

THE STANDARD

Bearer

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MEDITATION

Into Heaven Itself!

"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." Heb. 9:24

In these last days God hath spoken to us by His Son!

Thus it is also with the ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ. For He is the reality. In Him the promise is fulfilled. He, Who was appointed heir of all things, has come; and has, having purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on High. And He appears there, in heaven itself, before the face of God, in our behalf!

To be sure, in time past God spake at sundry times and in divers manners unto the fathers by the prophets. They had the promise, also the promise of the ascension and its blessings. But they lived in the age of shadows. And to them God spake in the sphere of the shadows.

And so, for the fathers in time past, there was a high priest who was a shadow high priest. There was a sanctuary which was a shadow sanctuary. And there was an entrance into that sanctuary which was a shadow entrance. And for that shadowy entrance by a shadowy high priest into a shadowy sanctuary a typical sacrifice and blood of atonement were quite sufficient. Surely, even though it was typical, that sanctuary had to be purified: for there is nothing pure among men in this sinful world. But a typical blood for a typical sanctuary would suffice. The blood of calves and of goats purifies the figures of holy things.

Figures with figures; types with types; shadows with shadows.

But as soon as you begin to speak of realities, of the real sanctuary, of heaven itself, and of the face of God in that real sanctuary, then you must have better sacrifices. Since Christ, the real High Priest, entered not into the sanctuary of the shadows, but was destined to enter into heaven itself, therefore nothing less than the better sacrifice of His own blood might He bring.

For Christ is entered not into the sanctuary made with

hands but into heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of God for us!

Realities belong with realities; fulfillments with fulfillments!

God hath spoken in these last days to us by His Son, His ascended Son!

* * * *

Literally the text does not speak of the "holy places," but of "the holies." And by "the holies" is not meant the outer court, to which all Israel was admitted, nor the first sanctuary, the holy place, into which only the priests might come, but the most holy place, the second tabernacle, into which only the high priest might come once a year, and that not without blood.

From that most holy place the whole tabernacle derived its meaning. For there, in the holiest of all, stood the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, with its mercy seat; there was the Shekinah, the wonderful symbol of God's Presence; there God dwelled between the cherubim. Into that holy of holies went the high priest once every year to sprinkle the blood of atonement upon the mercy seat before the face of God!

But that most holy place was made with hands, and it was a figure of the true!

It was, therefore, not the true sanctuary, although it pointed to that true sanctuary.

And that it was made with hands, and but a figure of the true, implies that the most holy place of the old tabernacle was purely local, limited, material, temporal, perishable. It was not the spiritual tabernacle of God with men, though it witnessed of spiritual realities. It was not universal in character, though it looked ahead to the time when God's tabernacle would embrace all things. It was not yet the tabernacle of God with men, with all His people, even though the high priest entered with the blood of atonement for them. They could never follow that high priest into the sanctuary of God. It was not the eternal and abiding tabernacle of God, even though it was a figure of that eternal covenant of God with His people. It was not the imperishable tabernacle of God: for it could and did perish. But it pointed to the imperishable tabernacle of God with men. In fact, in its

very figurative, material, local, temporal, perishable nature it gave testimony that there was another sanctuary — the real, spiritual, everlasting, abiding, permanent tabernacle of God with men. Plainly it testified that the way into the real sanctuary was not yet made manifest. Even the high priest could not remain there. Only for a moment could he stay there, — long enough to serve the shadows, — **and then** he must retreat. And every year he must enter anew to repeat the atonement for himself and all the people, the people who themselves could never appear in that sanctuary, no matter how much atonement was made.

It was indeed a sanctuary made with hands, and only a figure of the true!

Into it Christ did not enter!

In fact, Christ never entered, and never could have entered into that most holy place. He was not of the tribe of Levi, still less of the house of Aaron. He had no right to minister in the Holy of holies that was made with hands. He could only stand in the court-yard with the rest of the people, — even though it was true that also that sanctuary was His Father's house.

Besides, He was not destined to enter into such a sanctuary. Adam had been created to enter into an earthly sanctuary in the first paradise. But Adam had profaned the sanctuary. And God had instituted another sanctuary, one that was to be entered by way of blood. But Christ, God's Son in the flesh, was destined to enter into the perfected, heavenly, real sanctuary, in which God's tabernacle would be perfectly with men forever. And He was destined to enter by way of His own blood!

And of what avail would it have been if Christ had merely entered into the sanctuary made with hands?

If such were the meaning of His ascension, then we must still look for another. Then it is not true that there is an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us. Then He has only prepared the way into an earthly, perishable, temporal sanctuary.

But Christ is entered into Heaven itself!

And the essence of heaven is the presence of the living God!

Yes, heaven is a place, a part of God's creation. It is not to be spiritualized so that there is nothing left of it. It is the place where the angels dwell, and where are the saints that have gone before. And it is a glorious place, a beautiful place. But in our text the emphasis is not on the outward glory of heaven, but rather upon the spiritual idea and essence of it. It is the original of that which the earthly tabernacle prefigured. It is the dwelling place of God. In heaven is God's face, His presence. Heaven is the perfect, all-embracing, spiritual, everlasting, and imperishable realization of all that was symbolized in that earthly sanctuary. Heaven means that God dwells with us; that He is near us, and that we are not consumed; that He is near us in His friendship; that He causes us to know Him as we are known, to see Him face to face, to enter into His secret fellowship,

into the most intimate communion of His own covenant life as the God of our salvation. It is our Father's house.

Into that heaven, the true and real holiest of all, where the beauty of the Lord is beheld in all its glory, and where are enjoyed the pleasures at His right hand for ever and ever, Christ entered. He, the Son of God in the human nature, Who had come into the flesh, Who had descended into the nethermost parts of the earth, the Son of Man, entered there in the glorified human nature, — *our* glorified human nature.

He did that on the fortieth day after His resurrection, in the sight of His disciples, gathered on Mt. Olivet. He departed from one place, the place of corruption and death, the earth, into another place, the place of glory and incorruptibility, the place of perfect communion with the Father, heaven.

And He *is entered*, that is, He entered once, never to be compelled to retreat from that sanctuary again!

* * * *

The way, — a way that was symbolized already in the day of shadows on the great day of atonement, — was the way of blood.

He travelled all the way, and sprinkled the way into the sanctuary with blood, the blood of atonement!

And it was the real, the perfect, the only blood of atonement! Otherwise He could never enter. He entered, not by way of the blood of calves and goats, but with the better, perfect sacrifice of His own precious blood. Realities belong with realities! To enter the real sanctuary the real blood of atonement was absolutely necessary. And He shed it! And so He could and did enter!

You ask: why?

Because, in the first place, He is our High Priest. Ordained by God to be our representative, to act in our behalf, to prepare the way for us, to lead us into that blessed fellowship of God's covenant that is the essence of heaven, He was, from all eternity.

To Him, — and this belongs to the answer of that "why." — was given a people, by sovereign election. It was the eternal good pleasure of our God to glorify Himself as the Triune Covenant Jehovah by leading many sons to glory through the deep way of sin and grace.

That way of sin and grace was the way of *our* sin, and *God's* grace!

That means that as far as we were concerned, the way into the house of the righteous and just and holy God was closed, absolutely closed. For fellowship with Him, the Holy One, can be only in the sphere of holiness and consecration, never in the sphere of sin and corruption. And we had wantonly departed from His house, despising its beauty and fellowship. Nor could we ever return. Nor would we ever return. Guilty we became, and forfeited all rights to God's blessed favor and fellowship. Corrupt we became, and lost all ability and fitness to dwell in God's house. Heaven, the

house of God, is closed to us. And we neither could nor would ever effect an entrance even for a moment into the most holy place.

But Christ came, not for Himself, but for us. And He, entering into our guilty state, as the Guiltless One, Who knew no sin, carried our sin and condemnation to and upon the accursed tree. And thus He entered,—as our Representative,—into heaven itself, along the blood-sprinkled way, the way of perfect obedience!

Into the presence of the living God He entered!

* * * *

For *us* He did that.

And before God's face He now appears for us!

That means that He not only died in our stead, but He also goes to heaven, where we could not go, in our behalf. Interpret that "us" in that light too: do you behold Him by faith as the One who went for you, instead of you, ahead of you, with His own blood, where you could not possibly go, not even with your own blood?

That means that He is there even now in our behalf. As our Advocate He is there pleading our cause, and obtaining for us the *right* to follow Him into the sanctuary! As our Intercessor He is there, obtaining for us all the blessings of God's house, and praying, "Father, I will, that those whom thou hast given me, may be with me where I am."

Interpret that "us" also in that light: is His intercession already answered by the Father in you? For the Father surely answers Him! Then you follow Him now already into that sanctuary. Then you walk along the way sprinkled with His own blood. Then you repent and cry out for forgiveness and righteousness. Then you cleave to God in Christ, and enter now already in beginning into that fellowship of God's covenant.

And you may, in spite of all evidence to the contrary, confidently utter the challenge: Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

And: Who shall ever separate us from the love of that Christ?

Nay: He shall surely draw us all unto Himself, that we may be with Him, in the presence of the Lord our God forever and ever!

H.C.H.



NOTICE

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EDITORIALS

As to the Court Case

At the time of this writing the court case is approaching.

The case was to come up in court on the eighteenth of May. But this morning our attorney called me and informed me that it was delayed for a day or two because there was a murder case to come up in the same court that had the precedence. Hence, it will not appear in court till the nineteenth or the twentieth of this month, and if the murder case should demand more time, even later.

As editor of the *Standard Bearer* as well as for general reasons, I am sorry for this. I was in hopes that, in the present issue of our magazine, I would be in a position to inform our readers, at least to some extent, about the progress of the case. And this now seems to be well-nigh impossible. Besides, we are all anxious to have the case settled whatever may be the outcome.

No one of us, of course, considers this the most important aspect of the present upheaval in our churches. It is not the question of material possessions but of the truth with which the church is concerned. And that question is settled already. Nevertheless, the matter of brick, and more especially of the name Protestant Reformed, is by no means without significance, not only for our local congregation but for all our churches and for all that love the Protestant Reformed truth.

And sad to say, this can be decided only by the worldly court.

The chief reason is that the opposition still claims the right to the name Protestant Reformed.

In the meantime, let us not forget that we have no reason to be anxious about the outcome. For the Lord reigns even over the worldly court, over the hearts of attorneys and judges. Even, therefore, if, in spite of the fact that we have a just cause, the case is decided against us, we know that it is of the Lord, that He is for us as we walk in the way of His truth, and that also decision of the court, whatever it may be, is for our good and for the good of His Church.

That is all that matters.

But the purpose of this editorial is to tell you about an incident that occurred during the past week, the week before the date set for the court trial.

In order properly to understand this incident we must, first of all, refer to some correspondence that had been conducted some time ago between our consistory and those that were no longer Protestant Reformed but were in illegal possession of the church property.

On Oct. 9 the consistory sent to them the following communication:

"Sirs:

The undersigned, presidents and clerk of the Consistory of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids,

Michigan, a corporation, which was declared by Classis East of the Protestant Reformed Churches to be the only legal Consistory of said church at its meeting of October 7, 1953, notifies you as follows:

1. You shall no longer use the name 'First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan.'

2. You shall deliver forthwith to Mr. G. H. Stadt, clerk of the Consistory of First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, all documents, record books, and property belonging to the corporation and now in your possession or under your control.

3. That you will forthwith remove yourselves and your property from the church building and turn over to Mr. G. H. Stadt, clerk, the keys thereto.

4. That you will forthwith refrain from conducting meetings, services, or assemblies in or on the premises of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan.

5. That you will forthwith notify the Old Kent Bank that you have no claim to any funds on deposit in said bank in the name of First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Mr. G. H. Stadt, clerk, will expect notification from you not later than October 16, 1953, as to the time and place of receiving the property, keys, and other things which are to be turned over to him in accordance with this notice.

Done at Grand Rapids, Michigan, this ninth day of October, 1953, by resolution of the Consistory of First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, a corporation, in accordance with the law and order and findings of Classis East of the Protestant Reformed Churches of October 7, 1953."

(w.s. by presidents and clerk of the Consistory)

If you should wonder why we address them as "sirs" and not as "brethren" we can refer you to the filthy and slanderous Cross Bill. This made it impossible for us to call them brethren, as long as they did not repent.

Soon after this, the consistory received the following communication, addressed to the clerk only:

"Dear brother:

"The undersigned have taken note of your communication, addressed to us as individuals, and beg to reply as follows:

"1. That we, as addressed by you, are but two individuals, who, as mere individuals, are without any power or authority to act in such matters as referred to in said communication.

"2. That, whereas we, as mere individuals, have no power to act in such matters as referred to by you in said communication, it is impossible for us to perform the demands which you impose upon our persons.

"We trust that you will forthwith notify the other signers of said communication of this our, the persons Hubert De Wolf and Sidney De Young, reply."

(w.s.) H. De Wolf and S. De Young.

However, on Jan. 23, 1954 the consistory received from them another communication as follows:

"To our former fellow consistory members of the First Protestant Reformed Church.

"Brethren:

"You have grieved and surprised us with respect to your action of presenting your grievances before the courts instead of, Scripturally, seeking to make a possible and mutually equitable settlement with us, your brethren.

"The policy which you now pursue has always been condemned by your Rev. Hoeksema, both in spoken and written word. In reference to this matter he recently quoted I Cor. 6:1, 7b: 'Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? Why do you not rather take wrong? Why do you not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?'

"Possibly you now object that we are no longer your brethren in the Lord, and therefore, these Scriptural passages do not apply in this case. This is the subterfuge, we understand, Rev. Hoeksema has now used to neutralize and make of none effect his former statements.

"Brethren! you know that before the Lord this will not hold.

"We further understand that you wrote to our Rev. De Wolf and Mr. De Young, personally, demanding the keys and claiming for yourselves the legal right to the name, archives and church property. You certainly cannot, by any stretch of the imagination, construe these demands, made to these men personally, to be an overture intended to promote a peaceable and equitable settlement between your group and us.

"The truth is, that without any attempt to put into practice the Scriptural injunctions which you yourselves put forth, you placed the matter before the courts and forced us, against our will, to answer your charges before the 'unjust'; whereas by pursuing a Christian and brotherly approach we possibly could have decided these matters peaceably.

"We admonish you that the action you are pursuing is evil and irreconcilable with God's Word.

"We also feel that we must again point out to you the injustice of the position you hold. You are very well aware of the fact that we mutually agreed in our articles of agreement that if any question or differences arose among us, that in that case, the properties should belong to the majority. We are very clearly and decisively that majority. In all honesty you must admit, that in view of this fact, you are dealing dishonestly and unfairly. Dare you say otherwise?

"These are not matters merely touching on a few material possessions. These are matters of a clear conscience before God. You know we are speaking the truth.

(w.s.) Sidney De Young, clerk."

To this the following reply was sent to Mr. Sidney De Young who claimed to be the clerk of the illegal consistory:

"Sir:

"Received your communication.

"Please inform the group you represent as follows:

"1. We, indeed, consider an equitable settlement of the property out of court desirable from a Christian viewpoint.

"2. We remind you of the fact that this was our purpose from the very beginning but you made this impossible by claiming the name, records, archives and other church property, and even locking the doors on us.

"3. We consider a settlement out of court absolutely impossible as long as you claim to be the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan.

"We deny that you constitute the majority of the members of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, as you so confidently claim.

"Your letter indicates that you would prefer a peaceable and equitable settlement of the property out of court. The Consistory of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, is at all times ready to consider whatever overtures you may have to offer, but in the light of the allegations of your cross bill of complaint, which you filed against the individual members of the Consistory, and in view of the fact that you have been found by proper ecclesiastical authorities not to represent the Protestant Reformed truth, and as long as you have not repented and have indicated no intention of conforming to church polity, we can see no basis for discussion of settlement unless you are willing to relinquish the use of the name."

(Signed by Consistory of First Prot. Ref. Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan by the presidents and clerk)

To this communication no further reply was received.

Then, on Tuesday morning, May 11, the Rev. Hanko told me that Mr. Tubbs, our attorney, had called him up and informed him of the following transaction, all orally, between him and Mr. Linsey, the opposing attorney:

They had met each other in probate court. Mr. Linsey asked our attorney whether he intended to go through with the court case on May 18. Our attorney replied that he did unless a settlement could be reached out of court. Mr. Linsey asked Mr. Tubbs on what conditions he considered such a settlement could be obtained. Our attorney replied that he could not speak officially for his clients, but that he was sure we want the name Protestant Reformed and probably would demand one hundred thousand dollars. Mr. Linsey promised that he would confer with his clients. He had always urged them to settle our differences in a Christian way out of court. Later he returned to Mr. Tubbs and informed him of the fact that he had had a four hour conference with the Revs. De Wolf, Blankespoor, Cammenga, and Kok, and had again strongly urged them to accept a settlement out of court. They had finally decided that they would be willing to listen to the following proposals coming from us: 1. That they relinquish all rights and claims to the name First Protestant Reformed Church; 2. That they

"March 1, 1954

would re-organize under a different name; 3. That they settle on the basis of a *pro rata* division of the property; 4. that all this would pertain only to the local case.

Our attorney suggested that both parties hold consistory meetings that same Tuesday evening, that our consistory then come with proposals to them, and that others would wait until they should hear from us.

This, then, was the proposition, which was all delivered to us orally and of which it is deplorable that nothing was in writing.

The Rev. Hanko and I considered this proposition and thought it advisable: 1. That we should not ask for a consistory meeting that same evening because the matter was too important to decide without thorough consideration. 2. That we should immediately acquaint all the members of the consistory together with the consistory members of last year with the matter and ask for a meeting on the following evening. 3. That we should ask for a meeting that same Tuesday afternoon of as many representatives of the churches in the vicinity as could be reached on such a short notice, because they were all more or less involved in the matter.

We let our attorney know that our meeting was to be held on Wednesday evening and requested him to be present. He would acquaint the other attorney with this decision.

The proposed gathering for the afternoon was held and present were representatives of First Church, Fourth Church, Creston Church, Second Church, Hope Church, Hudsonville Church, and Holland Church. The matter was thoroughly discussed from every angle, but, of course, no decision was made.

On the following evening the consistory met in the presence of Mr. Tubbs and adopted the following:

"Re THE PROPOSED SETTLEMENT
OUT OF COURT

The MESSRS. HUBERT DE WOLF, FREDERICK SYTSMA, HENRY KNOTT, WILLIAM STUURSMA, LAMBERT MULDER, ANDREW DYKSTRA, HENRY BASTIANSE, SIDNEY DE YOUNG, ADOLF VERMEER, GERRIT SIKKEMA, JOHN BOUWMAN, ANDREW VOSS.

It has been brought to our attention through our attorney, Robert S. Tubbs, that you seek a settlement of our differences out of court and the following was proposed:

1. You will relinquish all rights and claims to the name FIRST PROTESTANT REFORMED CHURCH of Grand Rapids, Michigan.
2. You will reorganize under a different name.
3. You will divide the property of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, *pro rata* according to the number of families on each side.
4. The above shall pertain to the local church only.

In reply we offer the following:

1. We are willing to present to a congregational meeting of the legal members of the FIRST PROTESTANT REFORMED CHURCH of Grand Rapids, Michigan, called

by the legal consistory of which the Rev.s C. Hanko and H. Hoeksema are presidents, the following recommendations:

"The Consistory shall dispose of the real estate holdings of the FIRST PROTESTANT REFORMED CHURCH to the highest acceptable outside bidder and pay to those who wish to reorganize under a different name half of the proceeds of their sale of the above mentioned property."

Provided, that before Friday, May 14, 7 P. M.

(1) You acknowledge that the legal consistory of the FIRST PROTESTANT REFORMED CHURCH of Grand Rapids, Michigan, are the brethren represented by the Revs. C. Hanko and H. Hoeksema as presidents, and John M. Faber as clerk, and which are recognized as such by Classis East of the Protestant Reformed Churches in its October session, 1953.

(2) You immediately vacate the church building located on the corner of Fuller Ave. and Franklin St. of which you held illegal possession since June, 1953, and deliver the keys to the clerk of the consistory, Mr. John M. Faber.

(3) That you retract and apologize for your filthy and slanderous Cross Bill in which you besmear the good name of the Rev. H. Hoeksema.

From the above it is evident:

1. That for us it is a matter of principle and not of the brick.
2. That we are willing to put you in a position to build a new church and parsonage."

The consistory further decided to acquaint the opposition with this decision and to inform them that we would meet Friday evening to consider their reply.

At the time of this writing, i.e. after the consistory met on Friday evening, no reply was received.

This is all that happened officially, as far as I know.

But unofficially I must add something to this story.

And what I now write took place in the presence of two witnesses who happened to be present.

On Thursday afternoon two members of the illegal consistory, Mr. J. Kok and F. Doezeema, called on me in my parsonage. I do not know whether they were a delegation or a committee or in what capacity they came. But they came to find out the truth about the matter which I above reported and about which they had heard in a round about way. They, so they said, knew nothing about it. Mr. Kok offered to shake hands with me, which I refused on the ground that I could not possibly shake hands with one that was responsible for the filthy cross bill. But I informed them about the whole matter and gave them a copy of what the consistory had decided on Wednesday evening.

An hour or so later they returned and said that they now knew the facts and that they were not as I had presented them to them, for they had a letter from Mr. Linsey or rather a copy of a letter which he had written to Mr. Tubbs and which gave quite a different version of the matter.

Of that letter I have a copy. He does, indeed, give a different version of the matter and states that we had *assumed* certain things (which we certainly did not). In it he also states that he will recommend to his clients not to accept our proposition, which was to be expected, of course. In it, however, he also states that the Rev. De Wolf had proposed to him that they might be willing to relinquish the name but that we would have to offer a lesser sum than the one hundred thousand dollars suggested by Mr. Tubbs as a basis for settlement. Of the four hour meeting with the other ministers he does not mention one word, although this certainly took place in his office.

One more item.

The following morning, Mr .F. Doezeema again called me up. I will not report a mere phone conversation for which there are no witnesses. He told me, however, that the rumors afloat about this matter ought to be corrected. With this I agreed and I informed him that I would give a complete account of the whole matter in the *Standard Bearer*. This he, apparently, did not like. I then offered him that before I would publish the above editorial he might come over to my house and read it. This he did not accept but instead hung up the phone.

The above is a true account of what happened "Re a settlement out of court."

H. H.

AS TO BOOKS

Ellicott's Commentary on the Whole Bible, Vol. I, Gen. Numbers, by Chas. John Ellicott. Published by Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. Eight volumes. Price per volume \$5.95.

In an introduction by Dr. Herbert Lockyer he writes: "No pastor's study should be without this set of beneficial expositions. We have no hesitation of affirming that Seminaries, Bible Institutes and Christian Colleges adding Ellicott's Commentary and the Whole Bible to their library will prove to be the most sought after work of its kind. Students for the ministry will not be long in discovering the rich mine of truth its pages contain."

With this we agree. It is a work which is easily accessible to every bible student. Also to those who prepare for their bible lesson in Sunday school or societies, we gladly recommend this work.

Dr. Ellicott was an English divine of the nineteenth century, a scholar of the conservative type as his introductions to the various books of the Bible in his commentaries plainly reveal. To us he is better known for his critical and grammatical commentaries on several books of the New Testament than for his Commentary on the whole Bible.

The first volume contains expositions on the books of Genesis to Numbers. We perused this volume and, on the whole, recommend it to our readers. It is a conservative exposition, very clearly written and faithful to the text of Holy Writ. He does not hesitate to defend the miraculous element in the Old Testament over against those who "among ourselves . . . accept the view of Hume, that it is more probable that the witnesses to miracles should have been deceived, than that the miracles should have happened." p. 191.

It stands to reason that, in a brief review of this kind, we cannot enter into a detailed criticism of the work. We do not always agree with the exposition. As an example we refer to the explanation of Ex. 4:21.

But Zondervan rendered us a valuable service by republishing this work. And we heartily recommend it to our readers.

H.H.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On June 6th our dear parents

MR. AND MRS. TOM ELZINGA

hope to celebrate their 35th wedding Anniversary, D. V.

We are thankful to our God who has seen fit to give them to us and our prayer is that He may bless them in the way that lies ahead and that they may experience that there is no peace apart from Him.

Their Grateful Children:

Mr. and Mrs. James Elzinga	Peter
Mr. and Mrs. Fred Harbin	Alan
Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Hossink	Ronald
Mr. and Mrs. Louis Elzinga	Terrence
Theodore Elzinga	Thomas
Elaine	and 11 grandchildren

576 W. 18th St., Holland, Mich.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

On Wednesday, May 19, 1954, our dear parents,

MR. AND MRS. DICK DE BEER

hope to celebrate their 55th wedding anniversary.

We are thankful to our God for having spared them for each other and for us, and we pray that God may bless them further in the way that lies ahead; and as the days approach when their earthly pilgrimage shall end, may they enjoy the peace which alone can be found in Him.

Their grateful children:

Mr. and Mrs. Edward Fennema
Mr. and Mrs. Abe Vree
Mr. and Mrs. Nick De Beer
12 grandchildren
7 great-grandchildren.

The Holland Home, 1450 E. Fulton St., Grand Rapids, Michigan.

OUR DOCTRINE

THE TRIPLE KNOWLEDGE

AN EXPOSITION OF THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM
PART III — OF THANKFULNESS

LORD'S DAY 41

Chapter 2

Divorce and Remarriage (cont.)

And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery." And the passage in Mark is similar to that of Matt. 19. And after the Lord had answered the pharisees that came to Him to tempt Him about the matter of divorcement, we read: "And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same matter. And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery." And the text in Luke reads: "Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery." The text in Romans is probably not directly applicable, because the apostle Paul uses the marriage relation as an illustration of the spiritual relation of believers to Christ. Nevertheless, it is by no means without importance, and therefore we quote it here: Know ye not, brethren, for I speak to them that know the law, how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then, if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man."

The text in Mark is not decisive to determine whether or not a divorced man or woman may remarry, because it does not mention the limiting clause, "except it be for fornication." Nevertheless, the text as it stands there, if there were no other passages in Scripture, is decidedly against remarriage. Without any limitation it teaches that if a divorced man remarries, he commits adultery. And the same is true of a divorced woman that is married to another man. The question, however, whether it is allowable that any divorced party remarry in case the divorce is based on the sin of adultery or fornication, is left out of consideration. Certainly, however, it must be admitted that as the text stands there, it is decidedly against the remarriage of divorced parties. But it must be admitted that it is not decisive for the question we are discussing. The text in Luke is a little more to the point. Nevertheless, because of the omission of the clause,

"except it be for fornication," it also is not conclusive. It teaches us that not only a man that remarries when he is divorced commits adultery, but that also a third party, when he marries the divorced woman, commits adultery. Also this passage, therefore, when taken by itself, condemns the remarriage of divorced parties. But again we say: because the text says nothing about those who are divorced on the basis of fornication, the text is not conclusive.

Different it is, however, with the text in Matthew 5:32 and Matthew 19:9. Especially the former passage we consider conclusive in favor of our contention that remarriage of divorced parties is under all circumstances condemned by Holy Writ. I say *especially* the former text, because it is not certain whether in Matthew 19:9 the clause, "and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery," belongs in the text, according to the original. The best manuscripts omit these words. However, for our purpose this does not make any difference, because the clause does occur in Matthew 5:32.

Notice that in these passages there is mention of three different parties that commit adultery. In the first place, there is the man who without the cause of fornication forsakes his wife and marries another. He commits adultery because he is considered still to stand in the marriage relation to the woman whom he has forsaken. And therefore his marriage with another woman is adultery. In the second place, there is the man that marries the forsaken woman, who is entirely innocent and has committed no fornication. He also is said to commit adultery, for the very reason that the forsaken woman is still considered to stand in the relation of marriage with the man that put her away and that is married with another woman. And in the third place, it stands to reason that the woman that is forsaken by her first husband and marries the other man also commits adultery.

In spite of these clear declarations of Holy Writ, there are still those that maintain that the innocent party, man or woman, that has not committed fornication, may remarry with another. However, I am convinced that this interpretation of the words is absolutely untenable.

Let us have the implication of the words of the Lord in these passages clearly before our mind. A man puts away his wife, and marries another. A second man marries the woman that has been put away, and by marrying her he commits adultery. And through that marriage the woman also commits adultery. This, to my mind, settles the whole matter. The attempt has been made to change the words of the Lord by translating the clause, "that is put away from her husband," into, "when she is put away," and by adding, "before her husband is married with another." The case then is supposed to be thus, that the man indeed has put the woman away, but has not yet committed adultery by marrying with another woman. But in the first place, this translation is hardly permissible because also the original simply has, "her that is put away," or, "the forsaken one."

And secondly, even if the translation, "when she is put away," would be permissible, this is by no means the same as translating, "immediately after she has been put away." And besides, no one has the right to corrupt the text by adding, "before her husband is married to another woman." Such an explanation certainly cannot be considered true exegesis. And that this cannot be the meaning becomes all the more evident if we remember that the Jews had made it a law that a man who put away his wife without the cause of fornication, and given her a letter of divorcement, might immediately marry another woman, but that the woman would have to wait three months before she could marry with another man. Hence, there is not much ground for the supposition that the Savior in these declarations of Matthew and Luke had in mind the case of a woman that was put away by her husband, but whose husband had not yet been remarried. The contrary is undoubtedly true: the Lord speaks of a woman whose husband has not only put her away, but who also is already married to another. All this takes place "without the cause of fornication." The woman, therefore, is innocent. But the man now commits adultery by marrying with another woman. His wife therefore has Biblical ground for divorce. If any divorced party, therefore, can ever have the right to remarry, it certainly is this woman. Her husband, as far as he is concerned, has broken the bond of marriage with his first wife, and now lives in adultery. Yet, according to these passages the woman has no right to remarry. On the contrary, whoever marries her, even after her first husband has forsaken her and contracted another marriage, is said to commit adultery. The question is: why? The only possible answer to this question is: in spite of the sin of the husband, in spite of the woman having been put away, she is still considered to be the legal wife of her former husband before the face of God.

Hence, there can be no doubt but that Scripture teaches: 1) That there can be indeed Biblical grounds for divorce, the ground of fornication. Mark you well, that even in case of fornication the innocent party does not have to put away the guilty party. Even then the Christian way is undoubtedly the way of forgiveness. Nevertheless, fornication, and especially repeated fornication, is a ground for separation, or divorce. 2) At the same time, the Bible teaches without any doubt that the marriage bond is indissoluble, that it can only be dissolved in death, and that therefore remarriage while both parties are still living is condemned by the Word of God.

Chapter 3

Chastity

The fundamental principle of the law is love.

The law of liberty, objectively considered as a demand of God, and subjectively as written in our hearts, is that we love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our mind, with all our soul, and with all our strength. And this love is not a sentimental feeling, but is rooted in the heart of the

Christian, and from the heart controls his mind and his will, so that he fears the Lord and keeps His commandments. He stands in covenant relation to Him, and in the covenant is the servant of God. He respects and loves His precepts for every relation of life in the midst of the world, and that too, antithetically, so that while he walks in the light, he hates the darkness. He cannot and does not attempt to serve God and Mammon, but he serves God with the rejection of Mammon.

Hence, the law also implies that we love the neighbor as ourselves. This love of the neighbor is not a second commandment, next to that of the love of God. But as the Lord has it, the former is like unto the latter. The love of the neighbor as ourselves is rooted in the love of God. We must love our neighbor as ourselves for God's sake, and in the love of God. And also this love is not a mere sentimental feeling, but is rooted in the heart, and from the heart controls our entire life. The love of ourselves is not the same as carnal selfishness, so that we seek ourselves in distinction from the neighbor and exalt ourselves above him. But it is the love of God applied to ourselves, to our soul and body, to all our mind and will and strength, to all our powers and gifts and talents, and to our position and relation in every department of life in the world, in church, society, and state. It means that we respect ourselves in the gifts which God bestowed upon us and in the position in which God places us as the servants of the Lord in His covenant. This is also true in regard to the love of the neighbor. It means that for God's sake, and in the love of God, we respect him too in all his God-given talents and powers, as well as in the position which he occupies in the midst of the world in every sphere of life.

Applied to the seventh commandment, this implies that husband and wife love each other in the Lord and for God's sake. The Christian marriage relation cannot be based upon a mere natural love between husband and wife, a mere attraction of the sexes, which without the love of God degenerates into sexual lusts and principally becomes adultery, nor even upon the attraction of a particular young man to a particular young woman, which the Lord often uses as a means to bring them together. But it must be based on and rooted in the love of God. It is in the love of God that the husband must respect his own body and his own relation to his wife. And it is in the same love of God that the wife must love her own body and respect her position in relation to the husband. This is emphasized in Scripture repeatedly. In Ephesians 5:21, ff., the apostle writes that we must submit ourselves one to another in the fear of God. This he applies, first of all, to the relation of a wife to her husband when he admonishes: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing." Notice, in the first place, that this submission of a wife to her hus-

band is not a mere slavish yielding or subservience, but a very active obedience in the fear and love of God and for Christ's sake. This submission of the wife to her husband naturally implies that she subordinates herself willingly, in the fear of the Lord, with both body and soul. And in the second place, note also that this submission of love in the fear of God consists in respecting the ordinance of God with regard to the relation of man and wife. For the apostle writes, motivating his admonition, that the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church, and he is the saviour of the body. But the apostle also applies this fundamental precept of the fear of the Lord, of the love of God, to the relation of the husband to his wife. Writes he: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh." Here too, notice that the love of a Christian husband to his wife is not a mere natural love, but is rooted in the love of God and in the love of Christ to His church. Hence, also in their sexual relationship the man ought to love his wife even as he loves his own body. And even as he must love his own body for God's sake and in the fear of the Lord, so also he must love and respect his wife and her body in relation to himself. The same is true of Colossians 3:18, 19. In the context the apostle addressed to the church first of all some general exhortations. As the elect of God, holy and beloved, they must put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering. They must forbear one another, forgive one another, as Christ also has forgiven them. They must put on the bond of charity, or of love, which is the bond of perfectness. The peace of God must rule in their hearts. And the Word of Christ must richly dwell in them in all wisdom. And whatever they do, in word or in deed, all must be done in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him. And in that connection the apostle writes: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them." It is evident also from these passages that the relation between husband and wife must be based on and rooted in the love of God. Again, this is also evident from I Thessalonians 4:3-7: "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication. That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that

the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." Also from this it is evident that the love between husband and wife, even in their sexual relationship, must be rooted in and based on the love of God.

The same love of God, which is principally the same as the love of the neighbor, is also the principle that causes the Christian to flee from fornication. He loves the neighbor for God's sake, that is, he respects his person in whatever state he is. If the neighbor is married, he will respect his marriage relation in the love of God. Hence, a man will not commit fornication with his neighbor's wife, nor a woman with her neighbor's husband. Or, when you are married and the neighbor is single, you will refrain from committing fornication with him or with her. And the same is true in case you and your neighbor both exist in the single state. Also in that case the love of God, in which you respect your neighbor in his position, will cause you to refrain from committing fornication with each other. All this, namely, that it is the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord applied to the neighbor that is the only principle that causes the Christian to flee from fornication is plainly taught in Scripture. Thus the apostle writes in I Corinthians 6:13-20: "Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body. And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power. Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them members of an harlot? God forbid. What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own! For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

The same principle of the love of God, according to which we must also love ourselves for God's sake, implies that we keep our soul and body pure, and free from lusts of any kind, free also from those unnatural sins that are mentioned in Romans 1.

And this is the spiritual virtue of chastity which is emphasized by the Heidelberg Catechism in Lord's Day 41 as the general meaning of the seventh commandment. For in answer to the question what the seventh commandment teaches us, the Catechism instructs: "That all uncleanness is accursed of God: and that therefore we must with all our hearts detest the same, and live chastely and temperately, whether in holy wedlock, or in single life."

H.H.

THE DAY OF SHADOWS

The Prophecy of Isaiah

The sinners afraid; the church comforted. Chapter XXXIII: 14-24.

So has the Lord by His anger consumed the enemies of His people. By a terrible demonstration of His might He has delivered Zion. The sinners in Zion are now afraid. Fearfulness seizes the unclean. For they find themselves in Zion. Here is the temple. Here Jehovah dwells. Here is the fire of His altars. Here His wrath has flamed and reached out to devour the adversary. In their alarm the sinners cry, "Who shall dwell *for us* with the devouring fire? Who shall dwell *for us* with everlasting burnings (vs. 14)?"

Others, "Who *among us* shall dwell . . ." but incorrectly so. The preposition that occurs in the Hebrew (it is the *lamedt*) does not have the meaning of *among, in the midst*. The thought conveyed is, "Who shall place himself between us and the Fire in order that we may not be enveloped and devoured by it?" The prophet replies to these anguished ones.

He that walks in righteousness and speaks uprightness. He that despises the gain of deceits, that shakes his hands from holding of bribes, that stops his ears from hearing bloods, that stops his eyes from seeing evil. He shall dwell on high-places. Fortresses of rocks shall be his strongplace. Bread shall be given him. His water shall be sure (vss. 15, 16).

What is here demanded is a perfect righteousness, so that it may well be asked who among men measures up to these requirements. Only one and that one Christ. But this did not leave the penitent of that day without comfort and assurance. In principle walking uprightly and keeping the Lord's covenant, they received testimony in connection with their sacrifices by blood that in Christ they were righteous and that they pleased God (Heb. XI:4, 5). It is to such that the prophet now speaks.

Their eyes shall see the king in his beauty (vs. 17a).

This king is the ascended Christ in heavenly glory.

They shall behold the land that is very far off (vs. 17b).

This land is the new earth. It is far distant in the sense that its extent is immeasurable.

Their heart shall meditate terrors (vs. 18a).

As delivered out of all their troubles they shall contemplate their blessedness against the background of all the sufferings that was their portion in this present time.

In that far off land there will be no scribe, no weigher, no counter of towers (vs. 18b).

The scribe and the weigher were concerned with the collection of revenues. They were government agencies before whom one paid tribute and who weighed the valuables received and compiled a list of them. The first step that the enemy took toward attacking a city was to observe and

count the towers on its wall. Accordingly, scribe, weigher and counter of towers symbolized oppression, bondage, war. The far off land will be free of all such evils so that its inhabitants will be able to exclaim, "Where is the scribe? Where is the weighmaster? Where is the counter of towers?"

And they shall not be harassed any more by a fierce people whose speech is deeper than they can hear and whose barbarous tongue they cannot understand (vs. 19).

The allusion is to the nations that successively possessed the world-power — the Assyrians, Chaldeans and the Romans. They were foreigners whose language the people of Israel did not understand. At the present time the fierce people is the world that lies in darkness and whose prince is satan. The assurance is that on the new earth the adversaries of the church will never again be seen, because they shall be no more.

The redeemed shall look upon Zion, the city of festival days. Their eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle, house of God, that shall never be broken down; its stakes shall never be removed, and not one of its chords shall ever be broken (vs. 20).

In contrast to the traveling tabernacle of the wilderness, it shall never be broken up either voluntarily and in an orderly way or violently because of the onset of an enemy. But it shall be a permanent tabernacle, a house of God eternal in the heavens.

There in that land the glorious Lord shall be unto His people a place of rivers and streams broad of hands. No oar-ship shall go therein; no sail-ship shall pass thereby. For the Lord is their judge, their lawgiver and their king; He will save them (vss. 21, 22).

If the Lord is the rock of His people, their sun and shield, so, too, is He their streams and rivers. And therefore no hostile ship can reach them such as the proud ship Assyria — the Assyrian host — moored before the gates of Jerusalem. Wrecked by the stroke of the Lord, the ship was abandoned by its crew to the enemy, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, i.e., the Assyrian camp with its treasures and huge supplies of foodstuffs was forsaken by the remnant of the depleted Assyrian army and taken over by the Jerusalem-ites for plunder.

In the imagery of the text, they forsook their tacklings; they could not strengthen their mast, they could not spread the sail (vs. 23a). In a word, the ship was abandoned.

All the Jerusalem-ites, including the lame, took part in gathering the spoil. None refused by saying that he was sick. This wonderful deliverance shall be to the Lord's people the token that their iniquity is forgiven (23b, 24).

The Judgment on all the nations. Chapter XXXIV:1-4.

The prophet bids the nations, people, the earth and its fulness, the world and all things that come forth out of it, to draw near, hear and give attention (vs. 1).

The matter that the prophet will announce is weighty. Its significance is universal. And therefore he bids all na-

tions to come and hear. For wrath with respect to the Lord is upon all the nations, and His fury is upon all their hosts. He has devoted them to destruction, and given them over to the slaughter (vs. 2). Their slain will be cast out, and their stink shall ascend from their carcasses, and the mountains shall flow with their blood (vs. 3). And the hosts of heaven shall melt, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll. And all their hosts shall wither and fall, as a wilted leaf from a vine, and as a wilted fig from a fig tree (vs. 4).

The destruction of the world that is here foretold is the final stage in the progressive fulfillment of this Assyrian cycle of prophecies. The New Testament Scriptures contain passages that are founded on the present text. Comp. Matt. 24:29; II Pet. 3:7, 10, 12; Rev. 6:13, 14.

The Judgment on Edom as representative and type of the world of reprobated men. Chapter XXXIV:5-15.

For the sword of the Lord is intoxicated in heaven (vs. 5a).

Intoxicated, i.e., sated with judgment. The tense of the verb is the prophetic perfect indicating that the dissolution of the hosts of heaven shall surely come to pass, is thus as good as accomplished. And therefore the sword descends to earth; it has performed its work above.

Behold, it shall come down upon Idumea (Edom), and upon the people of the Lord's curse, for judgment (5b). The sword of the Lord is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, and with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for the Lord has a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea (vs. 6).

The sword of the Lord is not only sated with blood, it is fatted, i.e., it drips with the fat of the Edomites regarded as a sacrifice and compared to sheep, goats and rams. Bozrah stands for Edom. It is a people cursed of the Lord.

And the buffalos shall be cast down with them, and the bullocks and the bulls; and their land shall be satiated with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness (vs. 7).

Symbolized are the mighty men in the nation, the fierce and the strong. All shall perish, great and small, high and low.

For it is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompence for the strife of Zion (vs. 8).

This is the purpose of the "sacrifice," and the "slaughter," Zion's strife, her good fight, must be compensated; her injuries must be avenged.

Edom's streams shall be changed into pitch, his dust into brimstone, his land shall become burning pitch, that shall not be extinguished day or night but the smoke of which shall ascend forever (vss. 9, 10a).

In the final instance the prediction is that of the fire of the last judgment destroying the whole globe of the earth. The description is by images supplied by the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah. It is the prophets' way of saying that

the earth and all the works therein shall be burned up, 2 Pet. 3:10.

From generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever. But the pelican and the hedgehog shall possess it; the owl and the raven shall dwell in it (vss. 10b, 11a).

The land will be inhabited by wild beasts of the desert.

The Lord will stretch out upon it the line of desolation and the plummet of emptiness (vss. IIb).

The line and the plummet are instruments for measuring.

The meaning of the metaphor is that the Lord has appointed Esau to destruction, that is precisely Esau as the object of His eternal hatred that He wants destroyed, and Esau only, and not Jacob whom He loves.

"The line of desolation," — so called because it is stretched for the purpose of making desolate. And the line is made plumb for the purpose of emptying, depopulating, Edom's heritage. Hence, the "plummet of emptiness."

As to the nobles, there is no kingdom that they may proclaim (vs. 12b). This passage has been variously translated. Doubtless the meaning is that the kingdom of Edom shall be overthrown, so that there shall be no more government. For the prophet adds, "And her princes shall be no more (vs. 12b).

All shall pass away — kingdom, princes, nobles and the general mass of people.

And thorns shall come up in her forsaken palaces and bramble-bushes in her strongholds (vs. 13b).

And it shall be a habitation of great serpents and a court for the daughter of owls. And there the wild beasts of the desert shall meet with the jackals, and the hairy goat shall cry to his companion. The beast of the night also shall rest there, and find for himself a place of rest. There shall the arrowsnake make her nest and hatch and brood over eggs under her shadow. There the vultures shall also be gathered, every one with her mate (vss. 13b-15).

The exact meaning of the words for the various animals cannot be determined. But this is not a loss. It is enough for us to understand that Edom's ruins shall become the haunt of beasts that prowl in the night, beasts unclean, wild fierce and repulsive as the weeds with which Edom's abandoned palaces shall grow rank. For what must be manifest is that Edom is a people against whom the Lord hath indignation forever (Mal. 1:4).

The words for the animals denote actual beings and not spectres, ghosts, demons, as if the prophet were here fixing upon the Scriptures a popular superstition.

Conclusion. Chapter XXXIV:16, 17.

The prophet now summons to seek, i.e., inquire, at the book of the Lord and read (vs. 16).

As the following verse makes plain, the prophet has in mind the predictions of the judgment on Edom as put into writing. More particularly the reference is to the prophecy that Edom's ruins shall be occupied by all the unclean and

fearful beings enumerated in verses 11-15. The prophet wants God's afflicted people to take firm hold of this prophecy in order that, when the thing shall come to pass, they may know that it is of the Lord. And come to pass it shall without fail.

Not one of the weird beings named shall be missing. Not a female shall be lacking her mate. For the mouth of the Lord it has commanded, and His Spirit He has gathered them (vs. 16b).

As activated and directed by the power of the unseen God, they shall come from every quarter of the desert and congregate in Esau's desolate country, there to abide.

For He has cast the lot for them, and His hand has divided it unto them by line. They shall possess it for ever, from generation to generation they shall dwell therein (vs. 17).

As the Lord allotted Canaan to Israel, so He allotted Edom to these doleful creatures.

Then whole description is plainly calculated to set forth Edom as a type of the damned and Edom's land as a type of the place of eternal torment of the damned.

Israel's redemption and return. Chapter XXXV:1-10.

The wilderness and the land of draught shall exalt for them, and the sterile plain shall be glad, and blossom as the lily. She shall surely blossom and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto her, the splendour of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, and the splendour of our God (vss. 1, 2).

The demonstrative *them* of vs. 1 looks to the redeemed of vs. 10 and not to the Edomites of the preceding prophecy. Nor must Edom's desolated land be comprehended in the rejuvenated sterile places of the earth. No such prospect is here held forth to Edom. The Edomites are a people against whom the Lord has indignation forever. Forever shall the smoke go up from the burning pitch into which their land shall be changed. Not that the territory formerly occupied by the Edom of the Old Dispensation shall not share in the glorification of the earth at the appearing of Christ. But the total of the reprobated of which Edom was the type shall be assigned to a place that, in the imagery of the prophet, shall lie waste forever.

Vss. 1 and 2 are descriptive of the sphere for the coming of the ransomed to Zion (see vs. 10). The home coming shall be through a desert. A parallel passage is Isaiah 9:16: "And there shall be a highway for the remnant of the people, which shall be left from Assyria, like as it was to Israel in the day that it came up out of the land of Egypt." The Nile and the Euphrates shall be divided into seven small streams and in that way these rivers shall be made passable for the journeyers, 11:15. There shall be signs to direct them on their way, Jer. 31:21. And they shall enjoy abundance of water, Isa. 43:19 sq.; 48:21. There shall be no more curse. The life in Christ shall operate also in these desert places

so that they shall be wholly conformed to the state of the home-comers that pass through them.

This prophecy, like all others, undergoes progressive fulfilment. First to be mentioned as this home-coming of the redeemed is the deliverance of the church from the bondage of Egypt and the turning of Judah's captivity. The reality typified is the calling of the church according to the election of grace in this Gospel period as climaxed by the appearance of the church and the whole earth in glory at the end of time. The destination of the home-comers is always Zion now and everlastingly. For in Zion is the temple. In Zion Christ is at God's right hand. From Zion flows the stream of grace from which the ransomed will everlastingly drink. And the redemption is through judgment — the atonement of Christ and in subordination to the sufferings and death of the Saviour the desolation of Edom. Of the sufferings of Christ the Egyptian bondage and the captivity of Judah were each in turn prophetic.

And so the prophet continues addressing the ransomed: Strengthen ye the weak hands, and make firm the tottering knees (vs. 3). Say to them that are of a troubled heart, Be strong, do not fear. Behold your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; He will come and save you (vs. 4).

Then the eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf will be opened (vs. 5). Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing: for in the wilderness waters shall be cleaved, and streams in the desert (vs. 6).

The rocks in the desert shall be cleaved and streams of water shall gush forth out of them, as in the days of Israel's sojourn in the desert. And the rock is Christ. And He is the living water of the ransomed, so that as grafted in Him by a living faith they who are by nature dumb and blind and lame speak and see and leap.

And the dry plain shall become a marsh, and the thirsty land springs of water. In the habitation of the great serpents — in the places where they lie down — shall be grass of reeds and rushes (vs. 7). And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those, the way-faring men. And fools shall not stray therein (vs. 8).

Christ, too, is the way and the redeemed alone go by this way, such chosen of God.

No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there but the redeemed shall walk there (vs. 9).

And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads. They shall attain to joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away (vs. 10).

Herewith ends the Assyrian cycle of prophecies.

G.M.O.

IN HIS FEAR

Walking in Error

(7)

We come, now, to that sad chapter in the recent history of the Protestant Reformed Churches that deals with the sinful act of three of its former ministers, Rev. Blankespoor, Rev. Knott and Rev. Kok, whereby they left these Protestant Reformed Churches in a schismatic way and whereby they, as unfaithful shepherds, led large portions of their flocks astray and into walking in error with them.

This they will vehemently deny!

This they have at various times and in several ways tried to deny. They even dared to meet with Rev. De Wolf and one of his elders and draw up a document entitled, "Declaration of Continuation" wherein they claim to be the continuation of the very Classis they despised and left.

But let us examine this act of theirs perpetrated at the October session of Classis East.

We wrote last time that Rev. Kok gave Classis East an ultimatum by abusing a document of his consistory. We will, a little later, spread that document upon these pages as it rests in the archives of our Classis. But let us first reconstruct for you the whole situation.

Classis East met to receive the report of its committee appointed to inform Fuller Ave's. consistory of our advice in re the De Wolf case and especially to continue the work that remained of its April session, notably the protests against Rev. Kok for his heretical statements. He knew that this was coming up at this session of Classis. And in that light his action with this document becomes significant.

Before we could continue with our work, we first had the problem of deciding who could properly be seated as delegates from First Church. Rev. Hanko and Elder Bylsma responded to the roll call as replacing Rev. De Wolf and elder Sikkema. But Rev. De Wolf and elder Sikkema insisted that they should take their regular places and declared themselves to represent the only legal consistory of First church. Classis thereupon heard a letter read from Rev. Hanko's Consistory explaining what had taken place in the Consistory since Classis had given its advice in re the De Wolf case. We then listened to a document from Rev. De Wolf and his followers in which they gave their version of the same events. And then the committee appointed to inform First Church's Consistory of our advice and which met with the Consistory on June 1, June 15, June 22 and June 23 gave its report of the same matter.

After much discussion the following motion was approved by majority vote:

"A. Classis expresses that the Rev. De Wolf and Elder Sikkema cannot be seated as delegates of Classis East.

Grounds:

1. It appears from the report of the committee delegated to the Consistory of the First Prot. Ref. Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, that these brethren are under censure, and censured office bearers cannot function in their office.

2. It appears from the same document that these brethren, together with several other elders, did not submit to the censure of their consistory, but on the contrary, rebelled against their consistory.

3. These brethren, therefore, and all that follow them in their sinful way have by the same token become schismatic and severed themselves from the communion of the Protestant Reformed Churches.

"B. Classis further expresses that on the basis of the facts as expressed under decision A, the brethren Rev. C. Hanko and Elder Gerrit Bylsma are the rightful delegates of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan."

All during the discussion Rev. Kok kept in his pocket a document that had direct bearing upon this motion. He had a letter which we should have heard before we made our decision. In fact, he had a document which he should have handed in to the Stated Clerk or have sent to the Stated Clerk so that he might introduce it at the proper time or at least notify us of it during discussion on this point. Instead Rev. Kok kept it in his pocket, and after the motion was passed that Rev. Hanko and Elder Bylsma be seated as the legal delegates from First Church, he asked to have his negative vote against the motion recorded and then read to us the letter which we give you below:

"To the Classis East of the Protestant Reformed Churches,

To reconvene on the 6th day of October, 1953

Esteemed Brethren:

After having carefully, and prayerfully considered the documentary evidence, on the one hand from a section of the Fuller Ave. congregation headed by the Rev. H. Hoeksema, which announced that they had suspended the Rev. De Wolf as a minister of the Gospel, together with eleven of his Elders, and on the other hand from a section of Fuller Ave's. congregation headed by the Rev. De Wolf which announced that this was a schismatic action on the part of the Rev. H. Hoeksema and his group, the Consistory of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Holland, Michigan has come to the following decision, and humbly begs Classis East to also express itself as follows:

1. That on the basis of the information received they cannot recognize the suspension of the Rev. De Wolf and

2. That they consider the Rev. Hoeksema and his group to be guilty of schismatic action and mutiny.

Grounds:

1. Under no circumstances did the Rev. H. Hoeksema, and the Elders that supported him, have the right to walk out of the Consistory of Fuller Ave. and meet separately. This was not a walking in the legal way of the Consistory,

Classis and Synod, but in the way of Schism and mutiny. The Rev. H. Hoeksema here followed the same evil tactics which he several times threatened at Classis East. D.K.O. Art. 31.

2. A minority is not the consistory and cannot suspend from office, neither can it deprive of a vote.

3. The Consistory of the Fourth Church erred by giving the minority group even a semblance of recognition by meeting with them, and giving them the advice, and the schismatic consistory had no right to proceed with the suspension of the Rev. De Wolf, and the deposition of a majority of the Elders, especially in view of the fact that the Fourth Consistory questioned the legality of the meeting. D.K.O. Art. 79.

It is our earnest hope and prayer that the schismatic group of the Rev. H. Hoeksema will repent of its evil way, and that the breach which has been made may graciously be healed in the way of truth and justice, and in the spirit of brotherly love.

Respectfully submitted,

(w.s.) B. Kok, Pres.

(w.s.) R. Bouwman, Sec'y."

Now we ask you, is it not so very, very plain that Holland's consistory had intended this document to be presented BEFORE Classis took a stand in regard to the De Wolf faction? Do they not in their own words state in this document? "The Consistory of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Holland, Michigan, has come to the following decision *and humbly begs Classis East to also express itself as follows: . . .*"? (Italics ours. J.A.H.) What kind of nonsense is it to wait until one has made a decision and then to notify him of what you wanted him to decide?

Why did Rev. Kok keep from Classis East this plea of his consistory? Why did he cross up his own consistory? When the undersigned, as President of the Classis, asked Rev. Kok whether his consistory had given him instructions to wait with informing us of this matter till we had taken a stand ourselves, he answered in the negative. It was all his own sinful plan and work! That document had no proper place anymore after our decision was taken. And the sad thing is that his consistory instead of rebuking him for so abusing their document upheld him and with him left the Protestant Reformed Churches, that is, with the exception of the only Protestant Reformed man in that whole Consistory, Elder J. Kortering, who is still in the office of Elder in the Protestant Reformed Churches.

And yet, as we wrote above, Rev. Kok together with Rev. Blankespoor and Rev. Knott dared to meet with their elders and Rev. De Wolf with one of his elders and draw up a document in which they claim to be the continuation of Classis East. And they dare before God, if you please, they dare to say that they were "loyal and legal delegates" who were deprived of their seat at Classis.

Loyal delegates?

Loyal to whom?

Surely they were not loyal to Classis East of the Protestant Reformed Churches. Their negative vote to the questions put before them, especially the second question, shows that they were not loyal to Classis East. Nor were they loyal to the Protestant Reformed Denomination. Their defense of the literal statements of Rev. De Wolf shows this. For the Protestant Reformed Churches adopted the Declaration of Principles which condemns the statements of Rev. De Wolf in their literal form. It also says that regardless of how he explains and interprets the statements, they are literally to be condemned. And these three former ministers in the Protestant Reformed Churches together with Rev. De Wolf defied that Declaration and were in that act disloyal to the Protestant Reformed Churches.

Loyal delegates?

Loyal to whom?

Loyal to what?

Loyal to Rev. De Wolf whom they with his slanderous cross bill will defend regardless of what he says and does. Loyal to former Classis West which had committed a most abominable sin a week or two before. Loyal to the heretical statements of Rev. De Wolf. Loyal to the evil advice of the late Prof. Holwerda who advised the immigrants to join the Protestant Reformed Churches in America, if they would be accepted, in order then as a fifth column to work from the inside to destroy the truth for which the Protestant Reformed Churches were called into existence by God Himself. Just get yourself, once again, a copy of that letter which Rev. Kok defends and which gave us to understand what it was wherewith we were dealing. In loyalty to the liberated Rev. Kok kept that document in his pocket. In loyalty to them he fought tooth and nail against the Declaration of Principles. And today they dare before God to state in their "Declaration of Continuation" that the basis for their organization is "The acceptance of the Three Forms of Unity, to wit, the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession and the Canons of Dordt, as interpreted and maintained by the Protestant Reformed Churches." Let them for Gods' sake change that at their July session and add "with the exception of the Declaration of Principles which does not allow us to embrace the heresy of Rev. De Wolf which we have learned to love so dearly and which heresy has become the very reason for our separate existence." Rev. Kok fought against the Declaration of Principles without a formal protest even after it was adopted. Loyal delegate to a Classis in the Protestant Reformed Churches? Loyal to his own flock and to his own consistory? Don't you believe it?

There are several things in this document that can stand treatment. And we also like to show you the questions put to these three men who were formerly ministers in the Protestant Reformed Churches, that you may see what an evil thing they did. This will have to wait till later.

J.A.H.

Contending For The Faith

The Church and the Sacraments

EARLY VIEWS OF THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

(Continued)

Introductory remarks (continued).

The chief question concerning the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is that which is concerned with the proper interpretation of the words of the Saviour which were spoken at the institution of this sacrament: this is My body. We may say this without fear of dispute. This lies in the very nature of the case. The holy Supper is a sacrament in which we eat and drink. We eat bread and drink wine. However, we must eat and drink Jesus Himself. This thought is beautifully expressed in John 6:50-56, and we quote this passage: "This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if a man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us His flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him." It is obvious from this passage that we must and do eat and drink the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. I say: we must eat and drink and we *do* eat and drink the body and the blood of the Lord. If we do not eat and drink the body and blood of the Lord then we simply have no sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Does not the Saviour declare that "except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, ye *have* no life in you?" Hence, we must not eat and drink Christ in order to live but because we live and have life. Jesus we must eat and drink. From this we may surely conclude without fear of contradiction that the words: this is My body, and their proper interpretation constitute a vital part of the true understanding of the sacrament of the holy Supper. Hence, the chief question concerning this sacrament deals with the relation between the sign and the things signified.

Relative this important question we may say that four different views have been developed and are held at the present time. There is, first of all, the Roman Catholic view. This conception is known as the doctrine of Transubstantiation. This word refers literally to a change of substance. Rome simply identifies the sign and the thing signified. They teach that the bread and the wine are changed into the body

and blood of the Lord. This is, permit us to say, a rather fantastic conception. We sincerely wonder how it is possible for anyone to be addicted to such a view of the Lord's Supper, although it is not difficult to understand, on the other hand, why this conception should have such a strangle hold on the people of that church. Do they actually believe that, when Jesus spoke the memorable words at His institution of the Lord's Supper the night before His crucifixion, the disciples really believed that the bread which He broke and gave to them was not bread but His own body and that the wine was not really wine but His own blood? We will have more to say on this subject at the proper time. However, we may say already at this time that, although a fundamental difference between Rome and us certainly revolves about the question whether we are justified by works or by the unconditional grace of the living God, the view of Transubstantiation surely constitutes a vital part of the life of the Church of Rome.

Another view of the Lord's Supper is that which is entertained by the Lutheran Church. This view is known as Consubstantiation. According to this Lutheran conception of the sign and the thing signified they are not identified. Luther certainly rejected the view that the bread and wine are changed into the body and the blood of the Lord. However, although the Lutheran conception does not identify the sign and the thing signified it does teach that they are objectively connected. Their conception is known as: Consubstantiation. And this means literally: with the substance. Lutheranism advocated that the body and blood of the Lord are really present in, with, and under the bread and the wine. We will also have more to say concerning this conception at the proper time. Very strenuously and vehemently the German reformer maintained that Jesus said: This *is* My body. And they base their conception of Consubstantiation on the teaching of the omnipresent character of Jesus' human nature which the Lord assumed at the time of His glorification (that is, He assumed at that time its omnipresent character). The attempt to change the reformer's position proved utterly futile.

A third view of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is the Calvinistic conception. Luther and Calvin never met although the German reformer and Zwingli did meet once in debate. The Calvinistic view is the sacramental conception. This conception teaches that the relation between the sign and the thing signified is purely spiritual. It rejects the literal interpretation of Jesus' words: this is My body, and maintains that the bread and wine are purely and exclusively symbolic. The eating and drinking of Christ's body and blood does not occur through the mouth and is exclusively an activity of faith. The bread and wine must be separated from Christ's body and blood, are merely symbols of this body and blood. However, this does not mean that the Lord's Supper is merely a remembrance feast, a joyful occasion at which we simply meditate upon the suf-

ferings and death of our Lord. The Lord's Supper is a sacrament; an operation of grace certainly accompanies our eating and drinking of the bread and the wine; only, this relation between the sign and the thing signified is purely spiritual.

The fourth view and also the final view of the Lord's Supper is known as the Zwinglian conception. Zwingli was the Swiss reformer. He entered once with Luther into a very violent and utterly fruitless debate. He disagreed completely with the German reformer, maintaining that Christ was in heaven and not upon the earth. His view may be defined as the symbolical, the merely symbolical view. He maintained that the bread and wine were symbols and nothing more. It is true that the Calvinistic conception also stresses the symbolical character of the bread and the wine. However, we maintain the sacramental relation between these symbols and the Living Bread and Water, Jesus Christ, our Lord, whereas Zwingli's conception of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is such that this sacrament is a mere feast of remembrance at which we remember the death of a departed Friend.

These views in the early Church.

As might be expected none of these four views had been distinctly and fully developed in the earliest period of the Church. We can easily understand this, namely that the Church, in its New Testament infancy, simply accepted the sacraments and observed them without entering into the deeper significance of them. It did not at once give itself an account, clearly and distinctly, of the meaning of the Lord's Supper. I say that this is easily understandable. The Church of God was in its New Testament infancy. We repeat that this does not mean that the dawn of the New Dispensation witnessed the birth and beginning of the Church of God. The Church of God has been in existence all through the ages. We refer, of course, to the infancy of the Church of God from the aspect of its New Dispensational revelation. And then we can surely understand that the people of God did not have a clear and concise conception of the great fundamental truths of the holy Scriptures. To be sure, they understood the holiness and righteousness and oneness of the incomparably glorious God. They knew that God is one and that there is no god besides Him. They knew and realized that the promise of the Lord is faithful and inviolate and that no action of men can ever frustrate or annul it. They knew that salvation was of the Lord alone. They surely knew themselves, their sin and guilt and utter hopelessness, and that fellowship with the Lord was alone possible in the way of the complete and full satisfaction of God's justice for sin. One can readily understand, in the light of the Old Testament sacrifices for sin, that the people of the Lord surely understood the righteousness and justice of God and that salvation was alone possible in the way of

the complete satisfaction of that justice of God. Nevertheless, it is not difficult to realize that they did not have a clear and concise conception of the revelation of God in Christ Jesus. This revelation of the God of our salvation in Christ Jesus had been bestowed upon the Church of God throughout the Old Dispensation only in symbols and shadows and types. The light of God in Christ had shone only typically. Now the full light of the living God in Christ Jesus burst forth upon them. Even the apostles had experienced great difficulty to apprehend this light in its true heavenly and spiritual significance. The tremendous change from type to anti-type, from shadows and symbols to their corresponding reality eluded their grasp as far as the tremendous implication of this glory was concerned. "This is My body," the Lord Jesus had said to the amazed disciples, and they experienced great difficulty to understand Him when He continued: "Except ye eat My flesh and drink My blood, ye have no life in yourselves." To be sure, presently the Church of God would have full opportunity to develop in the truth and advance to a clear and distinct and concise understanding of the great truths of the Word of God as they center in Jesus Christ, the Son of God revealed in our flesh and blood. They would have this opportunity, in the first place, because the enemies of the truth would attack the truth as they had never before attacked it. Of course! The more clearly the light shines the more relentless and pitiless is this attack. God appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh! The light of the God of our salvation in Christ Jesus burst forth from its typical shell of the Old Dispensation. Presently the wicked forces of darkness and hell would level off against this revelation and assault the truth of the Son of God with all the fury of hell. They will do all within their power to minimize the tremendous gospel truth that salvation is purely a matter of God alone, that this line of salvation is horizontal, running from top to bottom and always beginning at the top with no strings or conditions attached. This has been also our struggle of late, a struggle from which our churches have emerged, with thinned ranks, it is true, but with our numerically decreased forces united and solidified as we have not been for several years. Moreover, besides this relentless attack of the forces of evil, Christ Himself gave His Church the promise that He would lead His people, through His Spirit, into all the truth. And this promise has certainly been fulfilled throughout the ages. However, at the beginning of this New Testament era the Church of God did not have a full and clear conception of these fundamental truths. This also applied to its conception of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The Church simply accepted the sacraments and observed them without entering into the deeper significance of them. This clearer and more concise understanding would come later.

H.V.

The Voice of Our Fathers

The Canons of Dordrecht

PART TWO

EXPOSITION OF THE CANONS

FIRST HEAD OF DOCTRINE

OF DIVINE PREDESTINATION

Article 9 (continued)

Having repudiated and denied the Arminian view, which makes of God a glorified spiritual weather forecaster, and makes God's decree of election dependent upon various conditions required beforehand in the elect persons, the fathers turn to business of a positive statement of the truth on this count.

And it becomes very clear at this point that the Reformed truth stands diametrically opposed to the Arminian heresy. It is the complete opposite of the lie of the Remonstrants. The Arminians make faith, the obedience of faith, holiness, and other good qualities or dispositions in man *first*, and election *second*; the Reformed and Scriptural position is that *election* is first, and faith, the obedience of faith, holiness, etc., second. Nor is it merely a matter of order, of what is first and second. The Arminians teach that election is *out of* faith the obedience of faith, and the various other prerequisites; the Reformed teach the very opposite; Faith is out of election! The Arminians make faith, the obedience of faith, holiness, *et cetera*, the cause of election; the Reformed make election the cause and fountain of faith and of all the blessings of salvation. And, by the way, if it be objected that the term *cause* is not employed by the *Canons* as a description of election, and that this term is not appropriate when speaking of the relation between election and the blessings of salvation, then let it be admitted that the article does not use the term; but let it be noted that the fathers do indeed employ the term *effects* (*effectus* in the original Latin). And how, pray, can there be an effect without a cause? And how can the blessings of salvation be the effects of election, if election is not their cause? And finally, let the implication which is inescapable in connection with these two opposite positions be noted: the Arminians teach that man is the sole author of his own salvation, while the Reformed position is that salvation is solely of the Lord.

Perhaps the following is not strictly in the sphere of exposition, but nevertheless we cannot refrain at this point from making an extremely practical observation, one which is especially germane to any discussion of the church and of various doctrinal positions and doctrinal differences in our time. We live in an age when doctrinal differences are frequently minimized and when they are reduced to the rank of the unimportant and the non-essential by being reduced to mere relative distinctions instead of absolute differences. Thus, for example, the difference between Arminian doctrine

and Reformed doctrine becomes a relative matter: it is a matter of "opinion," or a "difference of viewpoint," or a "difference of emphasis." Then, of course, one theologian emphasizes, and probably over-emphasizes, one aspect of the truth, while another emphasizes a different aspect of the same truth. One looks at Scripture from one viewpoint, and another expounds Scripture from a different viewpoint. Both are correct from their own point of view; and both are not to be condemned. Probably it is best to assume an intermediate position, and thus avoid both extremes. Along such lines, of course, it is but a small step to erase all lines of distinction and to succumb to the false spirit of amalgamation and ecumenicity which pervades the church in our day and which to no small degree may be found even in Reformed circles. But how entirely different is the language of our fathers. They make absolute distinctions. "This election WAS NOT . . . BUT men are chosen unto . . ." Between these two views there is no common ground. The truth will not tolerate the lie. It will condemn and repudiate and deny it. Such is the plain teaching of this article.

As we have before observed, this article teaches nothing new as to election than was taught in Article 7. There also it was plainly taught that all the blessings of salvation were the fruits of sovereign election. For God had decreed to give us to Christ to be saved by Him, "and effectually to call and draw them to his communion by his Word and Spirit; to bestow upon them true faith justification, and sanctification; and having powerfully preserved them in the fellowship of his Son, finally to glorify them for the demonstration of his mercy." Here it is this same truth which is expressed. Election is no mere decree; it is not simply a choice of God. But the decree of election is the living will of the Lord God to save His people, and the whole of their salvation, including all the means and the way to final glory, is included in that decree. The "condition" or "prerequisite" of our salvation, if such language may be borrowed for the moment, is eternal and unchangeable election. And that is indeed a condition of which the fulfillment is not and can never be man's, but God's alone. And He fulfills that "condition" unconditionally. Behind election, precedent to election, prerequisite for election, is God, eternally God! Election can only be, therefore, *unto* faith, *unto* holiness, *unto* the obedience of faith, *unto* perseverance, *unto* glory!

It is at this point that one finds that wonderful expression of the *Canons*: "Therefore election is the fountain of every saving good; from which flow forth faith, holiness, and the other gifts of salvation, and finally eternal life itself, as its fruits and effects." An expression like this reveals why the National Synod was the "Great" Synod, and shows to us the clear insight into the Scriptures which the fathers had. To be sure, when the fathers apply the term *fountain* to election, they do not use a literal expression of Scripture. But this expression of truth is nevertheless Scriptural as to its genus. For God is, as also the *Belgic Confession* has

it, in Article 1, the overflowing fountain of all good. He is the fountain of living waters. And to forsake Him, the fountain of living waters, and to dig instead empty cisterns that can hold no water, is already in the old dispensation the double evil of Israel. If God, then, is the fountain of living waters, and if we correctly conceive of eternal election as being not merely a blueprint, a dead plan, but the living thoughts of God concerning His people, and His living and eternal will, — then to say that election is the fountain of every saving good is the same as saying that God is that fountain. And in that light the genus of this statement is indeed thoroughly Scriptural.

But now let us give our attention to this expression. What does it mean?

It is, of course, figurative. And as always with a figure, so also here, there is a point of comparison, but there are also possible points in which the figure and the reality do not agree. Thus, for example, a fountain has no mind and no will. It is not personal. Water simply flows from a fountain without a conscious activity of mind and will on the part of the fountain. In this respect, of course, the figure does not coincide with the reality of sovereign election. The decree of election is the decreeing God. It consists of His eternal thoughts and will concerning the elect persons.

But the point of comparison is obvious. The figure is that of a fountain and the stream of water which issues from that fountain. And what is the relation between the two? Is the stream the cause, condition, or prerequisite of the fountain? Is it thus, that the stream is required beforehand, in order to have a fountain? In fact, does the stream have any effect whatsoever upon the fountain? Is the fountain out of the stream? Such suggestions are absurd, you say. The fountain, you reply, is the source; and the stream flows from it. The fountain is the prerequisite of the stream. It is its cause. The stream is the fruit and effect of that fountain. Remove the fountain, shut it off, let it run dry, divert its flow, and the inevitable result will be the end of the stream.

And thus it is with election and all the blessings of salvation. The former is the fountain, and the latter are the stream which issues from that fountain. And out of the eternal and overflowing fountain of the electing God come forth all the blessings which constitute the stream of salvation. They are the living waters that issue from the overflowing fountain in Christ Jesus. Are then those living waters the cause, condition, or prerequisite of that fountain? Is it thus, that the stream of salvation is required beforehand, in order to have the fountain of election? In fact, does the stream have any effect whatsoever upon the fountain and its action? Is the fountain of election out of the stream of living waters? Is God's decree, nay, is God Himself, the living God, the overflowing fountain of all good, in His eternal thoughts and desires concerning His people in Christ Jesus,

out of the stream of salvation, out of faith out of the obedience of faith, out of holiness, out of perseverance, — nay, is God, and is God's decree, out of the people whom He saves? You say: absurd blasphemy! The fountain is the source; and the stream flows from it. And here you have the marvel of it! This fountain is eternal and unchangeable. It cannot be dried up. It cannot be shut off. It cannot be diverted. Always it flows. And it flows determinately in only one channel and one direction. All saving good is the fruit and effect of the fountain and cause of election. Election is the unchangeable and eternal fountain of all our salvation, from the very first beginning of our union with Christ to the glorious end of eternal life itself!

And now we return to our former statement that under this article it is also impossible to maintain a conditional salvation. This must be quite evident. In the first place, it must be remembered that all the contents of that stream of salvation are eternally the contents of the fountain of election. In the second place, it must not be forgotten that the direction and flow of that stream of salvation is also determined by the fountain. This is the living fountain that does not simply arbitrarily overflow, but flows where it will, and determinately. If then, the salvation, the stream, is conditioned and conditional, then you cannot escape the conclusion that the fountain, election, is also conditioned and conditional. They are inseparable, and therefore inseparably either conditional or unconditional. Those who claim that election is unconditional while salvation is somehow conditional cannot escape the charge of a blatant and obvious contradiction. Besides, if faith, the obedience of faith, and holiness are part of the contents of the stream of salvation, how, then, can they be conditions of salvation? Is it not absurd to maintain that the stream is a condition of itself, that the Mississippi River is a prerequisite of the Mississippi River? Just as absurd and confusing it is to maintain that faith, the obedience of faith, etc., are conditions and prerequisites of salvation.

Finally, let us pay attention to the Scriptural support of this article. With one brief stroke of exegesis, inserted in parentheses in the text of Ephesians 1:4, the fathers make plain that their position is Scriptural. God has not chosen us *because* we were holy and without blame before Him in love. But the Scripture saith: "He hath chosen us *that* (purpose) we should be holy and without blame before him in love." And the point, very briefly given also in this article, is that "because" and "that" or "in order that" are mutually exclusive. If it is "because," then it cannot be "that." But it is "that." And therefore, it cannot be "because."

Indeed! Sovereign, eternal, and unchangeable election is the fountain from which flows forth every saving good. Thanks be to God for His unspeakable mercy!

H.C.H.

DECENCY and ORDER

Emeritation Of Ministers

(Continued)

In the former issue we explained that implicit in the idea of emeritation is retirement, either temporary or permanent, from the active ministry of the word. We further stated that this retirement is due to reasons of personal disability. It is our position that an emeritation proper is not granted because of circumstances in which others cause the continuation of the work of the ministry to be impeded. These cases should be treated under a different heading. Emeritation means that the minister who for valid reasons is unable to perform the duties of his office is relieved from active duty, supported by the church, and retains the honor and title of Minister of the Word of God. Where these reasons spell permanent disability the emeritation is naturally for life. Where they spell temporary disability the emeritation runs until such reasons for disability are removed and for a reasonable time thereafter during which the minister concerned may again be considered for a call by the churches. We now wish to take up a few other matters relating to this matter.

B. The Request For Emeritation.

From whom should this request come? Some are of the opinion that only the minister himself can ask for an emeritation. Others hold to the view that the consistory should make this request. Still others, which view we are inclined to support, say that the request may be initiated by either the minister or the consistory. This, it seems, is the only proper course which is fair to all parties concerned for an emeritation concerns not only the minister directly involved but in more than one way effects the congregation itself. In 1893 the Synod of Reformed Churches in the Netherlands decided that, "Emeritation, where necessary, takes place upon the request of the parties concerned (either minister or consistory) by action of the Classis, supported by the Synodical Examiners of the Provincial Synod." (Church Order Commentary, pg. 66)

However, freely translated, Dr. Bouwman writes concerning the decision of the same synod as follows: "About the emeritation itself it is established: (a) that the request proceeds from the minister of the Word and that there is an expression that the consistory consents thereto, (b) that the reasons for disability to function in office be submitted, (c) that in case sickness is the cause of disability, this is made evident from the expression of two experts, (d) that the classis considers the request legitimate. The emeritation itself goes through the classis, supported by the deputies ad examina of the Provincial Synod."

In our own rules we come upon the following: "The minister shall present his request for emeritation to his

consistory who shall decide upon his request with approbation of Classis and Synod." (Art. 3, Constitution of Emeritus Committee).

If this rule means that the minister, and the minister only, can request emeritation, we think the rule is wrong. If it is intended merely to prescribe a course which is to be followed, namely, that the request goes through the consistory to classis to synod, we can agree with it although in our opinion it is not quite complete. There ought to be a provision inserted according to which also the consistory, which deems it necessary, may request emeritation for her minister. If this is not done a minister can conceivably place a serious detriment upon the congregation. Let us suppose that a minister becomes seriously ill so that he will not be able to labor for several years. If he does not ask for an emeritation and the consistory cannot do so the congregation will be without a pastor for a very long time which is never a wholesome situation. The elders must "take heed unto themselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made them overseers, to feed the church of God." (Acts 20:28) They must see to it that the church is shepherded and the disabled minister ought not to have exclusive power to stand in the way of the congregation having a pastor who is able to actively labor in the ministry of the word and dispense unto them spiritual things according to their need. If the consistory, therefore, considers it to be in the best interests of the church that the disabled minister receive an emeritation, he ought to accept that in the confidence that when the Lord once again restores him He will also provide for him a field of labor. Of course, if the congregation is large and can support two ministers such an emeritation would not be necessary. If, however, she cannot do this it would appear quite proper for the consistory to make the request for emeritation. The validity of it would have to be judged by classis and synod which would also safeguard against any abuse or injustice. These broader assemblies would also have to decide the matter in cases where the minister and the consistory are unable to agree upon the matter.

C. The Status Of The Emeritus Minister

The article states that these shall retain the honor and the title of a minister. This means that he remains in the office in the church he last served although he is now relieved of all active duty. He may preach the word if requested to do so and he is able. He may administer the sacraments. He may function in all the labor of the office and may even be delegated to the broader assemblies of the churches because in very fact he is a fullfledged minister of the Word of God. His status is and remains unchanged through emeritation although he is no longer compelled to perform the work of the office.

D. The Support Of The Emeritus Minister

According to Article 13 of the church order two things must be considered here. First of all, the article states that

the support is to be "provided out of the common fund of the churches according to general ecclesiastical ordinances in this matter," and secondly, he is to be cared for "honorably in his need." It is evident from this that such support is not the same as a gift or charity but is something to which the minister is legally entitled. His rights are limited by his needs and the ordinances of the churches. These ordinances may be found in the Constitution of the Emeritus Committee. Article 7 of this constitution, for example, stipulates that "the obligation of giving this support rests in a legal sense upon the local church which the minister serves or has last served." A minister then cannot make an imposition upon the classis or the synod or the committee for desired support. He must present his request to his local consistory. Likewise, the local church may not simply shift the burden of emeritation to the churches in general but must always remember that it is first of all her obligation to support the minister she has made emeritus.

This immediately presents a problem. How would it ever be possible that a small congregation grant an emeritation? Small churches have sufficient burden to provide their active minister. To offset this difficulty a provision is made in Article 8 of the constitution according to which those congregations which are unable to support their emeritus minister can apply for support at the classis under which they resort. This request, if approved by the classis, is forwarded to a synodical committee which acts upon it until the Synod meets. When the synod gathers she passes final approval upon the emeritation as well as the request for support and then assesses all the churches accordingly so that a common and adequate fund is established out of which the payments can be periodically made.

In the short history of our churches we have no occasion of using the Emeritus Fund for real cases of emeritation. It has been used in the abnormal situations we referred to before. Should it become necessary to use this fund for several emeritations, we would very likely find out that such a system would be inadequate to properly provide for the needs or that the system would lay a very heavy burden upon the churches. The Christian Reformed Churches have experienced this in the past. Many of those that had been given an emeritation were not adequately provided for in their need. Their support had to be subsidized in various other ways. Hence, in 1939, they made an alteration in Art. 13 of the church order by eliding the phrase, "in their need," and then approved of a different plan by which the needs of the retired are met. They have established two funds. One is known as the Pension Fund and the other as the Relief Fund. Both of these are placed in the charge of a Board of Trustees consisting of five men appointed by the Synod. The Pension Fund is established by Synodical Assessments plus the payment of 3% of the annual salary of each minister desiring to benefit from it. No minister is compelled to contribute to this fund. The matter is optional with each one. Those who do contribute receive upon retire-

ment the equivalent of 40% of the average annual salary of the ministers in that church. The widows of such ministers are entitled to 30%. Minor orphans receive a pension of \$100.00 per person per year. Those who do not contribute to this fund are naturally not entitled to its benefits. They, upon retirement, receive aid only from the Relief Fund and then such aid is not to exceed 25% of the average Christian Reformed minister's salary or 20% for the widow or \$100.00 per year for each minor orphan. In the event that a minister draws from both funds the limitations are set at 66 and 2/3% of the average salary for the minister; 50% for the widow and no minor orphan is entitled to draw more than \$175.00 per year.

These rules, as found in "The Church Order," by J. L. Schaver, pg. 209, were adopted in 1939. Whether the figures given above have since been altered we do not know. But whereas our space for this issue is filled we will have to refrain from commenting on this until next time.

G.v.d.B.

ALL AROUND US

The Covenant Of Grace.

Recently a friend sent us three copies of an interesting and instructive booklet that bore the title set above this article. It is a Biblico-Theological study written by Professor John Murray who teaches Systematic Theology in the Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, Pa. The booklet is a transcript of a lecture the professor delivered last year in London, England, and is printed by the Tyndale Press of the latter city.

The present article will contain excerpts of this booklet and a few comments of our own. As well as we were able to observe with only one perusal of the booklet, the writer concludes from his study of the doctrine of the covenant in Scripture that it is both unilateral and unconditional. Quite naturally one becomes interested when he reads material of this sort written by one who is outside the circle of Protestant Reformed theology. For that reason we thought our people would be pleased to know that others, after thorough study of this subject, also came to our conclusions.

In his introduction the professor, pointing out the method of his approach to the subject of the covenant, makes the assertions: that "the covenant theology not only recognized the organic unity and progressiveness of redemptive revelation, but also the fact that redemptive revelation was covenant revelation and that the revelation was covenant religion and piety;" that, "it was in the Reformed theology that the covenant theology developed, and the greatest contribution of covenant theology was its covenant soteriology and eschatology." Murray also asserts that "it would not be, however, in the interests of theological conversation or theological progress for us to think that the covenant theology is in all

respects definitive and that there is no further need for correction, modification, and expansion. Theology must always be undergoing reformation." He concludes this introduction with the following: "It appears to me that covenant theology, notwithstanding the finesse of analysis with which it was worked out and the grandeur of its articulated systematization, needs recasting. We would not presume to claim that we shall be so successful in this task that the reconstruction will displace and supersede the work of the classic covenant theologians. But with their help we may be able to contribute a little towards a more biblically articulated and formulated construction of the covenant concept and of its application to our faith, love, and hope."

In his study of the definition of the term 'covenant', Professor Murray concludes from the writings of a large number of theologians of the past that "from early times in the era of the Reformation and throughout the development of the covenant theology the formulation has been deeply affected by the idea that a covenant is a compact or agreement between two parties." Here the professor quotes such men as Bullinger, Ursinus, Preston, Perkins, Van Mastricht, Turretine, Cocceius and Witsius. According to Murray these theologians consider the covenant as some sort of a mutual compact or agreement between God and man, or, God and the elect sinner, according to which God promises to be gracious and favorable to him, while the latter binds himself to faith and repentance. Faith and repentance are a certain condition man fulfills to the obtaining of the covenant favor.

When the professor, however, begins to search the Scriptures to see whether these things are true, he discovers something quite different. In his study of the concept 'covenant' in the Word of God, Murray, first of all, considers the covenants between men. For example, the covenants between Abraham and Abimelech, Isaac and Abimelech, Laban and Jacob, Joshua and the Gibeonites, David and Jonathan, etc. Concerning these he writes: "It must be said, first of all, that, even should it be true that in these covenants the idea of mutual compact is central, it does not follow that the idea of compact is central in or essential to the covenant relation which God constitutes with man. We have to recognize a parity existing between men which cannot obtain in the relation between God and man . . ." "In the second place, it needs to be noted that the LXX in these cases renders the Hebrew *berith* by the Greek word *diatheke*. This is significant because if mutual compact belonged to the essence of covenant in these cases, we should have expected the translators to use *suntheke*. To say the least this raises our suspicion that the LXX translators were not governed by the thought of mutual agreement when they came to these instances of covenantal human relationships . . ." "In the third place, when we examine some of the instances in question we shall discover that the thought of pact or contract is not in the foreground . . ." "If this analysis of the nature of these human covenants is correct,

then the idea of stipulations and conditions devised by mutual consultation and agreed upon as the terms of engagement need not to be present even in human covenants. There is, of course, the bond of commitment to one another, but so profound and all-embracing is this commitment that the notion of contractual stipulations recedes into the background or disappears entirely. To say the least, the case is such in these instances of human relationship that no evidence can be derived from them to support the idea of mutual contract or compact."

Next Murray considers the covenants made by man with God. He points out several instances of this kind of covenant revealed in the Old Testament. For instance, "In the days of Joshua the people said, 'The Lord our God will we serve, and unto his voice will we hearken' (Jos. XXIV: 24, r.v.), and in answer to this promise 'Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem.' He also refers you to II Kings 11:17; II Kings 23:3, r.v.; Ezra 10:3. Then he continues: "These are instances of covenanting with God. We cannot fail to note that what is in the forefront in these cases is not a contract or compact. Strictly speaking, it is not an agreement. Though the persons entering into covenant agree to do certain things, the precise thought is not that of agreement by the people among themselves, nor a mutual agreement between the people and the Lord. We must distinguish between devising terms of agreement or striking an agreement, on the one hand, and the agreement of consent or commitment on the other. What we find in these instances is solemn promissory commitment to faith or truth on the part of the people concerned. They find themselves in bond to be faithful to the Lord in accordance with His revealed will. The covenant is solemn pledging of devotion to God, unreserved and unconditional commitment to His service. We are far away from the idea of a bond as sealed on the acceptance of certain prescribed stipulations and the promise of fulfillment of these stipulations on the condition that other parties to the contract fulfill the conditions imposed upon them. The thought is rather that of unreserved, whole-hearted commitment."

Under this same heading the professor also treats of "Divine covenants." Here he refers to those of "God's creative and providential ordinances."

The author then considers in order: "The Post-Diluvian Noahic Covenant," "The Abrahamic Covenant," "The Mosaic Covenant," "The Davidic Covenant," and the "Covenant in the New Testament."

Space will not allow me to quote him at length concerning each of these phases of the covenant, but what he says is interesting indeed. Allow me to give you a few examples. Concerning the Noahic Covenant, he calls attention to the following features:

"1. It is God's covenant in that it is conceived, devised, determined, established, confirmed, and dispensed by God Himself.

2. It is universal in its scope, a covenant not only with Noah but with his seed after him and with every living creature This places in obvious relief the fact that it affects for good even those who do not have any intelligent understanding of its meaning. The covenant operates for good to such an extent that its benefits are not contingent upon intelligent appreciation of the covenant or of the benefits which are dispensed in terms of it

3. It is an unconditional covenant. This feature is, of course, co-ordinate with the fact that intelligent understanding is not indispensable to the reception of its benefits. But the particular consideration now in view is that no commandment is appended which could be construed as the condition upon which the promise to be fulfilled. And there is not the slightest suggestion to the effect that the covenant could be annulled by human unfaithfulness or its blessing forfeited by unbelief; the thought of breaking the covenant is inconceivable. The confirmation given is to the opposite effect. In a word, the promise is unconditional.

4. The covenant is intensely and pervasively monergistic. Nothing exhibits this more clearly than the fact that the sign attached to attest and seal the divine faithfulness and the irrevocability of God's promise is one produced by conditions over which God alone has control and in connection with which there is rigid exclusion of human co-operation

5. It is an everlasting covenant The perpetuity is bound up with its divinely unilateral and monergistic character These features of the covenant plainly evince that this covenant is a sovereign, divine administration, that it is such in its conception, determination, disclosure, confirmation, and fulfillment, that it is an administration or dispensation of forbearance and goodness, that it is not conditioned by or dependent upon faith or obedience on the part of men

I am sorry that I have to stop here. What Murray has to say about the other phases of the covenant is most interesting. I will, therefore, the Lord willing, continue this article in the next issue. Though Professor Murray says things a little differently perhaps than we would say them, he nevertheless has seen things which the majority, including our opponents in our present controversy, do not see.

M.S.



ALL NATIONS, CLAP YOUR HANDS

All nations, clap your hands,
Let shouts of triumph ring,
For mighty over all the lands
The Lord Most High is King

Above our mighty foes
He gave us power to stand,
And as our heritage He chose
The goodly promised land.

Psalms 47:1, 2

CONTRIBUTIONS

Wat is Waarheid?

Ongeveer een jaar na de Boerenoorlog bezochten sommige Boerengeneraals Nederland, met het doel om door redevoeringen gelden te verzamelen voor de wederopbouw hunner verbrande hoeven en verwoeste landerijen.

Door heel het land werden kerken en zalen voor hen geopend om hun zaak te bepleiten.

Uit een der redevoeringen is me deze aanhaling bij gebleven: „*We zijn overgeleverd aan de Nutspolitiek van Engeland.*” (De generaal had zeker de uitspraak van Kajafas op het oog.)

Onwillekeurig denk ik tegenwoordig nog al eens na over dat gezegde van dien Boerengeneraal in verband met onze huidige kerkelijke troebelen. Ik stel me wel eens voor de vraag is hier ook een soort nuttigheids politiek in het spel? De beschuldigingen die onze leiders naar het hoofd worden geslingerd zijn die op waarheid gegrond? Of komen ze soms uit de mond van valsche getuigen? Het gaat over de Split niet waar?

Heeft Ds. Hoeksema met woord en pen daar niet tegen gewaarschuwd? Is het niet te over bekend dat door Ds. Hoeksema '24 is aangehaald als een gebeurtenis waarvan een herhaling verrekende gevolgen kan mee brengen? Waar vecht men dan tegen? Tegen de gevolgen waarvoor men is gewaarschuwd, en zich zelf op den hals heeft gehaald?

Het wil me voorkomen dat de geesten die lang hebben gesluimerd, thans openbaar worden. Is misschien met de oprichting van Concordia een voorspel begonnen waarvan men nu het volle accoord kan beluisteren? Men bazelt op de preekstoel van liefde en verdraagzaamheid, doch men kan niet nalaten, en men schaamt zich niet onze leiders na te bootsen en belachelijk voor te stellen, daarbij vergetende dat men zich laat kennen met welke geest men inwendig beziel is.

Men is gelijk aan een zeker soort aap die uit pure liefde zijn jongen dood knijpt. Soms zou men denken dat Darwin nog wel eens gelijk heeft gehad.

Ook The Reformed Guardian laat zich in dezen ook niet onbetuigd. Men moet wel durven als men de artikelen van Ds. Hoeksema bestempeld als tacties die ons doen herinneren aan die van Stalin en Hitler. En om dan zijn beschuldigingen te besluiten met de wensch: “May God grant repentance, according to His will! That the breach may be healed even at this late hour.”

Volkomen mee eens Ds. DeBoer. We willen hopen dat uw wensch oprecht gemeend is, doch daar vloeit dan ook uit voort een hartgrondige schuldbelijdenis van uw artikel in de Reformed Guardian van March 10, 1954. Zonder een oprechte belijdenis bestaat er geen vergeving, en is toenaadering onmogelijk.

J. R. VanderWal

Report of Eastern Ladies League

Our Spring meeting of the Ladies League of the Prot. Ref. Churches, which was held May 4, 1954, at Fourth Prot. Ref. Church was opened by singing two Psalter numbers, after which our president, Mrs. F. Harbin, opened with prayer, read Isa. 51 and welcomed all the ladies present. We then enjoyed a vocal quartet from Priscilla Society of First Church and our president introduced our speaker for the evening, Rev. M. Schipper, of South Holland, Ill. His topic was "The Joy of The Redeemed" as based on Isa. 51:11.

1) Fact of Joy. Every child of God experiences this very real and personal joy even in distress and sorrow. Isaiah was exhorting Zion to rejoice even in captivity—a picture of our earthly bondage. So, we must rejoice; for Christ, alone, has unconditionally paid our ransom for sin to Jehovah.

2) Character of Joy. Even as God met His people on Mount Zion in Jerusalem, so our Zion, which is manifested on earth in the Church, shall be realized in Heaven. So, the Elect can experience this joy on the way to Zion, even in sickness and death. This joy is very particular and only for the Elect; for the world has no joy and there is no peace for the wicked.

3) Manifestation of Joy. God speaks to us of this joy, only through the pure preaching of the Word; so, we feel especially joyful now, after having separated ourselves from heretical preaching. Neither can we find this joy in the company of the wicked; for when we walk in sin the Spirit is grieved and is removed from our consciousness; but when God sends repentance, not as condition but as a fruit of our salvation, we may again be joyful. This joy in Christ should also be reflected by us as mothers in our home, to our children and in our every walk of life so our children may also learn to rejoice.

4) Comfort of Joy. Our only comfort lies in the fact that our Salvation is sure, because it rests on God's Almighty arm and He has promised us in His unchangeable decree, that He has overcome darkness and will be true to us to eternity.

After this edifying talk, opportunity was given to ask questions of Rev. Schipper on his speech.

While singing a Psalter number, a collection was taken to defray expenses, after which a short business meeting was held. After hearing another selection from the quartet, Rev. Schipper closed with prayer. Our evening ended with refreshments served by ladies from Fourth Church and the Ladies Aid of First Church.

We feel that God has richly blessed us by allowing us to meet in true Christian fellowship and we pray that He may give us grace so that all of our future activities may be done only to the glory of His most Holy Name.

Mrs. Geo. De Vries, Reporter

BE THOU MY HELPER IN THE STRIFE

Be Thou my Helper in the strife,
O Lord, my strong Defender be;
Thy mighty shield protect my life,
Thy spear confront the enemy.
Amid the conflict, O my Lord,
Thy precious promise let me hear,
The faithful, reassuring word:
I am thy Savior, do not fear.

Ashamed, confounded let them be
Who seek my ruin and disgrace;
O let Thy angel fight for me,
And drive my foes before his face.
Without a cause my life they sought,
Without a cause their plots they laid;
Themselves within their snares be caught,
And be my crafty foes dismayed.

My soul is joyful in the Lord,
In His salvation I rejoice;
To Him my heart will praise accord
And bless His Name with thankful voice.
For who, O Lord, is like to Thee,
Defender of the poor and meek?
The needy Thy salvation see
When mighty foes their ruin seek.

Unrighteous witnesses have stood
And told of crimes beyond belief;
Returning evil for my good,
They overwhelm my soul with grief.
When in affliction they were sad,
I wept and made their grief my own;
But in my trouble they are glad
And strive that I may be o'erthrown.

O Lord, how long wilt Thou delay?
My soul for Thy salvation waits;
My thankfulness I will display
Amid the crowds that throng Thy gates.
Let not my enemies rejoice
And wrongfully exult o'er me;
They speak not peace, but lift their voice
To trouble those that peaceful be.

My foes with joy my woes survey,
But Thou, O Lord, hast seen it all;
O be no longer far away,
Nor silent when on Thee I call,
O haste to my deliverance now,
O Lord, my righteous cause maintain;
My Lord and God alone art Thou;
Awake, and make Thy justice plain.

Psalms 35:1-6