour out in thine heart. Yes, and thou hast need of thy daily bread. I will give it thee. And thou hast need of My forgiveness. I have forgiven thee, in Christ. And thou hast need to be delivered from all evil, from the power of Satan, and from all thy guilt and sin

and death, and from thine adversaries, that revile you, and persecute you and say all manner of evil against you, falsely, for My sake. I have delivered thee and at the last day I will raise thee up and clothe thee with heavenly perfection and glory. And thou hast need to praise Me, thy God, and exultantly to exclaim that mine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. For thou art My child.

Having thus learned from the Father our needs, we as His redeemed children pray to the Father in the full assurance of faith:

"Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in heaven in heaven so on earth. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation. But deliver us from all evil. For thine in the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen."

G. M. Ophoff.

Contribution

Dear Editor:

A little space in your paper, please?

"Rev. Howerzyl votes in favor of the Declaration" (?—H.V.P.)

That was a beautiful article, from the pen of Rev. Howerzyl, in re, "The Radio Preaching in the midst of the field of the Arminian Faith; and the results: as he expresses it in the article in the Standard Bearer of March 15, last.

That is *just what we as churches were in need of*; and this article, (if anything) should prove to all those who voted against the Declaration, that they have *sorely* erred, although they meant well when they did so.

To maintain that we do not *need* the declaration is one thing; but to *prove* that we as churches should not adopt it, is quite a different matter. Up to the present date, such proof is still lacking, and sorely so.

The article in the Standard Bearer proves: that we as churches *must* maintain *our distinctiveness of Doctrine*, and that only in that way can we expect a blessing from God. God's Word is still: "The power of God *unto salvation, correction, rebuke, instruction*, and finally to the glory of God our Savior. Then, and then only, can we expect God's richest blessing; when this is preached in all its purity, and then only do we have comfort in life and in death: God's promise is sure!

We, as churches, and the Liberated, do *not* at present belong together. We must first settle our dif-

ferences 'as to what God's Word and the Reformed Confessions teach', before we can agree in 'One faith; One hope; and One baptism'. But that shall never be reached by letting down the bars of our distinctiveness and calling wherewith we are called by God.

It is *only God's Word, the truth!* That is the dynamite which can convert the man's heart from his sinful sentimental notions of Arminianism, Pelagianism and what have you, and turn him to praise the Living God, to adore Him only as his Savior. We can preach until the mountains turn upside down, but we cannot change man's heart and way. *Only God* can do so, and this He does do, only with His Word and *not* with our sentimentalism. God's promise is always the *yea* and *amen* in Jesus Christ.

Again: Read that article once more, and *be convinced* that to adopt the Declaration of Principles is an *absolute must* for our churches. Then, and then only can we hope to win the Liberated brethren to the Truth.

H. A. Van. Putten
Holland, Michigan.

Giving Account

During recent months at least four issues of the *Standard Bearer* have referred to the undersigned in connection with what he has said, written or implied with reference to current issues among us, or more explicitly: The Declaration of Principles, and our position over against the so-called "Liberated" brethren. These references have somewhat put us in a rather peculiar (if not questionable) light. For this reason it might be well for us to give an account of ourselves in as far as this is necessary.

First of all, we wish to refer to a statement of the editor, the Rev. H. Hoeksema, in his editorial of January 15th, last, page 172, where he offers proof for the need of the Declaration, stating: "The missionaries themselves evidently felt the need of it (the Declaration, A.C.) as a basis for their labors and for the organization of churches. At least the Rev. A. Cammenga, who was present at our last Synod, strongly expressed himself in favor of adopting this declaration."

Rev. G. M. Ophoff makes a somewhat similar statement in the *Standard Bearer*, Dec. 15, 1950, page 137, "Besides, on our last Synod we all heard Rev. Cammenga plead as many as fifteen minutes for exactly such a thing as 'The Declaration.'"

In connection with these statements we wish to point to the difference between the testimony of Rev. Hoeksema and that of Rev. Ophoff. Rev. Hoeksema

states that the undersigned expressed himself in favor of adopting "*this Declaration*," (italics mine, A.C.). Which means that we actually expressed, on the floor of Synod, that we favored the Declaration *as we have it today in its present form*. Rev. Ophoff merely states that we pleaded for "exactly such a thing as 'The Declaration,'" (italics mine, A.C.). Hence, according to Rev. Ophoff, we did *not* plead for *this Declaration*, but for something *like it*.

Let us emphasize that the statements of both Rev. Hoeksema and Rev. Ophoff are incorrect. The facts are these: Neither Rev. Hofman nor the undersigned ever personally felt the need of a so-called Declaration, neither of anything like it. Neither did Rev. Hofman nor the undersigned ever feel the need personally for what the *Mission Committee* requested of Synod: "a form that may be used by those families requesting organization into a Prot. Ref. congregation." (Acts of Synod, 1950, pg. 54). This request of the Mission Committee was solely the work of the Committee; the *Mission Committee* felt the need, not the *Missionaries!*

When the request of the Mission Committee for a "form" for congregational organization had been treated by Synod's committee of pre-advice the latter's report (Acts 1950, pg. 54) was not favorably received by some brethren. These brethren wanted more. They wanted something so clear-cut that none could mistake the sense of it. The document must be so clear, said a brother delegate, that a particular group (they were mentioned by name) "know we mean them". What this document was to be called no one knew as yet, because the desired product had not yet taken form in the minds of the several delegates. So, whether it was to be called a "binding" or a "declaration" or a . . . something else, no one knew—but some kind of document, the brethren thought, was needed.

After lengthy debate on this matter one of the delegates to Synod suggested that they hear the missionaries. Hence, the only missionary present, the undersigned was asked to speak on the matter. (He had to be requested to speak since he had no voice, not being a delegate). The undersigned conceded to this request. In his discussion he pointed to the following:

1. That the missionaries felt no need of any such document as far as they themselves were concerned.

2. That he was rather afraid that the need of such a document was born out of a lack of confidence in the missionaries. If that were true, which he hoped not, then all the documents in the world would do no good. There must be confidence in the missionaries first of all.

3. That if the document in discussion was intended to clearly set forth the truth which we as Prot. Ref. Churches preach and teach over against other denominations in the U. S. and Canada, thus to *inform* others how we are distinct from those who also boast a Re-

formed heritage, then such a document should not be directed against one given group, but should clearly set forth our peculiar truths in all its phases. Such a document would definitely be a boon in our mission work, and that for the following reasons:

a- People have come to distrust the Prot. Ref. missionaries as true representatives of said churches. (Of late this has often been felt among the immigrants, and was once publicly stated at a lecture given on the covenant by the undersigned in Canada. The following reasons were publicly given: Rev. Hoeksema's hint of disloyalty in our ranks, *Standard Bearer*, March 15, 1950; Rev. Ophoff's hint of disloyalty in our ranks in his article in regard to Prof. Holwerda's letter, *Standard Bearer*, August, 1949.

b- At present we lack "propaganda" material that is concise, clear-cut and with abundant Scriptural proof.

This is a brief summary of the undersigned's statements on the floor of Synod of 1950. However, let it be borne in mind that all this was said *before* the present Declaration of Principles was composed. At the time of these remarks there was nothing definite before the body of Synod which indicated how or what the discussed document might be like. No one knew what said document was to be like until three days later.

The question might be asked whether the undersigned spoke on the present draft of the Declaration when it finally reached Synod. The answer is: "Absolutely *no*!" In fact, when the undersigned asked the Synod's chairman whether he might ask a *question* about the present draft, the chairman was very hesitant in granting such permission; said he: "I doubt whether you have any voice in this matter at all". When we assured him that it was a *question* very intimately related to our mission work, since the proposed document stated that this proposed declaration shall be used in the meantime as "a working hypothesis for our mission committee and for our missionaries," he finally granted us to *ask the question*. And we did nothing more than just that.

Hence, we state again that we never publicly expressed at Synod, nor that we do so now, that the Declaration is just what we need. We contend that the Mission Committee did *not* receive in this Declaration what they were asking for, and this can be proven. Nor has the undersigned received in this Declaration what he claimed would be helpful in our mission endeavors, as expressed in point 3, above. We contend that for any *stranger* the Declaration of Principles is far from clear. It is unfit for mission work. Let alone the question: *What* is this document, called: "Declaration of Principles?" Is it an *informative* instrument? Or, is it a *signatory* document? How must this document be referred to in any form re-

questing organization of a new congregation? Do the signatories to said formal request express wholehearted *agreement* with the said Declaration, or must they merely express *knowledge* of said Declaration, declaring *willingness to be instructed* according to its tenets?

What did surprise us at the first reading of said Declaration at the time of Synod is the fact that it was far milder than predicted, for which we were thankful. We expressed this to Rev. Hoeksema *personally, after* Synod. Why was it milder than expected? Predictions were that the whole covenant conception as prevalent among us should be incorporated!

There is still another reference in *The Standard Bearer* to which we would like to refer. It appears in the editorial of Jan. 15th, last, page 196. The editor refers to a letter received from a certain Mr. A. van Dischoven (we think this should be: van Dixhoorn), who states that the undersigned and Rev. W. Hofman, at the time of the organization of our congregation at Chatham, Ontario, gave the assurance that: "'Freedom of Prophecy' existed," and that both views (Covenant views, A.C.) could be tolerated in one church connection." To this Rev. Hoeksema remarks, page 197, ". . . the above paragraph of Mr. van Dischoven is a reflection on the work of our missionaries; and it is up to them to contradict him. The churches surely have a right to know the truth in this regard." This reflection, we take it, indicates a sort of desertion of the Reformed truth, and of the Protestant Reformed camp.

Personally we don't believe that Rev. Hoeksema means this at all! Has it really come to this after all these years? We don't believe it! Are things so upset amongst us that a man is guilty until he is proven innocent? Has the reputation of the undersigned and his partner, the Rev. W. Hofman, fallen to such an all-time low that a single letter of the above nature requires them to give a public account of their being faithful or unfaithful to the truth? Ah, brother Hoeksema, we don't even believe that we should discuss the above letter! Let the undersigned speak just a personal word: Has he not, brother Hoeksema, served faithfully with you in the ministry of the Word for almost twenty-two years? Did you ever hear that he was afraid, or hesitant or failed to speak the truth as he was taught and now preached it with you these many years? He knows you haven't! Neither shall you ever hear it! Why, then, must an account be given because of just one single letter? Did not the enemy in years past speak most horrible things about our men?—yet we never asked for an account, simply because we loved, lived and labored together in the truth! As far as is known to us it is the same today. Why, then, must a public account be given? And what is true of the undersigned we know to be true of the

Rev. W. Hofman. No, really, we are not guilty until we are proven innocent—we *are innocent*, our record bears this out, until we are *proven* guilty of deserting the truth. And should an account be *necessary*, we shall only be too glad to give the same, but then only via our consistory and the Mission Committee. But we are confident that Rev. Hoeksema is also convinced that this is not necessary.

And finally, as long as we are giving account, just a brief word in answer to brother Reitsma's long article against what almost seems the undersigned's duplicity. (*Standard Bearer*, Jan. 1, 1951).

Brother Reitsma could have saved himself all this writing had he *interpreted* rather than *interpolated* our articles in *Concordia*. When we wrote as we did about the evil conceptions of the immigrants relative to our Protestant Reformed Churches we did not refer, neither by suggestion nor in word, to the so-called "Liberated" brethren. We wrote about people of Reformed circles who were "pumped full" of the spirit of "hatred and antagonism" toward our churches, who look upon us as "schismatics; a church, or rather a sect, with a very strange and never-heard-of-doctrine." Did Mr. Reitsma ever meet such a "Liberated" brother?—We never did! Hence, there is no discrepancy in our articles in *Concordia* and those in *The Standard Bearer*.

And as to brother Reitsma's questions: "Is a person fundamentally Reformed when he believes that God loves all the children who are baptized and would save them all? Is a person fundamentally Reformed when he declares that Christ died for all, or that Christ at least merited the chance of salvation for all?—we would answer: A *good* "Liberated" brother would most certainly condemn such doctrines, and so would a *good* Protestant Reformed brother. But if our dealings with the different types of people whom we contact are questionable to or under suspicion by brother Reitsma, we would refer him to the Mission Committee and our consistory to whom both the undersigned and Rev. Hofman give a full account every month, and that black on white.

A. Cammenga.

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Note by the Editor:

1. I still have an entirely different impression of the expressed reaction to the "Declaration" by the Rev. Cammenga on the floor of the synod. I wish that others that were present at delegates to synod would express themselves on this matter.

2. Must the Rev. Cammenga turn his comment on the published letter by Mr. van dixhoorn, published by Mr. van Dixhoorn himself as a contribution in *The Standard Bearer*, into a tirade against me? It was he,

not I, that cast suspicion on the labors of our missionaries. I merely asked our missionaries to contradict him, and let our churches know the truth in this matter. What is wrong with this? I still ask them to do this, for we have the right to know. I will be glad to give Mr. van Dixhoorn the lie. In fact, I will openly state here and now, that Mr. Dixhoorn did not write the truth. But let the missionaries support this statement of mine, instead of turning a statement of Mr. van Dixhoorn against me.

H. H.

* * * *

FROM HOLY WRIT

Exposition Of Luke 2:40-52

I.

"Thus also it is written: the first man, Adam, became a living soul; the last Adam (became) a quickening Spirit." (I Corinthians 15:45).

In the attempt to understand the meaning of this passage, it is important to bear in mind, that the writer of this epistle to the Corinthians is here defending the great truth of the glad-tidings of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the *resurrection* from the dead. Take this truth out of the Gospel and it is no longer glad-tidings having the approval of God. The preacher is then truly marked and branded a liar; his gospel is empty, faith is empty and the believers are then of all people the most miserable. But, thanks be to God, such is not the case. Christ is, indeed, risen and He has become the First-fruits of them that have fallen asleep!

For by man came the transgression and the penalty of death. Thus also by man came the resurrection of the dead. One of our number, born from a woman and made under law has come to lift us out of sin and death. He died according to the Scriptures and He arose again the third day according to the same Scriptures!

That is good-tidings. It is the glad-tidings of good things, which shall be unto all the people, unto all the men of God's good-pleasure. Wherefore, we must be steadfast, immovable in the Lord, always abounding in His work, knowing that our labor and travail is not vain in the Lord!

Such is the general setting of our text.

The more particular setting of our text within this general scheme is that Paul is here giving a reply to the infidel and sceptic to two questions. The first is:

the nature of the body that shall be ours in the resurrection. The other is: the *manner* of the resurrection act itself. Two distinguishable questions. Yet, they are questions, which are most closely related. One can hardly speak of the one without touching upon the other.

To understand the nature of our body that shall be ours after the final resurrection Paul shows us some very sharp contrasts.

First of all, there is the contrast of our body now as it is by virtue of sin and death; as it is now in the state of corruption, mortality, weakness and dishonor. The body that shall be ours will in no wise bear anymore the effects of sin and death. It will be a body that is immortal, incorruptible, full of power and glory. All the effects of sin and death will be no more.

However, it will not be a body that brings us back again in the position of the human race in the first Adam. If we may hypothetically think away sin for a moment, and, further, think of the whole human race as it came forth out of Adam never having fallen; as always having remained standing at the tree of life then there would have been no sin. But then we would not yet have come to the body that shall be ours in the resurrection in the Last Adam, Who became the quickening Spirit.

For there is a natural body and there is a spiritual body. And the spiritual is not first, but the natural and then the spiritual.

This contrast of the natural (psychical) body in the first Adam and the Spiritual (pneumatical) body in the last Adam is the contrast in our text. And, we may well add, it is a pivotal question. Here we have the fundamental and all-controlling lines of history. Here the believer lifts up his weary head in hope and finds sweet rest and repose in the eternal good-pleasure of God, and in His wisdom and matchless design in all things.

What is this contrast?

It is the Christological design of God already in Genesis 1-3. Christological design? "We read nothing of the Christ as yet in Genesis 2," someone may interrupt! Adam knew nothing of it, as yet. He simply had the command to live by, didn't he? Why speak of *Christological* design in Genesis 2, while in reality we read of the revelation of Christ only at Genesis 3, where the announcement is made to the Serpent, that his head will be crushed by the Seed of the woman?

We answer: because the Word of God itself teaches us that this design was there; it was there even in God's *intention*. It was not merely there as a back-door held open, like our fire-escape! It was there in God's design. The natural, says Paul in verse 46-47, is first and then the spiritual. In *God's* design, in His *design* it was thus!

Someone may say: but was this then God's original, primordial design? And I answer with an emphatic: Yes! Thus we read in Ephesians 1:9-10: "Making known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good-pleasure which He purposed in Him unto a dispensation of the fulness of times, to sum up all things in Christ, the things in heaven and the things upon the earth, in him. . ." And, again, we read in Colossians 1:15-18: "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in Him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through Him and *unto* Him; and He is before all things, and in Him all things consist (hold together). And He is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first-born of the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence." And we cannot fail to add verse 19 (idem) "For it was the good-pleasure (of the Father) that in Him should all the fulness dwell, and through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross, through Him, I say, whether things upon the earth or things in heaven."

There is more in this latter passage which is worthy of quotation. We hope to refer to later on. But for our present purpose, what we have quoted is sufficient. It is surely evident that the Cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the renewal of all things, the reconstitution of all things is no accident, but that it is the eternal, sovereign and incomprehensible and all-glorious purpose of our God and Maker!

Yes, God made the psychical (natural) first and then the pneumatical, the spiritual.

The line as drawn by Paul in Colossians 1:15-21 we must keep before our mind in our study here of I Corinthians 15:45.

And what do we then, to speak more particularly, notice?

There are two poles in history, if I may so speak. It is the natural, the psychical in Adam, who is out of the earth, earthy (not earthly!). He is earthy, for he is taken out of the earth. And this earthy is contrasted with the heavenly. The other pole is the Second, the Last Adam, after Whom no other Adam can come, Who was made by God a quickening Spirit.

Let us try to see this.

The text says: the first Adam was made a living soul. (*egeneto . . . eis psucheen zoosan*). And Paul adds too: "Thus it is written". And we believe it was written for our comfort and instruction, for us, I say, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. It is written, in order that, when we stand at the grave's brink (and who does not?) we by faith in Christ crucified, dead and buried might read of the Christological design and motives of God, as He created all

things into Christ, who is the First-born of all creation!

Let us not be affrighted by so rich a display of sovereign wisdom and good-pleasure for our salvation in Christ. Neither let us be told, that this design of God makes history meaningless. Rather let us humbly acknowledge, that this alone gives the meaning of History. And by faith let us see our place in it all, even at the mouth of the grave, and let us shout: O death, where is thy sting, O grave, where is thy victory. Then by faith we lean in the everlasting arms of God in the Son, the man Jesus, and die happily. Meanwhile we shall labor and travail, knowing that in Him our labors are not vain! History has meaning, it has the meaning of the realization of the summing up of all things in Jesus Christ our Lord. He must be the First-born of all creation as the First-born out of the dead!

That is the meaning of history.

It is the wisdom of God in Christ crucified.

Thus it is written. It is written in Genesis 2:7. And this word is here, in the text, administered in its Christological design to the church of God in the ends of the ages. That is why it was written. It was written up to the very present moment. It was penned by a holy man, moved unto this not by himself, but he was moved by the Holy Spirit. God would have us know this Word. And it must be preached to us by Paul. That which is written must be interpreted in the light of all of God's works, in the light of the all-controlling Design of God in dealing *with a man in our transgression*, and also *with a man in our resurrection*.

And thus it is written.

It was thus written down through the centuries.

But now it is not only written in the less understandable form of Genesis 2, taken by itself, but it is also written as interpreted by the apostle.

Genesis 2 tells us of the creation of Adam. No, it does not tell us everything. It does not tell us everything that God would do with this Design. But all that God does further in His Christological-Soteriological purposes is built on this, it uses this. It uses it not as an after-thought, as it clear from Colossians 1 quoted above, but He uses it as the foundation of the building, the house eternal in the heavens. II Cor-5:1-3. The natural (psychical) is first, then the spiritual.

This is not dry dogmatics! This is the administration of the secrets of God concerning our salvation to our comfort.

A good supralapsarian sermon is indeed a comforting sermon in the ends of the ages!

To preach well on Genesis 2 is to preach well on Revelation 22.

That is really Eschatological preaching. Not sim-

ply preaching about the last things! But preaching the last things as the things of Him Who tells the end from the beginning. Just as one may preach a sermon or two a year on the topic election, without having election as the very heart-beat in the preaching, so also one may preach about the ends of the ages in a very Arminian and Dispensational way, without really preaching the Consummation of all things in heaven and on earth, as spoken of in Ephesians 2 and as outlined by Paul in Colossians 1:15-20!

It is now some fifteen years ago that the writer of these lines wrote an article in the Standard Bearer on the subject: "Election-Preaching and the Preaching of Repentance". When one really preaches repentance from sin he is also preaching election. He is then possibly not preaching *on* election, but his preaching then has the heart-beat of God's elective grace in it. So, too, one who preaches well on Genesis 2 he really preaches an eschatological sermon. Thus it is done by Paul in I Corinthians 15:45. Saying: "And thus it is written!"

Geo. C. Lubbers.



IN HIS FEAR

Church Membership In His Fear

9.

Not Forsaking the Assemblies of the Saints.

(continued)

Once again let us remind ourselves of our aim in this discussion. It is not to formulate some merely external rules and regulations for church attendance, and thus to add line upon line and precept upon precept. Rather is our intention to discuss "in His fear" what our attitude as members of Christ's church should be toward the assemblies of the saints, and in our discussion to examine *ourselves*. Hence, we must also beware in our self-examination in this matter that we do not conclude by boasting in the flesh instead of worshipping God in spirit and in truth and glorying in Christ Jesus. Outwardly faithful church attendance in itself is of no avail whatsoever.

From that point of view we have discussed the deviation called *oncerism*, attempting not to multiply precepts, but to point the direction, first of all, in regard to improper reasons for absence from the meetings for public worship. From that same viewpoint we would like now to discuss proper reasons. And again, it is very well possible that you will be able to

add many more reasons. We intend, however, merely to point the direction.

* * * *

Proper Reasons.

As this is being written, we are reminded in a very concrete way of a proper reason for absence from church. For today, Sunday, we are in the midst of a howling blizzard, the worst of the year, here in north-west Iowa. The little town of Doon is isolated from the rest of the world except for telephone and radio. All roads are blocked in the area. In fact, even in town it is difficult to distinguish the streets from the surrounding landscape, as the wind, in gusts up to 40 miles per hour, piles up the snow, both old and new and still falling, in gigantic drifts. Even for those of us who live in town there is no question of holding services today: it is simply impossible. And for those of our congregation who are tillers of the soil it is simply out of the question even to reach the roads. The only ministry of the Word which we shall hear today is by the Rev. De Boer on the radio.

And thus it has been for the past several days. The present storm is only the climax of the severe winter which has struck this area in the past couple weeks. A previous storm had already cut attendance down to less than half a week ago, and had forced the postponement of Prayer Day services last Wednesday. And people were just digging themselves out when the present blizzard struck with greater fury. Besides the cancellation of services, all activities of societies, catechism classes, etc., are either hampered or entirely eliminated.

This is, of course, no Chamber of Commerce advertisement.

Nor did we refer to this bit of personal experience for that reason.

Nor do we write in order to give the impression that this is an everyday experience in these parts. It is unusual.

But nevertheless, it drives home a point concretely, namely, that sometimes we are placed in circumstances when it is *impossible* to attend church, and when, therefore, there is a very proper reason for not attending services, whether it be once or twice a Sunday. Correctly stated, there are times when the Lord Himself makes it impossible. And the Lord, we know, has His own good reasons. True, in the instance above, the Lord made it impossible for the whole congregation, and also only for a short time. But the Lord can make it impossible for an individual only, and He can do so for a long period of time also. And we submit that only *then*, when the Lord Himself puts us in a position in which we cannot gather with His people,—only then may we be absent.

A very ordinary instance of such a proper reason you have in the case of sickness. Through it, which, as we all know, is under the control of our heavenly Father, the Lord may prevent a person,—be it for only a Sunday or two, or be it for months or even years,—from gathering with God's people on the sabbath. Far different is their position than that of those who for one reason or another have *refused* to go up unto God's house. These have a desire to hear the Word of God proclaimed, but cannot. They have a desire to worship the Lord, but are prohibited. They have a yearning for the courts of the Lord, but the way is closed. Instead they must languish on beds of suffering, and must be satisfied with thoughts and mental pictures of the gathering of God's people from which they must be absent, and they anticipate the day when, if it be the Lord's will, they can once again assemble with the saints as before.

Another rather difficult problem presents itself in the case of families with little children. The problem has various ramifications. It is a different problem, for example, in a large congregation and a large auditorium than in a small one. It is often possible, or more easily possible, to take little children to church in a small congregation, while it is impossible or impractical to do the same in a large congregation. I remember well the annual occasion when all in our Fuller Ave. congregation took their little children and even babes in arms to the Christmas program of the Sunday School. Those who know will agree that the disturbance caused was sometimes a rival attraction to the program. Imagine that the same thing was done every Sunday in the services. It would become well-nigh impossible for the minister to preach and for the congregation to listen. In a small congregation that probability is much less. There are only a few such little children or babies, and the probability of disturbance is proportionately less. Hence, at the risk of occasional disturbance it may be possible to take little ones to church with us. But even then, it is at best a risky proposition, and of questionable value. Mother or Father, as the case may be, sits on "pins and needles" all through the service, striving to keep the little one quiet and anxiously wondering whether too much disturbance is caused. Even the practice of having a loudspeaker connection from the auditorium to another, separate room, is often of little value. True, in some cases it is profitable, since it allows one parent to remain in church at least, while the other parent can take the disturbing off-spring out. But if you get three or four such disturbance in a little room, you may well imagine that the separate "auditorium" is changed into a nursery and that the loud-speaker may as well be turned.

To be sure, there comes a time when parents must begin to take their children to church. And we would

not deny that time must not begin too late. In fact, we believe that often this is started too late. Even when a child cannot understand a sermon, he can certainly be trained to go to church and to sit still, and he may develop a healthy habit of going to church, may be impressed with the idea that there is something special about the sabbath, which is also for him.

But our point is now that you cannot expect parents with little children, except in rare instances, to both be in church twice on Sunday. It is necessary for father and mother to take turns, or to get a babysitter in some instances, in order that they may at least attend once per Sunday. It is necessary both for themselves and for the rest of the congregation, in order that the services may be conducted decently and in good order. In other words, also in this instance the Lord Himself, in giving us little children, makes it temporarily impossible for us to attend church every time services are held. And such parents are certainly not to be classified as oncers.

Also here, however, a word of warning is in place. We must beware that we do not make of our children an excuse to be absent from church. That can be done. We must be careful that we do not postpone too long the day that we begin to take junior to church. We must our obligation, even though it may be unpleasant for a time, until the little one is completely trained to sit quietly and to listen.

Other such proper reasons may be found perhaps, and details might be multiplied. But let this suffice.

Conclusion.

And so the conclusion of the whole matter is that as members of His Church we may not, must not, can not forsake the assemblies of the saints. For the Church is *gathered* by Christ. It must be and is manifest in this world as the gathering of believers and their children. It therefore also gathers together, in order that it may be manifest as a gathering. And he who belongs to that church certainly does gather with it.

And in that way only is there a blessing. There is no blessing in the way of forsaking the church *ever*. And to the extent that one is remiss in the Christian calling to assemble with the saints, to that extent one also surely misses the blessed assurance that he is a living members of the body of Christ, and forever shall remain such. That follows automatically. And anyone who claims that he can with impunity forsake in any measure the assemblies of the saints and not at all miss that assurance lies. Life is in itself the assurance of life. And dead works can never result in the growth of that assurance. Rather is the very opposite true, and it always becomes manifest concretely in our walk. He who has no desire for the fellowship of God's people on the sabbath soon loses, or perhaps has

already lost, his taste for the weekly gatherings of God's people for Scripture study in the societies, and soon becomes remiss in his duty to bring his children to catechism faithfully, and reaps to himself and to his family the reward of his own way.

But in the way of faithful, regular, and spiritually alert attendance of the services for divine worship we receive a rich reward. Establishment in the truth is its reward. Growth in the knowledge of Christ, which is incomparably excellent! Development and cultivation of our spiritual taste for spiritual things is to be had in that way. And the assurance of living membership, which shall endure unto everlasting life, is to be received there, where the Word of God is proclaimed!

H. C. Hoeksema.



PERISCOPE

No "Double-track" Theology.

One of the more difficult elements in the "common grace" struggle in our history was the element introduced I believe by Van Baalen of the "double-track". That this has indeed taken root in the Christian Reformed Churches is evident to me from my own contact with various ministers of that denomination. That it must ultimately lead, if consistently applied, to the death of all dogmatics and all interpretation of Scripture is very evident to me.

Now the question of a "double-track" theology also arises in connection with our understanding of the theology of the "Liberated" churches in the Netherlands. The question of the "promise of the covenant for all" overagainst the irrefutable revelation of Election and Reprobation and the reconciling of these two raises the question, "Is there a 'double-track' perhaps?"

In this connection our attention fell upon a series of articles in "De Reformatie" under the title "De Betekenis van de vrijmaking voor theologie en leven" by Dr. Bremmer. In this series Dr. Bremmer discusses the question of common grace and the view of Dr. A. Kuyper on this score. We do not have the room to "discover" this series for you but it is worthwhile reading if you would discover the thought on this subject.

However in an appendage "Substraat of Genade"? Dr. Bremmer refutes the position of several men on this same question and in this article we have, I believe, at least in as far as Dr. Bremmer is concerned,

the answer to the question concerning a "double-track" theology. We quote from Dr. Bremmer:

" . . . It is extremely difficult to analyze from these twenty pages what the author himself understands by the longsuffering of God. We would gladly have seen that he had expressed himself more concretely. However, he heartily endorses certain statements of others, and these statements do not leave a shadow of a doubt on this score. Thus he declares to agree with the Three Points of the Synod of Kalamazoo which speak 'of a favorable attitude of God towards mankind in general, and not only toward the elect.' And he endorses the position of Dr. Van Til who somewhere has written: 'That God's preservation of the unrighteous is evidence of His favor toward them, and that therefore there is *some favor shown to the unrighteous* in the fact of his preservation in this world.'

" If we consider all these statements then we are constrained to ask the question, what does the author understand by the longsuffering of God? Is it revelation of grace, or at least something intermediate between grace and judgment? For herein lies one of the most important points of the discussion. Dr. Berkhouwer protests that 'the contrast between elect and reprobate is constantly intruding in the exegesis of the Scriptural passages as a principle of exegesis, also then when there is no sign of it in the text', and he complains in this connection about 'schematic exegesis which does serious injustice to the Scripture, and approaches it from the view-point of special prejudice'. But we in turn ask, is this reproach fair? *May the dogmaticus, and the exegete, in the interpretation of certain passages of Scripture, leave out of consideration what the same Scripture elsewhere teaches concerning election and reprobation?* (I underscore, J.H.) It is indeed commendable that the author rises to the defence of the concrete and anthropomorphistic statements of Scripture. But must not we, just because of the anthropomorphism in a certain passage, that speaks of God's attitude over against the fallen world, also take into consideration other passages that speak of this matter. Just exactly in re an anthropomorphism it is thus, that the one figure or metaphor explains and compliments the other . . . Hence, in order to determine the attitude of God, in certain concrete cases, I shall have to give account of His election and reprobation. And when we do this, then this is not an intrusion of a strange principle of exegesis, but then we cleave to the old Reformed rule; 'Interpret Scripture with Scripture' . . .

Thus it was also with God's attitude which revealed itself unto the contemporaries of Noah. Exactly as we confess in the Canons of Dordt that God seriously calls through the Gospel unto faith and repentance. But does this justify the conclusion, that there is with God, or to speak in the words of Prof. Berkhouwer, that

there was in God's heart a favorable attitude towards those wicked contemporaries of Noah? We do not believe a word of it . . .

"And when Prof. Berkhouwer speaks of the compassion of the divine heart in re the fallen world, yea, even writes in reference to the longsuffering of God over the contemporaries of Noah, 'His heart beat in compassion during the building of the ark', then we ask anew; but can we separate the beating of God's heart from His eternal decree of election and reprobation? Would God's heart beat, even but for one second, in love and grace, over against those whom He has hated with an eternal hatred, and therefore shall hate unto all eternity?"

So far Dr. Bremmer.

For the translation of the above we wish to thank Rev. Kok.

I believe the article is plain in itself and speaks language with which we all can agree.

* * * *

The Suffering of Korean Christians:

From the Southern Presbyterian Journal we take over part of a letter written by Mr. Ko Oon Yong, a young Christian in Conja, Korea, a clerk in the Chosun Industrial Bank there. Mr. Ko's letter is dated, Chonju, Korea, November 7, 1950.

"It is almost six months since I saw you last. During the time almost everything was changed. Our city was under control of Puppet government for ten weeks. North Korean Army flooded the city on the 20th of July. We, all of the Korean people, could clearly understand what communism was. They made use of the name of Justice. They said they were fighting for Right. We looked at their hands: they were stained with blood, the blood of plunder, cruelties, murder, violation of chastity, instead of liberty for proletariat. They killed many peaceable citizens, regardless of age and sexes, especially policemen and Christians. My beloved brother was slaughtered by them. He was a faithful Christian. They took me for an American spy: so assaulted me, and I was nearly killed. They carried away all of my household effects for the reason of reactionary. I cannot help bearing a grudge against them. They lost 99 percent of the whole nation's support: not only bourgeois support but also all proletarian support, even the farmer and the laborer. We Koreans shall never be fooled by their good-sounding slogans and propaganda . . ."

* * * *

Church Merger with a slightly different slant:

In a recent number of the "Southern Presbyterian Journal" on of the contributing editors, Dr. Wm. C. Robinson is discussing the fact that the Associate Re-

formed Presbyterian Churches are at present contemplating a merger either with the United Presbyterian or with the Southern Presbyterian Church.

Now merger as such is hardly church news in these days of so-called ecumenicity and church-merger. But what struck our attention is the attitude toward this particular merger reflected in the following words: "Now the larger Church is always willing to unite with the smaller. Thus it is no credit to our denomination that we are ready to receive our brethren who bear such a good name among us. We can, however, show our Christian consideration by taking care that in the plan of union we preserve the assets of their heritage . . . The most conspicuous testimony of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church has been the use of the Psalms in Christian Worship. This, as well as such spiritual assets as are better known to them than to the writer, ought to be conserved in the union offered them."

"In the past Associate Presbyterian congregations have come into our Church with permission to use exclusively the psalms in their singing, and of course this privilege ought to be extended. But over and above that, our Church ought to be enriched as a whole by the addition of this testimony . . . Let the united Church gather in, not dissipate, the strength of the A. R. P. testimony!"

"Similarly, we hope that their fine emphasis on the Sabbath will tone up our observance of the Lord's Day."

J. Howerzyl.

Strength in Weakness

I could not do without Thee,
I cannot stand alone,
I have no strength or goodness,
No wisdom of my own;
But Thou, beloved Saviour,
Art all in all to me,
And weakness will be power,
When leaning hard on Thee.

CLASSIS EAST

will meet in regular session at the Hudsonville Protestant Reformed Church on Wednesday, April 4, at 9 o'clock A. M.

D. Jonker, (S. C.)

IT IS FINISHED

Hark! the voice of love and mercy
Sounds aloud from Calvary;
See! it rends the rocks asunder,
Shakes the earth, and veils the sky:

"It is finished!"

Hear the dying Savior cry.

Now redemption is completed,
Sin atoned, the curse removed,
Satan, death, and hell defeated,
At His rising fully proved.

All is finished!

Here our hopes do rest unmoved.

Finished all the types and shadows
Of the ceremonial law;
Finished all that God had promised,
Death and hell no more shall awe.

"It is finished!"

Saints, from hence your comfort draw.

Tune your harps anew, ye seraphs!
Join to sing the pleasing theme:
All in earth and heaven's uniting,
Join to praise Immanuel's name:

Hallelujah!

Glory to the bleeding Lamb!

—Rev. Jonathan Evans.

ADVANCE NOTICE!

The League of Men's Societies will have their annual membership meeting on the 19th of April at the Creston Protestant Reformed Church. Reverend E. Emanuel will be the guest speaker.

All men in this area are invited to attend this important meeting.

SUBSCRIBERS — PLEASE NOTE!

Due to the increased cost of printing *The Standard Bearer* it has been necessary to raise the subscription price to \$3.00 per year. This will take effect with the subscriptions coming due on April 1st and thereafter. Will you please refer to your subscription date printed opposite your name on this issue, and if past due, forward a remittance at once. Your co-operation is kindly requested. At the present time there is no change in membership price which includes the subscription.

THE BOARD.

Report of Classis West

IN SESSION MARCH 7-8, 1951 at HULL, IOWA

The Rev. L. Vermeer calls the meeting to order, reads Eph 4, and has the brethren sing Psalter 403 and offers prayer. The eleven churches of this Classis are represented, twenty-one delegates being present. Rev. P. Vis becomes chairman for the day and Rev. Vermeer keeps minutes of the proceedings. Previous minutes are read and their recording approved. The Sermon Committee (Revs. Howerzyl and Gritters) report that the Sermon Books have been made. Each minister of Classis West is to receive a sermon book gratis and it is decided to sell them in the churches for five dollars per copy. The Stated Clerk of this Classis is to handle the sale of them. Any consistory or anybody in our churches, East as well as West, or anybody anywhere wanting one of these Sermon Books, please send up five dollars to Rev. M. Gritters, Pella, Iowa and the Book will be sent.

Referred to us from the last Classis was an Instruction from Rock Valley about Meditation Booklets for the Servicemen. Classis decided to have such a Booklet drawn up and the committee is appointed to carry it out. This committee will in due time, ask a collection in the churches to cover the cost of this project. Next comes the matter of Deputaten Ad Examina and Classis passes a motion to inform Stated Clerk of Classis East that we have at present no Deputaten Ad Examina. Church Visitors give their report, Revs. Doezeema and Vermeer for the far West, and Revs. De Jong and De Boer for the Iowa-Minn. territory. The Reports are encouraging. The Classical Committee renders its report and this is accepted. The Orange City church requests Classical Appointments and a committee is named to arrange the schedule. Their report comes later, which see.

Classis next turns its attention to the matter of the Declaration of Principles as drawn up by Synod of 1950. There are communications from the consistories in re this Declaration and Classis decides that they shall be read in alphabetical order and after all the communications have been read further action taken. The Protest and Overture from Bellflower is read first. It protests "that Synod accepted the document of the committee of pre-advice or even instructed its committee to draw up any such document which is an interpretation of the Confessions, without having a proper occasion for such action, the proper instruction to do so" and then follows six reasons for this protest plus an Overture for positive action. Next an Instruction and Overture from Doon is read urging to adopt the Declaration and presenting six grounds for same. This is followed by a protest from a member of Doon church against the Declaration together with an answer from the Consistory. Edgerton follows with its advice in re the Declaration, advising not to adopt this document at the forthcoming Synod and gives two reasons. Then follows a Protest of Rev. J. De Jong against the Declaration giving three main divisions and several subdivisions elucidated point by point and this is followed by four individual protests from so many members of the Hull

Church. The Hull Consistory next renders its advice, objecting to the Declaration and states twelve reasons. Identical documents from four individuals of the Hull church are read next, favoring the adoption of the Declaration and giving six reasons. Manhattan Church comes next; this Church overtures Synod not to adopt the Declaration and gives three reasons. Orange City follows suit, declaring that it does not approve of the Declaration and urges not to adopt, giving three main considerations for their action. The Oskaloosa Church likewise advises Classis to overture Synod not to adopt the Declaration and gives two main reasons and numerous subdivisional reasons for such advice. The Pella Church advises Classis not to adopt the Declaration and brings its four objections together with a concluding statement. Likewise, three members of the Pella Church legally present their protest against the Declaration. Redlands is next; this Church advises and requests that Classis overture Synod not to adopt the Declaration and gives four grounds for such advice. The Rock Valley consistory protests the Declaration on five grounds and requests that their protest be carried to Synod also. This is followed by a communication from Rock Valley's pastor. Rev. S. Cammenga, giving reasons why he does not completely agree with his consistory in re the matter of their having rejected the Declaration and giving three reasons why he would have the Declaration modified. Follows next a writing from a member of the Rock Valley Church objecting to the Declaration and giving his various reasons. Sioux Center Church advises Synod not to adopt the Declaration, giving three motivations for such action. A letter of three brethren against the Hull consistory is read but a motion prevails to declare it illegal since the Consistory could not have received nor treated it. A letter of Information is read by the Rev. J. De Jong and a committee appointed to give pre-advice in re the matter.

A motion comes to the floor of Classis to approve and adopt the Protest and Overture from the Bellflower church as its own and to so protest and overture Synod. The Bellflower document is re-read and classis decides to treat it point by point. At this time Classis decides to declare irrelevant the material appendaged to Rev. De Jong's Protest and this material is struck out of the records. A motion prevails to adopt Point I of the Bellflower Document, the gist of which is: "The Mission Committee should not have come with the question they did present. If they did come with such a request they should have been referred to the same basis that we have used previously and the basis which is still the basis for the unity of all our churches." Rev. H. C. Hoeksema protests this adoption and reserves the right to motivate his protest on the Synod floor. Classis adopts Point II of the Bellflower Protest, the sum of which is: "In the second place it follows that Synod should not have answered the Mission Committee as it did. It should not have allowed itself to become involved in the questions without proper preparation and occasion, nor have drawn up such a document, but

should have very clearly pointed the committee to its task to **proclaim** our truth unequivocally. It may have cautioned not to condemn views of others if not called upon to do so under our Confessions, or views which are compatible with ours, in order to keep our positive teaching clearly before the minds of the hearers." Classis adopts Point III, the essence of which is: "Looking at this action to interpret Confessions as such, we believe that Synod forgot that any interpretation of the Confessions which becomes the official statement of the Churches should have a specific occasion and statement of the problem or error which it seeks to combat, clearly before its mind and stated in definite language for the Churches."

Classis proceeds now to adopt Point IV the theme sentence of which it: "It also follows that this specific statement of error can only be presented by way of protest or request from the churches." "Confessions are not made to prevent error. Confessions combat error". Point V is adopted which reads in its heading as follows: "Our fifth objection is against Synod's submitting this document for the approval of the churches. The first wrong action of initiating something outside of a proper request and mandate resulted we feel in this regrettable situation." Classis adopts Point VI, "Finally we wish to protest against Point IV of the Brief Declaration, particularly point A," and, "we question the right of Synod to sit in judgment over another church with whom we do not have correspondence and offhand express an official condemnation of action without having been officially called to do so and without having been presented with material to study for the delegates and the churches." Next the Overture comes up for action. Classis moves to adopt Point I of the Overture, which reads, in its heading, as follows: "To repudiate the action of Synod of 1950 as found in the Acts page 54, art. 64 and page 90 art. 117." Point II of that same Overture is also adopted which reads, in its heading, "To instruct our Committee for correspondence with other churches to submit a documental report of the confession and teaching with their criticism or approval of" Point III of the Overture is adopted which reads: "To take no further reaction until this has been presented."

Next comes a motion, passed by the Classis, which reads as follows: "In view of the overwhelming documentary criticisms presented by the various consistories in re the proposed Declaration of Principles, Classis overtures Synod to declare that as churches we are not at all ripe and ready to compose a Declaration and that the need for it has not been proven." Rev. H. C. Hoeksema and elder H. J. Blankespoor record opposition to the document of Bellflower and the motion immediately following it, and reserve the right of protest.

Committee in re the letter of Information (referred to above) gives its report and Classis adopts the advice.

Committee for Classical appointments gives us the following schedule for Orange City: March 11, P. Vis; 18, De Jong; April 1, Gritters; 15, De Boer; 29, Howerzyl; May 13, Hoeksema; 27, Van Weelden; June 17, S. Cammerga; 24, De Boer; July 8, De Jong; 22, Gritters; Aug. 5, Howerzyl; 19, Hoeksema, Sept. 2, Van Weelden; Sept. 9, Vermeer.

Delegated to the Synod as follows: M. Gritters, L. Vermeer, J. Howerzyl, L. Doezeema; 1st alternate, J. Van Weelden; 2nd alternate, P. De Boer; 3rd alternate, J. De Jong; 4th alternate, P. Vis. Elder delegations: W. De Vries, G. Rijken, J. Broek, M. Flikkema; 1st alternate, N. Bnyert; 2nd, J. Bekendam; 3rd, A. Wassenaar; 4th, R. Brunsting.

Rev. J. Van Weelden is voted to fill in the vacancy created by Rev. Petter's leaving the Deputaten Ad Examina West. Two year term.

Requests for subsidy approved. Next Classis meeting in Edgerton Sept. 5, 1951. Classis raises remuneration of the Stated Clerk to one hundred dollars per year. Questions of DKO 41 asked and answered. The minutes were read and approved.

Rev. De Boer closes the session with prayer.

M. GRITTERS (Stated Clerk).