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MEDITATION

The Peaceful End

*"Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright:
for the end of that man is peace."* PSALM 37:37

The end of the perfect man and the upright is peace!
Astounding truth!

About whom does the poet speak? Are there such people on this sorry earth? Who would dare to say that he is a perfect man? And who would dare to say of himself that he is upright? Are we not all very imperfect, and also false?

Let us see.

First of all, the derivation of the names *perfect* and *upright* leads us to contemplation of the Godhead. God is the eternally perfect One, as also the Upright One.

Attend to this Scripture: "He is the Rock, His work is perfect: for all His ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He." Deut. 32:4.

God's endless perfection means that with regard to His Divine Being He is blessedly full, complete and integral. There is no lack in God. All that is needed to be the great God is in Him. Perfection emphasizes fullness, completeness.

God's uprightness emphasizes truth.

It is that virtue of God whereby He is as He reveals Himself. His inmost thought and the works of His hands, even as His words are all harmonious. He thinks, speaks and works as He is from eternity to eternity. You are never disappointed in God. Uprightness stresses that the hidden and inmost life as well as that which is seen and manifested are in complete harmony with one another. Far is the Almighty from falsehood.

Relatively these virtues dwell in man, made in the similitude of God.

That is, as man came forth out of the hands of God in Paradise.

But he fell. And now man, by nature, is very imperfect, and very false.

And as necessary consequence, he is condemned, damned and cast away from God.

Where, then, is the upright and the perfect man?

* * * *

And still the text says: Mark the perfect man and the upright . . .

Yes, there are perfect men and upright men (and women, and children) among us.

To be a perfect man does not mean that we are without sin.

It means that he is and has everything which belongs to the Christian here below.

It means that with respect to all the manifestation of his life and heart and conversation he bears the image of Jesus Christ.

You see, when man fell away from God, so that there was no longer any man that revealed the virtues of God, God chose Him a Man. There is really only one Man left. And that Man is Jesus, the perfect and the upright Jesus.

Oh, how He has shown that during His sojourn among the serpents and the adders.

He is the only Man who could arise and throw this challenge among men: Who of you convinces me of sin?

He is the Upright one and the perfect Man.

And no one, either in the Church or without the Church has ever had the courage to deny this. If anything in the whole manifestation of Jesus was plain it was this: Jesus is *L'Innocence* in Person.

For He was and is and shall be God, most blessed forever, Amen!

Therefore, if any man, women or child has Jesus in his or her heart, he is perfect and upright.

That is even true with regard to sin.

If you are regenerated, and if this regeneration has reached your consciousness, you reveal the perfection of your deepest heart, in the hatred against sin, especially your own sin.

The perfect child of God hates sin, condemns it, eschews it and sorrows because of it.

And he proceeds, and will tell it all to his God. He confesses sin.

And he or she is also the upright one.

The upright is the man (or woman) whose inward and outward life is harmonious.

You will note that such is the very opposite of deception which is our natural heritage.

But the real Christian's life is such that the subjective and the objective harmonize with each other.

And now, please, do not oppose me by saying that all Christians confess that the opposite is often true. That the Christians often are also false. Take for instance David. Watch how he smiles on Uriah when he returned from the wars. And tries to induce him to go home to Bathsheba.

We will admit all this with reservations.

You must not stay there. Watch David in Psalm 51.

And then you have the complete picture. There you see something which you will never find with the reprobate. David confesses all his sins. And proves his uprightness. So much, that he will even warn sinners from sin.

Here is the explanation: the Christian is perfect and upright in two ways.

First, he is perfect in Jesus Christ. And also upright in Him. All the uprightness and perfection of Jesus' Person and work is reckoned unto the elect. Our fathers wax very bold, and say that the elect will stand in the judgment as though they themselves in their own persons had fulfilled all the law of God. So completely are they justified in the Son of God.

Second, they are perfect and upright here on earth in this life *in principle*. And mark you well, that little principle of perfection and uprightness dwells where they live the deepest, in their inmost heart. The Scripture denominates it as "truth in the inward parts."

And that is the portion of all God's elect. It is not so, that some of God's children are perfect and upright and that others have little or nothing of these virtues. No, but all God's people are equally perfect and upright in Jesus Christ, and there is a varying degree of perfection and uprightness in them here on earth. And we are admonished in the Scriptures to strive after them, if haply we may grow in such beauties.

God be blessed, there are perfect and upright men and women.

* * * *

There is an end.

Contrary to our creation.

We should live on and on everlastingly.

That is the way we were created in Adam and Eve.

But we sinned, and the Lord said: Dying you shall die. And die we did.

There is an end.

And it is very unnatural for man to die. We hate and abhor death. We all do. He is the great enemy.

And the wicked rebel against death. They never bow the head in obedience to God's voice. God has to snatch them away in death.

But not so the perfect man and the upright.

When God says to them: Prepare your house for you shall die! they say: I will be ready right away, Lord!

Of all people, only the perfect man and the upright are able to die. Their death is an act of faith.

And their end is peace, says the text.

Peace, what is it?

Peace is absolute harmony between God and us. In the sphere of love.

Peace is when God's heart and your heart beat in unison.

And it seems to me that it ought to be rather plain that only the perfect and upright have a peaceful deathbed.

God will never dwell with the imperfect and the false.

For God is God. He is far from all iniquity. He cannot dwell with sinners. Only when Jesus has made you perfect can you expect to dwell in the hallowed tranquility of heaven's perfection.

And here is the sweetness of the present Gospel, that you may taste this peace even before you go to heaven. That is also proof of the stand that there are perfect and upright men in this world. If there were not, all communion with God would be impossible. But even now you sing: In sweet communion Lord with Thee I constantly abide.

And Paul tells us that we *have* peace with God since we are justified by faith thru our Lord Jesus Christ.

And such peace is past understanding. Even now.

But that peace certainly will be tasted to the full when we die.

The end of that man is peace says the text.

But at this juncture I must remind you that all of this is of grace.

Of grace you are chosen; of grace Jesus was given to you and died for you; of grace you believe and are saved; and it is the gift of grace that the perfection and the uprightness of Jesus is given to you on this side of the grave. And it is again the grace of God which makes you sing on your deathbed: Even if I go thru the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me . . .

It is peace, but out of grace, the grace of God in Jesus.

* * * *

Mark such!

Behold them!

It is the injunction of the text.

Mark the perfect man and behold the upright!

It shows that the children of God are walking Gospels unto their fellows.

Do not mark the imperfect or the false. It might make you do as they do. But be sure and mark the perfect man. And be sure and behold the upright.

We are walking Evangelists for one another.

There is a wondrous power of Christian discipline in the communion of saints.

Paul reminded the Philippians to mark the apostles, so that haply they might follow them, seeing the end of their conversation.

That is especially so at their latter end.

Mark the perfect man (and the woman) when they die.

Some of them sing on the way to the hospital where they will breathe their last breath.

In fact, I have derived much joy in marking the end of a dear mother in Israel, who had passed the age of the strong.

Her end was peace. And we have marked and beheld.

There was a song of peace among us when we have sown her earthly remains against the day of the harvest.

It is in her memory that I wrote these few lines.

Peace, blessed peace! Amen.

G.V.

IN MEMORIAM

Monday evening, at about 8:00 o'clock, October 17, 1955, our beloved Mother,

MRS. GERTIE SCHUT, nee VANKLOMPENBERG

fell asleep in Jesus, at the age of 76 years.

The knowledge that she is in glory softens our sorrow.

"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered." Psalm 32:1

Her children:

Jake L. Schut

Mr. and Mrs. John L. Schut

Mr. and Mrs. Henry L. Schut

Rev. and Mrs. George C. Lubbers—Schut

Mr. and Mrs. Henry Heuvelman—Schut

Mr. and Mrs. Chris Schut

Mr. and Mrs. Steven Holstege—Schut

Mr. and Mrs. John C. Lubbers—Schut

Mr. and Mrs. Lambert Schut, Jr.

Mr. and Mrs. Gerrit L. Schut

Mrs. Wm. Grasman—Schut

55 grandchildren

13 great-grandchildren

Hudsonville, Michigan.

IN MEMORIAM

Our Society herewith expresses its sympathy with our fellow-members, Mrs. Chris Schut, Mrs. Steven Holstege, and Mrs. John C. Lubbers, in the loss of their Mother,

MRS. GERTIE SCHUT, nee VanKLOMPENBERG

May the knowledge that she has entered heavenly glory be their comfort.

The Hudsonville Prot. Ref. Ladies' Society,

Rev. Gerrit Vos, President

Mrs. H. J. Holstege, Secretary

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EDITORIALS

Based On Untruths

Whether they deliberately, in court, misrepresented the Reformed conception of church polity or whether they never understood it, I do not know and cannot judge, but certain it is that Kok c.s. tried to make the court believe that we have what is really a congregational form of church government.

Even their lawyer received that impression from their testimony. In his fourteen grounds for appeal, he states:

"12. The trial court erred in not finding and decreeing that the First Protestant Reformed Church is more nearly a congregational form of government than at presbyterial form of government."

He also states:

"6. The trial court erred in not finding and decreeing that the Classis and Synod were merely advisory bodies in the church, and erred in not decreeing that Classis and Synod had no judicatory power."

All this is in direct contradiction to the Church Order, as the judge understood very well.

He read article 36 of the Church Order which states: "The classis has the same jurisdiction over the consistory as the particular synod has over the classis and the general synod over the particular."

Indeed, as is always well understood by Reformed men, the article does not state that the broader assemblies have the same jurisdiction over the consistory as the latter has over the congregation. But that is something quite different from declaring that classis and synod have no judicatory power at all. Without some form of authority or jurisdiction no denominational life were possible. By becoming part of a denomination a local congregation agrees to surrender some of its authority or jurisdiction to the broader assemblies. This is definitely expressed in the Church Order.

Nor did we, in 1924, assume a different position as especially Kok maintained and attempted to prove by quoting from my book "The Protestant Reformed Churches in America." That this is not true is evident from the following.

In a document, composed by undersigned and addressed by my consistory at the time to Classis Grand Rapids East, we state the following:

"Consistory does not question that Synod possesses the ultimate authority to interpret our Confessional Standards. But neither does the Consistory want Classis to assume a position which would indicate a denial of the fact that Synod also possesses ultimate authority in matters pertaining to cases of discipline. And Consistory maintains that Classis has no authority to reopen a case against the pastor, Reverend H. Hoeksema, against whom so many attacks were

launched and so many complaints lodged and protests were written, and who left Synod with the testimony of the largest assembly of our churches that he is fundamentally Reformed." p. 195.

Did we, in 1924, ever deny that Synod has jurisdiction or authority in matters pertaining not only to doctrine but also to discipline? We never did. On the contrary, we emphatically asserted this.

Again, in the same communication to Classis Grand Rapids East, we state:

That the Consistory fully agrees with Art. 31 of the Church Order: 'Whatever shall be agreed upon by majority vote shall be considered settled and binding.' If only our Churches and especially Classis and Synod had adhered to what is considered settled and binding, also in matters concerning procedure and rules of order . . . But with regard to the point in question, Consistory maintains that Synod had the entire case before it, finished it, gave an answer to all protests and questions, the question now put by Classis included, and that this must be considered settled and binding according to Art. 31 of the Church Order." pp. 194, 195.

When I read this history again, I am still thoroughly convinced that we were right and that Classis Grand Rapids East was in error.

Synod had ultimately decided in my case.

Synod had adopted the "Three Points" and at the same time expressed that I was fundamentally Reformed.

Synod had rejected all requests for discipline that were before that Assembly.

Classis could, therefore, not reopen the case, but had to agree that, under the Church Order, the decisions about my case were final, were "settled and binding." If Classis wanted to do anything at all, it could have made a new case or appeal to Synod to reopen it.

The jurisdiction of Synod is, according to Art. 36 of the Church Order, higher than that of Classis.

At any rate, it should be perfectly evident that we never denied the jurisdiction of the broader assemblies over the consistory.

Nor did we ever regard only those decisions settled and binding that are in agreement with the dictates of our own conscience, as Kok would have it.

Classis and Synod have no authority or jurisdiction under the Church Order?

Consider Art. 3 of the Church Order: "No one, though he be a professor of theology, elder or deacon, shall be permitted to enter upon the ministry of the Word and the sacraments without having been lawfully called thereunto. And when anyone acts contrary thereto, and after being frequently admonished does not desist, the classis shall judge whether he is to be declared a schismatic or is to be punished in some other way."

Note that in this article the classis is given independent jurisdiction, even without the consistory.

Consider also Art. 4 of the Church Order, which stip-

ulates with respect to one that is to be ordained into the ministry for the first time:

1. That he must first be declared eligible for a call by the churches with the advice of the classis.

2. That the call must be submitted for approval to the classis.

3. That he must be examined by the classis in the presence of the deputies *ad examina*, which are synodical delegates.

All this presupposes jurisdiction over the consistory that called him. Under the Church Order no minister can be ordained otherwise.

The same is true of Articles 8, 9 and 10.

And how about Art. 52? It states: "The ministers of the Word of God, and likewise the Professors of Theology (which also behooves the other professors and school teachers) shall subscribe to the three formulas of unity, namely, the Belgic Confession of Faith, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dordrecht, 1618-19, and the ministers of the Word who refuse to do so shall de facto be suspended from their office by the consistory or classis until they shall have given a full statement, and if they obstinately persist in refusing, they shall be deposed from their office."

Notice that, in such cases, the Church Order gives the consistory but also classis power to suspend and to depose from office.

Art. 79 declares that the consistory may suspend the ministers of the Word, but "whether these shall be entirely deposed from office, shall be subject to the judgment of the classis, with the advice of the delegates of the (particular) synod mentioned in article 11."

The entire Church Order, therefore, attributes judicatory power to the major assemblies.

But what then?

Did we not always maintain that the broader assemblies have only advisory power over the Consistory and that the local church is after all autonomous?

We did and we do.

But remember, in the first place, that every local church in the denomination voluntarily agrees with and subscribes to all the articles of the Church Order, also to the articles that ascribe judicatory power to the major assemblies. By doing this, it certainly voluntarily limited its own autonomy. It surrendered voluntarily some of its power. Without this no denomination of churches could possibly exist.

And, secondly, the local church still always remains autonomous, even if it leaves or is cast out from the denomination. No local officebearers can be deposed from office, if the consistory chooses to maintain them. But remember: in that case they are outside of the denomination with their officebearers, and they cannot sail under the name of the denomination.

This last is what Kok denies and denied in court. Even if he leaves the denomination he can still keep the name Protestant Reformed.

This is the height of folly.

Nor did we do so in 1924.

When Classis Grand Rapids East put us outside of the Christian Reformed Churches, no matter how illegal and corrupt this action was, we at once assumed another name, the name *Protesting Christian Reformed Churches*. And this was, after 1926, changed to *Protestant Reformed Churches*.

But I wish to return, for a moment to the fourteen points on the basis of which the attorney, Mr. Lindsey, claims that the court in Grand Rapids erred and on the ground of which he makes his appeal to the supreme court.

These points all imply that the Protestant Reformed Churches have "more nearly the congregational form of government than the presbyterial," and this is, to my mind, also the main reason why this appeal is doomed to failure.

This is true, for instance, of point 4: "The trial court erred in not finding and decreeing that the attempted suspension on June 23, 1952 of Rev. De Wolf by cross defendants and the deposing of all the other members of the consistory who stayed in the church was illegal and of no binding force and effect."

Fact is that, even apart from the fact that the action by the consistory was perfectly legal in itself, the classis approved of it and had jurisdiction to determine who were the legal and proper delegates to its session of October 6, 1953.

This point, too, therefore, presupposes that we have the congregational form of church government, and that the classis has no judicatory power whatever.

To a few more items I still wish to point, but this must wait till our next issue, the Lord willing.

H. H.

AS TO BOOKS

Expository Outlines on the Whole Bible, by Charles Simeon. Published by Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. Price \$3.95.

Again I received and perused some volumes of this most excellent commentary. All that I have written about them in former issues of our *Standard Bearer* still I hold to be true. It is, on the whole, thoroughly Scriptural, written in a very clear style, and easily accessible to the general public.

Of course, this does not mean and cannot be understood to mean that I agree with all the exegesis and interpretation of the text offered in this work. As an instance of disagreement I would refer to Acts 1:7-9 on the restitution of all things, and Rom. 11:26 on the salvation of all Israel. The author appears to believe a post-millennarian view, though he is somewhat hesitant about it.

This, however, does not retract from the value of this work, and I heartily recommend it to the general student of Scripture.

H.H.

(Continued on page 72)

OUR DOCTRINE

THE TRIPLE KNOWLEDGE

AN EXPOSITION OF THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

PART III — OF THANKFULNESS

LORD'S DAY 49

Chapter Two

Prayer for Obedience and Submission

If we do, we assume the attitude of hypocrites. It is certainly true that in this life we are still ever so sinful. We have but a small beginning of the new obedience. Nevertheless, this petition presupposes that we hate our own sin and our own carnal nature, and that we strive to put off the old man and put on the new. Only in that spiritual attitude can we pray this particular petition: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Moreover, this petition presupposes also a longing to receive the grace of God. Without that grace we can do nothing, and we know it. And therefore, this petition presupposes a longing in our hearts for the grace of the Holy Spirit, that He may work within us to will and to do of God's good pleasure.

And finally, this prayer expresses the longing for final perfection. Principally this petition looks forward to the consummation of all things, to the perfect life in the new Jerusalem, in the new heavens and the new earth, in which righteousness shall dwell. For the prayer that God's will may be done on earth as it is in heaven certainly looks forward to the state in which the workers of iniquity shall be no more, and all without exception shall do the will of God. You understand, of course, that also in that new creation each one will have his own station and calling. We are not just going to sit down lazily on the banks of the river of life, singing our songs and playing our harps. On the contrary, the perfect life will be full of activity and work. Only then there will be no more toil, no more slaving for a living or for filthy lucre. All our work will then be service of God, fully and consciously. For that final perfection the believer longs. Here he finds that even his best works are defiled with sin, that often he is inclined to rebel against the Lord because of the way he must travel, or the place he must occupy. Besides, here he comes in daily contact with the world, that cares not for the will of God, that is full of unrighteousness and rebellion, and in which it is ever so difficult to do the will of his Father. And then, looking upward to heaven, where even now the will of the Most High is the delight of all, he longs for the time when all life in all the new creation will be like that in heaven. And prostrating himself before the throne of grace, he prays: "Our Father, Which art in heaven, give unto me, give unto all Thy people, Thy

Spirit and grace to know and to do Thy will. And hasten the day when the workers of iniquity shall be no more, and all shall be in perfect harmony with Thy will, which is only good. Thy will be done. Amen."

LORD'S DAY 50.

Q. 125. Which is the fourth petition?

A. "Give us this day our daily bread;" that is, be pleased to provide us with all things necessary for the body, that we may thereby acknowledge thee to be the only fountain of all good, and that neither our care nor industry, nor even thy gifts, can profit us without thy blessing; and therefore that we may withdraw our trust from all creatures, and place it alone in thee.

Chapter One

Our Daily Bread

The fourth petition, the petition for our daily bread, stands first in order in the series of petitions which we are to send to the throne of grace for our own personal needs. The first three petitions, — "Hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done, — all have reference to God, to His name, His kingdom, His will. And these stand first in order. It certainly is the primary and deepest need of the Christian, living from the principle of his regenerated heart, that God's name may be glorified, that His kingdom may prosper and come with power in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that His will be done on earth as well as in heaven. These realities, therefore, are first in order because they are of primary significance. But the three petitions that follow in this model of prayer are strictly concerned with our own personal needs. And at the head of this second part of the Lord's Prayer stands the petition for daily bread.

We must not cater to the erroneous conception of the contents of this fourth petition of some over-spiritual Christians, according to whom we have in this prayer a request not for material bread, but rather for spiritual nourishment, for the bread that came down from heaven and that feeds our souls to everlasting life. From the lofty heights of their would-be spirituality these people judge that it would be below the high level of this model of prayer to insert a request for mere bread, for earthly necessities. Besides, they argue that if this were the meaning of this fourth petition, it would seem to stand in flat contradiction to all that the Lord teaches us elsewhere concerning our attitude to earthly things. Does He not teach us plainly in the sermon on the Mount that if we set our hearts on things earthly, we attempt to serve God and Mammon? And does He not admonish us in that same sermon that we shall take no thought for them whatsoever: "Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap,

nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." Matt. 6:25-32. How then, they say, could it be possible that the same Lord would insert a prayer for these very things in the series of petitions which He teaches us to pray?

Others have an idea that this prayer for daily bread appears to be so earthly in its contents that all men without distinction may take it on their lips. It would seem to require no special spirituality to send this request to the throne of our Father in heaven. Here is a prayer that touches a deeply felt need of every man and woman on earth. And surely, even the natural man is able to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread."

Both these views are utterly mistaken. As far as the first-mentioned conception of the fourth petition is concerned, it is certainly true that the Lord teaches in the Sermon on the Mount, in the passage which we quoted above, that we shall take no thought for the morrow, that we shall not be anxious about the needs of our body. But this admonition certainly does not stand in contrast to the prayer for daily bread. In fact, as we shall see, it is quite in harmony with that admonition of the Lord in the Sermon on the Mount. Besides, the simple words of the petition, its exact position in the series of prayers we are taught to pray in this second part of the Lord's Prayer, as well as the reminder that we are still on the earth and not yet in heaven, — all this ought to be sufficient to convince anyone that we do indeed have a request for daily, earthly, material bread in this fourth petition. And in opposition to the latter view, namely, that any natural man, apart from the grace of God, can take this petition on his lips, we wish to emphasize that even though we deal here with a prayer for very tangible and material bread, the petition is nevertheless very deeply spiritual. This is not a common petition, which any man can pray. The natural, unregenerated man certainly is not able to make it his own. All the manifestations of greed and covetousness, the strife after the things of this world and always more of them, the constant and bitter fight between the "haves" and the "have nots," the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life that manifestly characterize the life of the natural man, — all these constitute a striking contrast to the simple request in this fourth petition for daily bread. But even for the believer it is not

always easy to utter this petition in spirit and in truth, without reservation. We do not usually live on the high spiritual level that is required to take this petition on our lips and to mean it. And the end also of this present meditation on the Lord's Prayer will have to be an acknowledgement on our part that we still have much to learn, and that we will have to assume an attitude of constant watchfulness in prayer to be able to say, "Give us this day our daily bread." This is also the conception of the Heidelberg Catechism. According to it, the emphasis in this fourth petition is not so much on mere bread, which especially in our country we normally have in great abundance, but on the acknowledgement that God is the giver of all good things: ". . . that we may thereby acknowledge thee to be the only fountain of all good, and that neither our care nor industry, nor even thy gifts, can profit us without thy blessing; and therefore that we may withdraw our trust from all creatures, and place it alone in thee."

As has been said, in the second series of petitions that occur in the Lord's Prayer the prayer for bread has a leading place, on the basis of the principle that the natural is first, even though it is not the most important, while the spiritual is second in order. In order of time we need bread, even before we need the forgiveness of sins and the deliverance from evil. And as soon as we need bread no more, we shall have no more need of forgiveness and deliverance. But although it occupies the first place in the second section, we must not overlook the fact that, together with the whole of the second part of the Lord's Prayer, it is strictly subordinate to the first part, in which we are instructed to ask for the glory of God's name, the coming of His kingdom, the submission to and obedience of His will. The significance of this is clear. It means, to be sure, that in the fourth petition we pray not simply for bread, in order that we may eat and drink, still less in order that we may use the bread for the satisfaction of our sinful desires, but in order that we may be able to hallow the name of God, to seek His kingdom, and to obey His will: "Give us bread, our Father in heaven, that we may serve and glorify Thee, and represent Thy cause in the midst of the world." Such is the meaning of the fourth petition in the order in which it occurs in the Lord's Prayer.

But this order teaches us something else. The statement is often made, quite without reservation, that in this petition we have the promise that God's people in this world will never lack bread, will never suffer hunger, that every day their food and drink will certainly be provided. And, in the sense that the Lord will surely always care for His people, and that He will provide them with the necessary means to live as His people in the world, this may be said to be true. But we should not forget that all this is strictly subservient to the purpose of God's glory, to the coming of His kingdom, and to the realization of His will. Scripture teaches us everywhere that we must expect suffering for righteousness' sake in the world. And this suffering may

very well include that the portion of our daily bread becomes very small, that we really suffer hunger and want, starvation and death. The apostle Paul relates how for the kingdom of God's sake he was "in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness." II Cor. 11:27. And the epistle to the Hebrews mentions those that "wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented." Heb. 11:37. And does not the Bible forwarn us that the time shall come when we shall not be able to buy or sell unless we receive the mark of the beast? Rev. 13:7. It is important, therefore, that we pray for our daily bread in strict subordination to the glory of God's name, the coming of His kingdom, and the realization of His will, which is always good.

Turning now our attention to the contents of this petition, we are at once impressed by the fact that it places the petitioner on the level of a very simple life as far as earthly things are concerned. It teaches us to ask for bread, no more. We understand, of course, that there is a figure of speech in this term, a figure that is denoted by the strange word "synecdoche," and which means that part is expressed to denote the whole, or the particular to denote the general. So bread in this petition certainly represents more than mere bread. Our needs include far more than this. We need clothing and shelter and all the necessities required by our earthly life. In our modern world we need money to buy bread and all the rest of our necessities. And in order to earn the money we need a job or a position in the world. In fact, we need a thousand and one things for our daily life. Nevertheless, it is very evident that the term "our daily bread" definitely excludes whatever is above and beyond the things that are strictly necessary for our physical and earthly subsistence. One cannot very well so stretch the term "bread" in this petition that it includes riches and luxuries. Especially in modern life we have a thousand and one things for our enjoyment: delicacies to render our earthly life comfortable, abundance of food, rich and comfortable homes, beautiful clothing, instruments of music, beautiful and comfortable churches and schools, telephones, radios, television, and many other things. These are certainly not included in the fourth petition. This is not saying that we may not have them if we are sure that our heavenly Father gave them to us, and that we may not enjoy them if we can do so with thanksgiving and to the glory of our God. But it certainly does teach us that we may not set our heart on these things, that we may not seek them, covet them, and that therefore we may not ask our heavenly Father for them. Positively speaking, it teaches us that we shall seek and ask for only those things that are strictly necessary for our earthly subsistence. In the fourth petition we do not pray for riches and for an abundance of earthly goods. We do not pray for sugar and coffee and cake and pie, for beautiful clothes and silk stockings, for comfortable homes and radios and pianos and automobiles. The fourth petition, with its request for

bread, puts us on a very simple level of living: "Give us bread."

The same idea is emphasized still further by the word that is translated by "daily." Give us this day our *daily* bread. The Greek word that is translated by "our daily" presents a little difficulty, and there is considerable doubt as to the exact meaning of the term. The trouble is that in the New Testament it occurs nowhere else. Only it may be said confidently that it does not mean "daily." Some suggest that the word means "that which is present"; and the meaning of the prayer then would be: "Give us this day bread for the present." But this idea is really already expressed in the words "this day." Give us *this day* our bread means: give us bread for the present. Others see in the composition of the original word the meaning "coming" or "future." The Lord then would teach us to pray: "Give us this day the bread that is coming, bread for the future, bread for the morrow." But this would appear to be in direct conflict with the teachings of our Lord when He emphasizes that we shall not be anxious for the morrow, and that sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. To me it seems that the word may properly be rendered by "bread that is coming to us." The prayer then means: "Give us this day the bread that is coming to us, that is, the bread that is our proper portion for this particular day. Give us our own proper, limited portion of our daily necessities." This proper portion varies. It is not always the same. Nor is it the same for all. The needs of a large family, with small children, differ from those of an old couple. They are different on a severely frosty day in January than on a pleasant, warm day in June. They are not the same when we are sick as when we are in good health. Our proper portion varies according to our circumstances and position in life. And the prayer asks that our Father in heaven in His wisdom may give us that particular portion which is proper for us.

And do not overlook the further limitation of this proper portion of bodily necessities expressed in the words, "this day." This is to be taken most literally, and most seriously. It does not mean that we may ask for a well-stocked food-cellar or a full coal-bin, that may carry us through the winter, or a reasonably large bank account, on which we may fall back. It does not imply that we ask our Father in heaven to give us so much that we may feel secure for a year, or a month, or a week, or even for another day. It means exactly what it says: "Give us what we need for this day." In other words, the prayer teaches us to assume the attitude of faith, which the Lord exhorts His people to assume with respect to earthly things: "Take no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." The morrow is not ours, for we are but children of the moment. To ask for today is sufficient.

H.H.

FROM HOLY WRIT

Exposition of I Corinthians 1-4

3.

It is rather important to keep in mind that the church at Corinth is, in spite of her many sins and imperfections, most emphatically the church of God. Paul addresses this church as the called saints, saints in Christ, together with all the people of God, who call upon the Name of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Living members they are of the body of Christ, and such they would remain forevermore. For God is faithful who hath called them into the fellowship of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore she shall surely be presented in that day a church without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

But this church is at the time when Paul writes this Epistle to her far from this final perfection. If ever a church showed that she has only "a small beginning" of the new obedience it is here. Fact is, that this church in good part was not even living up to the spiritual manhood in Christ that begins to live not only to some but according to all of God's commandments.

To bring this church to that "perfection" (see Chapter 2:6). Paul here addresses a Word of reproof and correction in righteousness, so that this church may indeed be equipped, be in that spiritually readiness and purpose of mind to walk in all good works.

What was wrong in this Church?

There were several evils in this church; evils that had crept in and would eat through the entire body as a cancer. However, the particular evil we would call attention to is that described and refuted in the verses 10-17 of the first Chapter of I Corinthians. In these verses we read the following:

"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you . . . For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the Cross of Christ should be made of none effect."

In these words we have a very keen analysis and a very strong rebuke of the schism and party-strife in the church of God at Corinth.

It is the rebuke of sinful schism in the body of Christ where the unity of the Spirit should be kept in the bond of peace.

Notice of this schism had been brought to Paul "by the house of Chloe," a house-church under that name. Whether this word had come to Paul by means of a letter, or whether

it had come simply by a committee delegated to bring this sad news to Paul we are in no position to state. The state of affairs in the congregation was such that silence could no longer be maintained and word was brought to Paul, who was at this time at Ephesus.

Although an allusion is made to four types of partisans in Corinth, to wit, of Paul, Apollos, Cephas and Christ, yet one should not draw the conclusions that there were four parties in this church. For the text in verse 12 does not state that "some" were saying *we* are of Paul, *we* of Apollos etc., but rather "each of you" is saying "I am of Paul" etc. The picture is rather a confused din of voices; there is much confusion, and it affected the entire congregation. It set the whole church on fire—this party—strife spirit did. None was exempted from it. And out of this confusion we hear in strong staccato notes: "I, indeed, am of Paul, I of Apollos, I of Cephas and I of Christ." All sane discussion had gone out of the window and in its stead had come a mad clash and strife over the talents, personalities and preference for preachers! Such is the partisan spirit in this church of God at Corinth!

Attempts are made to try to show the reason for these preferences. If there are any reasonable considerations at the bottom of this party-strife, they may be conjectured to be the following:

1. Those who were partisans of them who cried "I am of Paul" evidently were sent down this evil road by the consideration that Paul was the first preacher, the Apostle in Christ. He had preached to them first in the Synagogue and later in the house of Crispus, the ruler of the Synagogue, which stood right next door to this place of worship. They were the followers of a mere man, a "leader in the church." They forgot, or probably had never profoundly learned, that Paul is a "minister" (diakonos) by whom they believed. They did not see Paul in his proper place in the dispensation of God, and therefore gave an improper and doting disproportion to Paul's place in God's church. These were the "Paulites!"

2. Once down this unholy line of conduct and thought, which is void of all spiritual sobriety, the temptation is there for others to choose Apollos as their man. He was a man of learning and of culture, a man of words schooled in Alexandria, a man mighty in the Scriptures. And in the blurred vision of respect of persons these doting partisans too could not see that Apollos was but an earthen vessel, a mere man, yet called to be a minister, a messenger to bring the tidings of good things. These seemed to be the men who were inclined to rhetoric in the preaching, although Apollos is not guilty of having incited this feeling among the readers. The blame is with the Corinthians. For this party-strife is due to their not being willing and ready to all have the same deep inner feelings toward each other, to mind the same thing in the Lord.

3. Of course, there were also the Peter-partisans, who were more or less inclined toward legalism, perhaps. Or

they might claim him as being an apostle of greater rank than the others since Christ had addressed him as "Peter," the rock upon which he would build the church. These too lack the sobriety which sees that Peter is only great when the Lord makes known to him His secrets concerning greatness in the Kingdom of heaven.

4. And, finally, there are the "Christ-partisans." These were correct in condemning the parties of the others, but probably did so in such an arrogant manner that it was impossible for them to restore the unity and the unanimity so sorely needed in the church. Ipso facto they simply became another party next to the other partisans. Since they did not try to restore and heal in the *spirit of meekness*, but rather uttered hard staccato cries: *I am of Christ!* they too helped tear the church of Christ in pieces. Truly the latter should give us all reason to reflect whether we are really the peacemakers who shall be called the sons of God! Matt. 5:9. It is the truth of the mote and the beam which lies demonstrated in this party "I am of Christ!" Paul too is of Christ, but he does not do this in a holier than thou attitude, but rather in that mellowness and love, and fatherly wisdom and fearless courage which would bring all under the dominion of Christ, subjecting our every thought to His Word!

From the above it appears that there may be some ascertainable startingpoint in these partisan confusions and every evil work, but that at bottom it is not something which belongs with our "reasonable service," but belongs to the works of the flesh. Such is often the case where there is sinful schism and when we try to analyze those who work schism. One fails to see the reasonable service of Christ, as this reasonableness is taught us in sound words of wisdom in Scripture, in those who are filled with a partisan spirit and do not live out of faith, according to His law and unto His glory.

Well may one pray: lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from the Evil One, that is, "since we are as weak in ourselves, that we cannot stand a moment; and besides this, since our mortal enemies, the devil, the world and our own flesh do not cease to assault us, do thou therefore preserve and strengthen us by the power of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may not be overcome in this spiritual warfare, but constantly and strenuously resist our foes, till at last we obtain a complete victory." Ques. 127 of Heid. Catechism.

When Paul would still the angry tempest of the flesh, this mortal foe in this church at Corinth he does so in such a way that he does not capitalize on the situation to enhance his own prestige (read Phil. 1:15-18), but rather he so writes that all the attention is drawn away from the *ministers* of the Gospel to the *content* and purpose of the Gospel. Rather than in any way becoming involved in this mad party-strife he placed first of all *himself*, and then *those that read and hear him* under the Word of the Cross. Such is always the proper order. Let it never be forgotten! And if we have forgotten it let us confess it humbly before our

God lest His anger rise against us but a little — and we be consumed!

Schism in *God's* church is a great evil under the sun. It is a great evil under the sun as it shines Anno 1955, October 20 also! And therefore we do well to take the shoes from off our feet and pray with the Psalmist: "Search me o God and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me and lead me in the way everlasting."

We must know therefore whether the "schism" which we see in our midst is a schism (*spaltung*) which is caused by the Word of the Cross or whether it is due to wisdom of Words. Then it is reduced to its last denomination. Thus, of course, it must be in the holy place, and thus it is done by Paul here *through our Lord Jesus Christ*. (See verse 10).

Of course, such parliamentary considerations as rules of majority and that of "unanimity" are considerations which are indispensable in conducting the affairs in God's church in proper order. And these are the matters which are dealt with in Civil Courts. But in the Court of God the last, the rock-bottom question is: is the schism in the Church one which is the manifestation of the falling and rising again of many in Israel, and that, too, because Christ was thereunto set and appointed by the Lord!

When this "schism" is present and when there is a show-down battle between these two forces then there is not power on earth to keep them together in the true unity which has the sanction of God in Christ. But where it is the disunity of the flesh waging war and assaulting the unity of God in Christ in His church — then the wisdom of Solomon and courage of David and the meekness of Moses — all men of like passions as we can cause the sword to stop destroying in Israel. Then it is not the sword of the division of Christ, but it is the sword of mere man, the puny sword of Peter which must be put back into the sheath! The former makes separation between the church and the world in the church here below, while the latter makes separation between brother and brother in the Lord.

The latter was true in Corinth.

It was the flesh in the church. This must be crucified.

And since God works grace through admonitions Paul will admonish this church so that she may indeed be of the same mind and the same speech: there be no schism in the church, the body of Christ.

With what masterful spiritual skill Paul handles the sword of the Spirit in this given situation we hope to trace in the next instalment, D.V.

He does not get involved in this brawl over personalities, but as the wise builder builds upon the foundation besides which there is none other, in order that his work may stand the test, and not be burned while he himself be saved as by fire.

Having cried out the victory for others he himself does not become a castaway!

G. L.

IN HIS FEAR

Speech That Manifests Fear

(2)

Nicknames for God!

Nicknames for Holy things!

The very thought of such nicknames strikes a discordant chord in the heart of the regenerated child of God.

Yet there are many, many such nicknames given and used by those who claim to walk in His fear.

Webster tells us that nicknames are names "given instead of the one belonging to the person, thing or place, usually descriptive and given in sport." As a verb "to nickname" means, according to Webster "to misname; to give a nickname or to call by a nickname."

Does one in sport give God names other than those which He has given us of Himself? Does man dare do that?

Can we describe Him better by names which we have manufactured than the names He has given us of Himself? Can we with words we invented tell who and what He is more clearly and more correctly than He has Himself in the names He gave us in Holy Writ?

Will we not be guilty of misnaming Him as Webster suggests in his definition of the verb "to nickname"?

Dare the creature even think that it may do this to God—be he His child—as he does to a friend? A friend he will slap on the shoulder; and in sport he will call him something that is a nickname. Dare he change God's names into nicknames and in a jovial spirit pronounce them before God's face?

Can that be done in His fear?

O, man is proud. Conceited specks of dust that depend upon God for every breath of life do dare to speak without reverence before His face. They do dare to take the name of the Transcendant One, The Almighty, Sovereign and Holy One of Israel and hurl it around like a plaything. They curse and swear and boast of being able to curse and swear for two minutes straight without repeating themselves! The devilishness of it all!

Of that we usually piously(?) wash our hands. His names we do not take in vain. As far as that Third Commandment is concerned, we are quite sure that we keep that precept of God.

And we are quite sure of that even when we do perform that other hideous thing: that we manufacture nicknames for Him and for the things that are Holy. And we dare to use them left and right—and I once heard a man declare that he did so in His fear! He claimed to do it with reverence!

To what do we refer?

This: many who feel the horror of accenuating their words with the names of God and of His Son will come as close

to the sound as they can without uttering the name. The forms are so numerous. We could not begin to give a catalogue of them all.

You know them.

"Gee, but it is hot!" A nickname for Jesus is used by those who dare not use His Scriptural name. "Cripe" is used by those who know that to use the name "Christ" is forbidden. "Gosh" and "Golly" are the nicknames for "God." "Gee Whiz" becomes another and a closer substitute for "Jesus." A nickname for "God" that avoids the first letter and so seems to get away from the awful thing of swearing is "cotten;" one using only the first letter and varying from there on is the oft used "Guy."

And the Holy things?

These are chiefly used in the realm of cursing rather than swearing. The man who dares not say "O, hell it is true," will swear by a nickname and say "O, heck, it is true!" But in the realm of cursing, he who dares not consign one to hell by using the word will also resort to that word "heck." He who dares not say "Damn it" says "darn it." And so we could continue, although we are thankful that our vocabulary on these "nicknames" is as limited as it is. These will suffice to show how we offend with tongue, with the same tongue that blesses God. Listen to the speech of men around you. Either by a similar sound, a word that begins with the same first letter that God's names begin with or some other device, men give nicknames to God and to the Holy Things.

This is really nothing new. Jesus said to the multitude that they should not swear by heaven, by Jerusalem or by the king's throne. These also were devices used by men who knew the Third Commandment and tried to commit its sin in a sinless way. That, of course, is folly.

You use these expressions and never thought of it that way?

That is not impossible, and we hope that these lines will be blessed and applied by the Spirit to give you grace to let your yea, be yea and your nay, nay that you may utter speech that manifests fear; the fear of the Lord.

The sad thing is that many of the books that are published for our youth and are even labeled: Christian Fiction and are stories which are woven around the conversion of this or that young man or woman and picture what are to be christian families and christian young people contain many such expressions as "Gee", "Gosh" and "Golly": That is to be deplored. It is hard enough to rebuke and warn your children against these things as they hear them from the mouth of the world; but it makes it harder when—as the undersigned once had to do—you must read carefully all the books purchased for the church library and deface them by blotting out in black ink these things in so-called christian fiction.

It was also in this connection that I heard that remark of using these nicknames in His fear. A continued story reading program was featuring one of these so-called chris-

tian fiction books; and the radio personality who has reading it for the children came across such an expression: the word "Gee." He felt it was out of place and after reading it stopped long enough in his reading to remark that if we only use that word reverently it would be alright; although, he added, it would be better without it. Reverent use of the irreverent? In His fear you cannot use these terms reverently in any other way than to condemn them in no uncertain terms. To defend them is to be irreverent, is to show lack of the fear of the Lord in regard to that matter.

Let us also bear in mind that to refrain from the use of these "nicknames," which are cursing and swearing as much as the vain use of God's names, simply because of the presence of parent, an elder or minister of the gospel still is not speaking in His fear. The reason for our putting a stop to the use of all these words should not be to avoid a rebuke from men. It should not be to keep from hurting the feelings of those who object to such language. It should not be in the first place either to keep from offending others—in the Scriptural sense of offending, namely, to cause them to stumble into the same sin. It should always be discarded from our speech in order to walk in His Fear. In order to glorify and praise God in our speech, we should refrain from all these variations of His names for our own selfish defense and emphasis of our words.

"Profanity is the attempt of a feeble mind to express itself forcefully." I read that slogan somewhere. But it is a very materially minded slogan. It had a form of godliness to it; but it denies the power thereof. God is not in it. "Gee!" "Golly!" and "Gosh!" are not simply the attempt of a feeble mind to express itself forcefully by using the names of the Almighty One. You either use God's name to His praise and glory or else you take it in vain. And the attempt of a feeble mind to strengthen its words by the use of the Almighty's names is taking that name in vain. It is the proud and devilish act of trying to make God your servant. Proud, fallen, depraved man will not even have scruples about seeking God's help in his evil attempt to set himself up as god. (The same is true, of course, also of all heresy. A heretic will not have a scruple to use God's names and to quote His Holy Word to defend himself in his lie and for self-vindication.) But that is not walking in His fear. We must manifest speech that manifests His fear. We must stand in holy reverence and awe before Him as GOD.

And words formed from part of the letters of His names or fashioned after the sounds in His names or of Holy Things is taking His name in vain. It is not manifesting the fear of the Lord. It is behaving as though we do not consider Him to be the Lord and God that He is.

We might add that for this reason also we cannot at all approve of the practice of speaking to Him as "You." Many circles like to do that and claim that it is a more personal touch. The discarding of the forms of "Thee" and "Thou" in our prayers, it is claimed, show a more intimate and tender relation between the God of our salvation and His

redeemed child. It seems to manifest the covenant relation more beautifully. It seems to indicate that we truly consider Him to be our father; and we never address our earthly fathers with the lofty "thee" and "thou." But it does not manifest speech that reveals the fear of the Lord!

Indeed we do not address our earthly fathers as "thee" and "thou" exactly because they are earthly fathers. But Jesus taught us in His model prayer to address Him as Our Father Who art in heaven, not to be placed on the same level with our earthly fathers.

He is God!

How easy it is to forget that. How much more convenient and man-exalting it is to ignore that fact. But we may not! And we know that too. When we appear before an earthly judge, we call him "Your Honor." And God we will put below that man? God Himself declares that the children should honor their fathers and their mothers. But we do not honor Him when we drag Him down to our own level in our speech and talk to Him as though He is one of us.

To address Him as "You" rather than "Thou" has a form of godliness in it in that it looks like we are so spiritual that we are so close to Him and on such good terms with Him; but it denies the power of godliness, for it denies that He is God.

He who lives in His fear has a deep, spiritual respect for Him as God. The angels cover their faces before Him. Job, having been instructed by God says "I will put mine hand upon my mouth," Job 40:4. He who lives in His fear and prays to Him in His fear does so with reverence and awe.

He is our covenant Father and has lifted us to a glorious state as children who have in Christ the right to all the blessedness of His house. But He is and remains God.

Speak of Him and to Him in such a way that you manifest a faith in Him as GOD and not as some creature on your own level.

He lifts us to heavenly heights in the salvation He has accomplished in His Son; but in it all He remains the Transcendent One. In our salvation we are lifted far above where we are through the Fall and even far above where Adam stood before the Fall; but He remains infinitely above us. We have been made a little lower than the angels and raised by Christ above them; but God has not in that salvation been demoted to any degree. In fact it is the child of God who is saved from the foolishness and blindness of sin and the lie who understands how lofty and exalted above all creatures God is.

Such a saved child of God utters speech that manifests the fear of the Lord.

J. A. H.

Men's League

The Men's League meeting will be held in our Hudsonville Protestant Reformed Church on Thursday, Nov. 17, at 8 p. m. The Rev. H. C. Hoeksema will be our speaker. Men, show your interest by being present.

Jac. Oomkes, Secretary.

Contending For The Faith

The Church and the Sacraments

VIEWS DURING THE SECOND PERIOD (300-750 A.D.)

THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH

THE PAPACY (by Philip Schaff).

But thus, at the same time, was roused the jealousy of the bishop of Rome, to whom a rival in Constantinople with equal prerogatives, was far more dangerous than a rival in Alexandria or Antioch. Especially offensive must it have been to him, that the council of Chalcedon said not a word of the primacy of Peter and based the power of the Roman bishop, like that of the Constantinopolitan, on political grounds; which was indeed not erroneous, yet only half of the truth, and in that respect unfair.

Just here, therefore, is the point, where the Eastern church entered into conflict with the Western, which continues to this day. The papal delegates, protested against the twenty-eighth canon of the Chalcedonian council, on the spot, in the sixteenth and last session of the council; but in vain, though their protest was admitted to record. They appealed to the sixth canon of the Nicene council, according to the enlarged Latin version, which, in the later addition, *Ecclesia Romana semper habuit primatum*," seems to assign the Roman bishop a position above all the patriarchs, and drops Constantinople from notice; whereupon the canon was read to them in its original form from the Greek Acts, without that addition, together with the first three canons of the second ecumenical council with their express acknowledgment of the patriarch of Constantinople in the second rank. After the debate on this point, the imperial commissioners thus summed up the result; "From the whole discussion, and from what has been brought forward on either side, we acknowledge that the primacy over all and the most eminent rank are to continue with the archbishop of old Rome; but that also the archbishop of New Rome should enjoy the same precedence of honor, and have the right to ordain the metropolitans in the dioceses of Asia, Pontus, and Thrace," etc. Now they called upon the council to declare whether this was its opinion; whereupon the bishops gave their full, emphatic consent, and begged to be dismissed. The commissioners then closed the transactions with the words: "What we a little while ago proposed, the whole council hath ratified:" that is, the prerogative granted to the church of Constantinople is confirmed by the council in spite of the protest of the legates of Rome.

After the council, the Roman bishop, Leo, himself protested in three letters of the 22nd May, 452; the first of which was addressed to the emperor Marcian, the second to the empress Pulcheria, the third to Anatolius, patriarch of Constantinople. He expressed his satisfaction with the doc-

trinal results of the council but declared the elevation of the bishop of Constantinople to the patriarchal dignity to be a work of pride and ambition—the humble, modest pope!—to be an attack upon the rights of other Eastern metropolitans—the invader of the same rights in Gaul!—especially upon the rights of the Roman see guaranteed by the council of Nice—on the authority of a Roman interpolation!—and to be destructive of the peace of the church—which the popes have always sacredly kept! He would hear nothing of political considerations as the source of the authority of his chair, but pointed rather to Divine institution and the primacy of Peter. Leo speaks here with great reverence of the first ecumenical council, under the false impression that that council in its sixth canon acknowledged the primacy of Rome; but with singular indifference of the second ecumenical council, on account of its third canon, which was confirmed at Chalcedon. He charges Anatolius with using for his own ambition a council, which had been called simply for the extermination of heresy and the establishment of the faith. But the canons of the Nicene council, inspired by the Holy Ghost, could be superseded by no synod however great; and all that came in conflict with them was void. He exhorted Anatolius to give up his ambition, and reminded him of the words: *Tene quod habes, ne alius accipiat coronam tuam*—Rev. 3:11.

But this protest could not change the decree of the council nor the position of the Greek church in the matter, although, under the influence of the emperor, Anatolius wrote an humble letter to Leo. The bishops of Constantinople asserted their rank, and were sustained by the Byzantine emperors. The twenty-eighth canon of the Chalcedonian council was expressly confirmed by Justinian I, in the 131st Novelle (c. 1), and solemnly renewed by the Trullan council (can. 36), but was omitted in the Latin collections of canons by Prisca, Dionysius, Exiguus, and Isidore. The loud contradiction of Rome gradually died away; yet she has never formally acknowledged this canon, except during the Latin empire and the Latin patriarchate at Constantinople, when the fourth Lateran council, under Innocent III, in 1215, conceded that the patriarch of Constantinople should hold the next rank after the patriarch of Rome, before those of Alexandria and Antioch.

Finally, the bishop of Jerusalem, after long contests with the metropolitan of Caesarea and the patriarch of Antioch, succeeded in advancing himself to the patriarchal dignity; but his distinction remained chiefly a matter of honor, far below the other patriarchates in extent of real power. Had not the ancient Jerusalem, in the year, 70, been left with only a part of the city wall and three gates to mark it, it would doubtless, being the seat of the oldest Christian congregation, have held, as in the time of James, a central position in the hierarchy. Yet as it was, a reflection of the original dignity of the mother city fell upon the new settlement of Aelia Capitolina, which, after Adrian, rose upon the venerable ruins. The pilgrimage of the empress

Helena, and the magnificent church edifices of her son on the holy places, gave Jerusalem a new importance as the centre of devout pilgrimage from all quarters of Christendom. Its bishop was subordinate, indeed, to the metropolitan of Caesarea, but presided with him (probably *secundo loco*) at the Palestinian councils. The council of Nice gave him an honorary precedence among the bishops, though without affecting his dependence on the metropolitan of Caesarea. At least this seems to be the meaning of the short and somewhat obscure seventh canon: "Since it is custom and old tradition, that the bishop of Aelia (Jerusalem) should be honored, he shall enjoy the succession of honor, while the metropolis (Caesarea) preserves the dignity allotted to her." The legal relation of the two remained for a long time uncertain, till the fourth ecumenical council, at its seventh session, confirmed the bishop of Jerusalem in his patriarchal rank, and assigned to him the three provinces of Palestine as a diocese without opposition.

The Rival Patriarchs of Old and New Rome

Thus at the close of the fourth century we see the Catholic church of the Graeco-Roman empire under the oligarchy of five coordinate and independent patriarchs, four in the East and one in the West. But the analogy of the political constitution, and the tendency toward a visible, tangible representation of the unity of the church, which had lain at the bottom of the development of the hierarchy from the very beginnings of the episcopate, pressed beyond oligarchy to monarchy; especially in the West (Oligarchy means: government by a few—H. V.). Now that the empire was geographically and politically severed into East and West, which, after the death of Theodosius, in 395, had their several emperors, and were never permanently reunited, we can but expect in like manner a double head in the hierarchy. This we find in the two patriarchs of old Rome and New Rome; the one representing the Western or Latin church, the other the Eastern or Greek. Their power and their relation to each other we must now more carefully observe.

The organization of the church in the East being so largely influenced by the political constitution, the bishop of the imperial capital could not fail to become the most powerful of the four oriental patriarchs. By the second and fourth ecumenical councils, as we have already seen, his actual preeminence was ratified by ecclesiastical sanction, and he was designed to the foremost dignity. From Justinian I he further received supreme appellate jurisdiction, and the honorary title of *ecumenical* patriarch, which he still continues to bear. He ordained the other patriarchs, not seldom decided their deposition or institution by his influence, and used every occasion to interfere in their affairs, and assert his supreme authority, though the popes and their delegates at the imperial court incessantly protested. The patriarchates of Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria were distracted and weakened in the course of the fifth and sixth centuries by the tedious monophysite controversies (the

controversies which centered around the question whether Christ had but one nature—H. V.), and subsequently, after the year 622, were reduced to but a shadow by the Mohammedan conquests. The patriarchate of Constantinople, on the contrary, made important advances southwest and north; till, in its flourishing period, between the eighth and tenth centuries, it embraced, besides its original diocese, Calabria, Sicily, and all the provinces of Illyricum, the Bulgarians and Russia. Though often visited with destructive earthquakes and conflagrations, and besieged by Persians, Arabians, Hungarians, Russians, Latins, and Turks, Constantinople maintained itself to the middle of the fifteenth century as the seat of the Byzantine empire and centre of the Greek church. The patriarch of Constantinople, however, remained virtually only *primus inter pares*, and has never exercised a papal supremacy over his colleagues in the East, like that of the pope over the metropolitans of the West; still less has he arrogated, like his rival in ancient Rome, the sole dominion of the entire church. Toward the bishop of Rome he claimed only equality of rights and coordinate dignity.

In this long contest between the two leading patriarchs of Christendom, the patriarch of Rome at last carried the day. The monarchical tendency of the hierarchy was much stronger in the West than in the East, and was urging a universal monarchy in the church.

The patriarch of Constantinople enjoyed indeed the favor of the emperor, and all the benefits of the imperial residence. New Rome was most beautifully and most advantageously situated for a metropolis of government, of commerce, and of culture, on the bridge between two continents; and it formed a powerful bulwark against the barbarian conquests. It was never desecrated by an idol temple, but was founded a Christian city. It fostered the sciences and arts, at a time when the West was whelmed by the wild waves of barbarism; it preserved the knowledge of the Greek language and literature through the middle ages; and after the invasion of the Turks it kindled by its fugitive scholars the enthusiasms of classic studies in the Latin church, till Greece rose from the dead with the New Testament in her hand, and held the torch for the Reformation.

But the Roman patriarch had yet greater advantages. In him were united, as even the Greek historian Theodoret Concedes, all the outward and the inward, the political and the spiritual conditions of the highest eminence.

In the first place, his authority rested on an ecclesiastical and spiritual basis, reaching back, as public opinion granted, through an unbroken succession, to Peter the apostle; while Constantinople was in no sense an *apostolica sedes*, but had a purely political origin, though, by transfer, and in a measure by usurpation, it had possessed itself of the metropolitan rights of Ephesus. Hence, the popes after Leo appealed almost exclusively to the divine origin of their dignity,

(Continued on page 66)

The Voice of Our Fathers

The Canons of Dordrecht

PART TWO

EXPOSITION OF THE CANONS

SECOND HEAD OF DOCTRINE

OF DIVINE PREDESTINATION

Of the Death of Christ, and the Redemption of Men Thereby

Introduction:

As the title of this Second Head of Doctrine indicates, This chapter deals not only with the death of Christ as such, but especially with the *nature*, or character, of the death of Christ: His death was a *redemptive* death. And this is indeed the fundamental truth of this chapter, as we shall see. And the basic issue at stake in the controversy with the Remonstrants was exactly the maintenance or the denial of this *redemptive* death of Christ. In the opinion of the fathers the Arminians really so construed the death of Christ and the scope of the death of Christ as to deny its redemptive value, even though they continued to speak of "redemption" and a "Redeemer."

Historically, of course, this second chapter of the *Canons* stands opposite the second point of the *Remonstrance*, in which the Arminians maintained that "Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world, died for all men and for every man, so that he has obtained for them all, by his death on the cross, redemption and the forgiveness of sins; yet that no one actually enjoys this forgiveness of sins except the believer . . ." And that in this proposition, even though they speak of redemption, the Arminians poured another than the Scriptural meaning into this term became very evident when they actually developed another theory of the atonement, the so-called "governmental theory," propounded by one of their eminent scholars, Hugo De Groot (Grotius). In this new theory of the atonement they denied the substitutionary character of Christ's death and denied that it constituted a *satisfaction* for sin, a satisfaction of divine justice with respect to the sins of the elect. According to this theory, God, the governor of the universe, cannot forgive sin without in some way demonstrating His righteousness and His displeasure over against sin and His determination to punish the sinner. Hence, God gives an exhibition of His righteousness and justice in the death of Christ: by delivering up His own Son He clearly reveals to the sinner what He might righteously do to every sinner. The well-known comparison is here made with the general who, instead of sentencing every soldier in a mutinous regiment to death, rather singles out one man, possibly the ringleader, in order to demonstrate his justice to all the rebels, and in order to teach them a lesson. Thus God demonstrates His justice in Christ, in

order to let the rebel sinner go free. And the sinner who, looking by faith at that demonstration of divine righteousness in the cross, confesses his sins, acknowledges God's righteousness, and pleads for forgiveness, is allowed to go free, is saved, — not on the basis of the satisfaction of justice, but on the basis of his repentance and confession and acknowledgement of divine justice, and all the other conditions of salvation which we have previously noted. (For an exposition and a criticism of this theory of the atonement, confer, "The Triple Knowledge, Volume III, The Death of the Son of God," pp. 94 ,ff.). Now it may be true that all the Arminians did not follow Grotius and his governmental theory of the atonement; but they all agreed in this, that they denied that the death of Christ was a vicarious satisfaction of justice, and that He bore the sins of all His people on the accursed tree. God did not have to exact complete payment for sin, but might consider anything He pleased as the condition of forgiveness and salvation. And it is this view which the father opposed as basically consisting in a denial of the redemptive character of Christ's death.

As to the relation between the present chapter and that on divine predestination, we may be brief. It must be quite obvious that since the fathers conceive of sovereign election as the foundation of every saving good (Canons I, A, 9), the doctrine of predestination is determinative for the doctrine of the redemptive death of Christ. The latter is one of the "saving goods" flowing from the fountain of election. Election determines the scope of redemption. Touch the former and you invariably touch the latter. But also: touch the latter and you cannot avoid saying something of the former. Accordingly, it is quite obvious also that the present chapter, as well as those following, do not stand coordinately with the chapter on predestination, but rather in a position of subordination.

* * * *

Article 1. God is not only supremely merciful, but also supremely just. And his justice requires (as he hath revealed himself in his Word), that our sins committed against his infinite majesty should be punishment, both in body and soul; which we cannot escape, unless satisfaction be made to the justice of God.

In this article a fundamental theological principle is laid down, which may not be ignored or denied when speaking of any of God's dealings with men, and especially with sinful men. And in the present discussion the fathers emphasize particularly that this principle may not be contradicted when speaking of God's redemptive dealings. The reason is, of course, that God Himself does not ignore this principle, or rather, that God never acts contrary to His own Being. Moreover, the fathers here do not merely lay down a fundamental principle, but they delineate the consequences of that principle as far as the sinner is concerned. The principle, positively speaking, is: God is supremely just. The con-

sequences are: 1) Our sins committed against his infinite majesty must be punished with temporal and eternal punishment, both in body and soul. 2) This punishment can be escaped only if satisfaction is made to this supreme justice of God.

It is to be noted, first of all, that the *Canons* do not yet speak of the death of Christ and the redemption of men thereby. The fathers are laying a foundation for the Reformed doctrine of redemption. And that foundation is not merely the mercy of God, but also His infinitely perfect justice. The method which the fathers follow is undoubtedly correct. The foundation determines the size and shape and soundness of the whole structure, to be sure. But historically the reason for this method of the fathers lies in the fact that the Remonstrants struck at the very foundation of the truth of redemption, and attempted to destroy it. As it were, they wanted to remove one of the piers of the foundation that is fastened in the bed-rock of the divine Being, and wanted the truth of redemption to rest only on one pillar, that of the mercy of God. The trouble is that when you remove one stone of foundation, you are not left with a partial foundation, but you have no foundation left whatsoever: the foundation is one. And therefore our Reformed fathers insist first of all on the fundamentals, on the foundation stones, before they rear up the structure of the truth of redemption. In close connection herewith, we must note, secondly, that the fathers follow a method which is only too often despised and condemned in our day, namely, the *theological method*: they begin with the truth concerning God Himself. The presupposition of this first article is that you cannot say anything about redemption without saying something about the Redeemer-God, and that your conception of the latter determines your conception of the former. Or, to put it in general form, all doctrine is principally *theology*, doctrine of God. Also this had its historical reason. The Arminians themselves adopted a certain theological starting-point. They loved to emphasize God's love and God's mercy to the exclusion of His righteousness and justice. And accordingly, they enjoyed accusing Reformed men of having a hard and cold conception of God as an inexorably severe and just God, a Judge Who knew no mercy. To this accusation concerning their God the defenders of the faith must first give answer. Both the Reformed and the Arminians concede that one's Theology determines his Christology, and that consequently if they disagree on Theology they will also be at odds in their Christology.

The Arminians posited a conflict in God between His justice and His mercy, a conflict in which divine mercy was victorious and overcame divine justice. According to His mercy, so they teach, God yearns for the happiness of the sinner and cannot cause suffering and misery to him. And though His justice requires that the sinner be stricken with the curse and be killed, God cannot exercise His justice without doing violence to His mercy. And hence, His mercy prevails. He denies His justice, and without the satisfaction of

His justice bestows upon the sinner forgiveness and eternal life.

The fundamental error in this conception lies in the fact that it denies the unity and simplicity of God, and denies the essential unity of His attributes. It makes a separation between God's attributes. It posits a schism in God. And now we must not imagine that the fathers of Dordt go to the opposite extreme, and maintain God's justice in preference to His mercy. Not at all; but they maintain both divine justice and divine mercy, not, however, in irreconcilable conflict with one another, but in essential unity. Briefly stated, God's justice is that attribute of His goodness according to which He maintains Himself as the only good, the infinitely perfect God, and according to which, with reference to His moral creatures, He rewards the good with good and the evil with evil. And God's mercy is that attribute of God's goodness according to which He is in Himself blessed as the infinitely good God, and according to which, with reference to the creature, He is the sole Fount of all blessing, and therefore delivers the creature from all misery and fills him with life and joy. And as God is One, so His mercy and His justice are one in Him. God *is* His attributes. His justice, and His justice *is* His mercy. Never is there in God a mercy which is not just, nor a justice which is not essentially merciful. And therefore His justice never functions without His mercy, and His mercy never operates apart from His justice. There is no conflict in God! Such is the fundamental truth of this article. And the fathers mean to say: "If you would speak of God's mercy, well; but when you do so, do not forget and deny that infinitely perfect divine justice that characterizes also the divine mercy!"

The conclusion, therefore, is as follows: 1) Divine justice requires the punishment of sin, a requirement which divine mercy can never overlook. 2) Divine justice requires exact punishment of sin, that is, a punishment which is equal in measure to the sin. Hence, sin against the infinite majesty of God requires infinite punishment, that is, not only temporal, but eternal punishment, both in body and soul. 3) Divine mercy cannot operate toward the sinner, except on the basis of the complete payment of this debt of sin. God's justice must be satisfied! Upon no other basis can the sinner ever taste the mercy of God. God, Who is really God, cannot deny Himself.

This is the plain teaching of Scripture in many places, even though the *Canons* do not furnish Scriptural citations. After all, this is the position of the *Heidelberg Catechism* also. And already at the time of the Great Synod, it was considered sufficient in Reformed circles to cite the *Catechism* as the norm of Reformed doctrine. The Arminians also knew that this was the instruction of Lord's Day IV, Question and Answer 11; and they knew too, in fact, they had accepted this position of the *Heidelberg* as Scriptural. But now they would overthrow it. Hence, the fathers considered it unnecessary to quote Scripture on this count.

And this is the foundation of the Scriptural and Reformed doctrine of redemption in Christ. H.C.H.

DECENCY and ORDER

The Election of Elders

Article 22 Continued

Last time we cited a few passages of Scriptures wherein are enumerated the qualifications of the office bearers of the church and, more particularly, of the elders. In "The Church Order Commentary," Monsma and Van Dellen make the following summarization of these qualifications:

"As a general rule it may be said that the following are some of the chief requisites for a good Elder in our Churches: A thorough knowledge of God's Word; unquestioned sincerity of heart as a professing christian; whole hearted loyalty to the church as to its doctrinal position; exemplary conduct in everyday life; ability to instruct others; forbearance, good judgment; self-denying devotion."

In considering the eligibility of candidates for the office, Joh. Jansen cites this three-fold requirement: (1) one must be a member of the church in full communion, (2) one may not be under any ecclesiastical censure, silent or otherwise and, (3) one must be a male member.

These quotations are correct and wherever men may be found who answer to this description, they may be considered as eligible candidates for the office of elder. They express the substance of the Scriptural passages afore cited. The importance of this matter constrains us to look more carefully into the meaning of the two passages of I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. We quoted these passages last time. They are in many respects similar. Both passages are rather lengthy. Instead of following the exact order of the texts, we choose to divide these various qualifications under separate headings with our comments:

a. *Personal or Character Qualifications*

Under this heading the main term found in both passages is translated by the word "blameless" (without reproach in R.V.) although different words are used in the original. This should not be confused with "perfection." Then none would qualify. The term denotes one that is above reproach. He is unimpeachable. There may be those who do not like him! others who speak evil concerning him as they did also of Christ, but a charge of wrong doing cannot be successfully lodged against him. He is a man of ethical repute. It is important that those who lead the church live an irreproachable life in the opinion of both christians and those without. The general testimony concerning him is, "He is a man of integrity and uprightness."

Closely connected with this are several other requisites mentioned in these passages. Some are positive, others negative. The elder must be vigilant, sober or sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, patient, just, holy and have a good report of them that are without. Negatively, "not a

winebibber, covetous, striker, brawler, self-willed."

It should be clear in this connection that the negative elements are descriptive of the works of the flesh while the positive virtues mentioned here are characterizations of the fruits of the spirit. Consequently, the fundamental personal requirement for the office is that a man gives unmistakable evidence of his regeneration through the putting off of the works of the flesh and walking in the Spirit. It must be clear that one truly loves God and the things of God. Such a man may be said to be "blameless." He is a new creation in Christ Jesus. In Him he is above reproach. It is true that sin still attaches itself to his best deeds and he himself is the first to confess this. Such a man is personally qualified.

b. *Marital or Family Qualifications*

In this connection many questions are frequently raised. Some of these are: May an unmarried man serve in the offices of the church? May a man whose wife is an unbeliever or whose wife belongs to a different church than he serve? May one who has a son or daughter that reveal themselves as disobedient, rebellious and evil children, be considered a possible candidate for the office? The assumption here is that such a man possesses all the other necessary qualifications. How does his marriage effect the right to office?

Scripture states that one must be "the husband of one wife, having his children in subjection with all gravity or having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly (for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)"

There are two things in this passage to consider. The first concerns the matter of marriage and the second the family. Concerning the first, the text does not exclude the unmarried from office as some seem to think. This inference is without justification. The text does not speak of the unmarried but simply sets forth the qualifications of those who are married. One feels the necessity of this by casually observing many marriages within the church in the present age as well as then. An elder must be the husband of one wife. These oft contexted words have been variously explained:

(a) that they refer to a deviation from morality in respect to marriage, whether by concubinage, polygamy or improper second marriages. Many held at this time that marriage after the death of the first wife was something immoral. Although this was not the generally accepted view, even those opposing it regarded abstinence from a second marriage as something praiseworthy and meritorious. Consequently, it was held on general principles that those who hold office in the church should not marry the second time.

(b) that they refer to contemporaneous polygamy which at that time still seemed to be quite prevalent among the Jews. "This corruption," writes Calvin, "was borrowed by them partly from a sinful imitation of the Fathers, (for they who read that Abraham, Jacob, David, and others of the same class, were married to more wives than one at the same time, thought that it was lawful for them also to do

the same) and partly from neighbouring nations; for the inhabitants of the East never observed that conscientiousness and fidelity in marriage which was proper. However that might be polygamy was exceedingly prevalent among them, and, therefore, with great propriety does Paul enjoin that a bishop should be free from this stain."

(c) that they refer to successive polygamy whether after a divorce or after the loss of the first wife.

Meyer's explanation we take to be the correct one. He states that, "there is good ground to take the expression simply as opposed to an immoral life, especially to concubinage. What Paul says then is that a bishop is to be a man who neither lives nor has lived in sexual intercourse with any other woman than the one to whom he is married." This is also the underlying meaning of the three terms, "vigilant, sober, and of good behavior," which follow this expression in I Timothy 3:2. Vigilant means to be calm, collected in spirit, temperate. Soberness is the state of a sound mind and the exercise of self control. And good behavior denotes a well ordered life. Applied to marriage these terms emphasize the moral chastity of that holy state and this must be observed and practiced by those who seek the office of the church.

The text itself says nothing directly about the man whose wife is an unbeliever. It would seem that circumstances must somewhat determine the eligibility of such a man. Did his wife become an unbeliever, an apostate, while he was married to her? Was she such prior to marriage? This would make some difference. A chaste and holy marriage is only one that is consummated in the Lord. Where this is ignored the bitter consequences of sin become evident in countless ways. It would seem that one who wilfully plunges into that state and joins himself with an unbeliever disqualifies himself for the office of the church. Such is not being an example. Another may have every reason to believe that he marries in the Lord, only to find later that his wife is unbelieving. He has been deceived. The fault is not his. This is a different case and to determine whether such a person is disqualified we would have to consider the matter of his rulership in his house.

The elder must be one "who rules his own house well." The antithesis of this is not one who has no house to rule, i.e., the unmarried. Often it is presented that way. An elder must rule his house well. An unmarried man has no house to rule. Ergo: the unmarried cannot be considered for the office. This, however, is faulty reasoning. It does not follow because the antithesis in the text is the man who *does not* rule his own house well and not the unmarried man. The latter is not considered here at all.

The good rule of the elder in his own home consists of his having his children in subjection with all gravity; his children must be faithful and not accused of riot or unruly. This rule and subjection or this relationship of authority and obedience is reflective of a relationship in the church. For that reason one who is unable to maintain that rule in his house is also disqualified to do so in the church. There, too,

the relation is spiritually that of father and children. God is the Father of His Church through Jesus Christ. And the office bearer, appointed of God, stands in the place of or is representative of God in the church. He must rule, not as lord over God's heritage nor by constraint, but as a willing example. He must bring the church into subjection to the will of God, her Father. Doing this it is imperative that he knows how to conduct himself so that the members of the church may also in love submit themselves to his rule. They must be able to do this. They must be able to see in him the power of God. He must be a good example in all things. And this begins in the home. His wife and children must see in him a godly father.

Then it is not only possible but also very much a reality that a faithful father witnesses with grief the waywardness and disobedience of some of his children. Does that disqualify him? We say, "No." The conduct of the children does not qualify or disqualify the father. There might be a worthless father whose children, under the instruction of the mother, grow up to be very obedient and behaved children. The fact that they are such does not qualify their worthless father to be an office-bearer in the church. No more the opposite. Always there is a double seed brought forth in the historic generations of the covenant. No human rule, however perfect it may be, is going to subject the reprobate seed to obedience of love. That is impossible. The same reality exists in the church. The sole question, therefore, is whether or not the father rules well? Does he conduct himself in the home so that the children may learn to be obedient or is he, perhaps, by his negligence or evil example the cause of the children's waywardness? If the latter is the case he cannot rule in the house of God. If the former is so, he may be considered. And the same principle applies to him whose wife departs from the faith. If it is through no fault of his that this occurs and if he conducts himself as the head of his house, an example of godliness, he may serve also in the church of Christ.

(To be continued)

G.V.D.B.

CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH

(Continued from page 62)

and to the primacy of the prince of the apostles over the whole church

Then, too, considered even in a political point of view, old Rome had a far longer and grander imperial tradition to show, and was identified in memory with the bloom of the empire; while new Rome marked the beginning of its decline. When the Western empire fell into the hands of the barbarians, the Roman bishop was the only surviving heir of this imperial past, or, in the well-known dictum of Hobbes, "the ghost of the deceased Roman empire, sitting crowned upon the grave thereof."

H.V.

THE MUCH-CATTLE OF JONAH 4:11

The text of Scripture, from which the above theme is taken is as follows: "And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?" Jonah 4:11.

What gave rise to these words of the Lord, were a complex set of factors, recorded by Jonah, beginning with the revelation of God's determinate counsel concerning Nineveh. God revealed to Jonah, that in Nineveh, there was an elect nucleus among the Gentiles. For the sake of these remnants by election, God was pleased to direct Jonah to arise and go to Nineveh, that great city, and capital of the Assyrian empire, and cry against its sins and wickedness, in the preaching of the Word. Thus, it pleased God to proclaim this Holy Gospel to a people sitting in darkness, in a heathen land. The content of this Gospel of God's redeeming grace, through the mouth of his servant, is summed up in the prophet's words: "Salvation is of the Lord" (verse 9). These words mean essentially this: God saves the righteous, who in themselves are hell-deserving sinners, through election; and destroys the wicked, on account of their sins, through reprobation. While this Gospel was proclaimed to all, in Nineveh, yet only the elect there heard it unto salvation. These elect, nationally, were not Jews; they were of Nineveh. Their salvation was rooted in sovereign, divine love, the fruit of election. They were saved because they were elect. The rest of Nineveh—the reprobate wicked, were hardened in their sins, through the very same preaching of Jonah. It was through the preaching that the thoughts of many hearts was revealed. Therefore, it was very necessary for Jonah to go to Nineveh, to preach unto that great city. Jonah, however, in sinful rebellion against God, and willful disobedience, refused to go. This was Jonah's sin.

Next, the record points out Jonah's futile attempt to flee west to Tarsish. God intervened. Raising up a great fish for the purpose, the Lord used the fish as a means of returning Jonah to a place where he could once again start on a journey to Nineveh. The word of God came to him a second time, saying: "Arise, go unto Nineveh." He obeyed.

In Nineveh, the book goes on to relate, the prophet preached God's word, and it pleased the Lord to give the prophet fruit upon his labors, from the greatest to the least. This result was no surprise to Jonah. He knew, and he had also testified, that the Lord is a gracious God, merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest of the evil, that He said He would do.

But the question arises, quite naturally, "Why did he flee from the Lord's presence, if he knew of the mercy of Jehovah, to save?" He fled, (he thought), from Jehovah's presence because he knew that, in the salvation of the elect, God would postpone, for the present, at least, the destruction that God said He would bring to pass on that wicked city. To be sure, the prophet longed for the salvation of the

righteous, in Christ—else he would be no true prophet—but he longed for the destruction of the reprobated wicked, and all that denies God. This tone is solemnly announced by the psalmist who wrote: "Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered . . . as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God." (Psalm 68:1, 2). Jonah, knowing that God would spare the wicked for the sake of the righteous, had fled from Jehovah. Had not God blessed Potiphar's house, for the sake of Joseph? Yet, in not obeying the voice of Jehovah, Jonah fell into sin. He had refused to trust the Lord, in the unfolding of God's counsel concerning Nineveh. But when God thwarted his evil plan, the prophet went to Nineveh and preached as divinely directed.

Next, this prophetic scripture tells of the object lesson God used—a rapid growing gourd that ultimately withered when attacked by a worm—as a pointer to Jonah that the ways of God's mercy and providence are ways of consummate wisdom, great depth, and determinate sovereignty. The Lord affirmed His right and justice, to spare Nineveh and its much cattle.

Now, the question arises, "What was God's purpose in sparing much cattle?" At first glance, the question seems to be easily answered, when the text is taken literally, as it stands. The text tells the reader three facts: First, the Lord is sovereign; it is His good pleasure to spare or destroy the city, as He wills. Secondly, the Lord spared a city of one hundred and twenty thousand persons unable to discern between their right and left hand—that is, a large number of immature children. Thus, the population, by implication, is six or seven hundred thousand persons. Thus, Nineveh, was a large city. Thirdly, the Lord spared much cattle in this city. This, He may do, since he hath given life and breath to all creatures. He may spare, or destroy them. In this case, it pleased Him to spare the cattle when He spared Nineveh, at the time of the preaching of Jonah. Their being spared, on this occasion, provides both meat for food, hides for leather, or any other purpose.

At other times, it was the Lord's pleasure to utterly destroy the cattle. A case in point is the instance of the war of extermination against the Amalekites. On this occasion, Saul was directed by the Lord of Hosts to smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that the nation had. The charge to Saul included the slaying of both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass. He was to spare them not. Who would be capable, we may ask, from a human standpoint, of carrying out such a charge? Only when one is armed with the shield of faith. Saul, though, sinned. He spared Agag, the king, and the best of the sheep and the oxen, ostensibly as sacrificial animals for Jehovah. This act of Saul, God did not approve. It was then that Samuel spoke so beautifully to Saul, saying: "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken, that the fat of rams." (I Samuel 15:22).

Considering the two instances—the cattle in Nineveh,

and the cattle in the city of Amalek — the cattle simply serve the purpose of God, as God has His purpose revealed in each case. In one instance, He spares them, in the other He destroys them. Being irrational creatures, they are non-moral. Their function is subservient to God's purpose, which is primary. The cattle are a part of the brute creation that lies under the curse of God, because of man's sin. The original purpose of this brute creation was to serve God's glory and man's usefulness (Gen. 1:29, 30). This purpose, according to God's revelation, was not to be realized through man's obedience, but through man's Fall, the curse, sin, and death. The whole creation was subjected to vanity, in the bondage of corruption, in groaning and travailing, unto the restoration of all things, with the coming of the Lord. This purpose He works out, as the revelation of His glory. The cattle then, belong to the organism of God's creation. This creation He loves (John 3:16) and pronounces good. (Gen. 1.) The purpose of His creation is the service of His counsel concerning all things in their organic connection with each other, and in their connection with Christ, who is the Head of His Church. The creature serves the Creator.

Thus the text may be understood. However, a difficulty arises, in the understanding of this text, when it asked: "Do we not have here, a gracious disposition of God unto salvation, in sparing Nineveh and its much cattle?" At first glance, it would almost seem so. It would almost seem that we have an instance here in which support could be found for the view of "common grace." Not so. Closer examination of the text, in the light of the whole Word will prove that "common grace" is not taught in Jonah 4:11 for the following reasons:

The first, the text speaks of the Lord "sparing" Nineveh, its inhabitants and its cattle. This act of God, whereby He "spares" the city, in and of itself, does not indicate that God is gracious, in the sense of blessing, unto Salvation. For, if sparing Nineveh means blessing the city unto salvation, then all the city would be saved, and a ground for universal atonement would be found in the text. Every last Ninevite then, would be saved. This interpretation is inconsistent with the current teaching of Holy Writ.

Secondly, if the text is to be understood to mean that sparing Nineveh, its inhabitants, and its cattle signifies grace unto salvation, then the question follows, "are cattle saved; do cattle need grace?" The answer, obviously is "no."

On the other hand, what does "sparing" Nineveh mean? The Lord "sparing" Nineveh is this: the Lord takes pity on the city; He is compassionate to it; He is indulgent towards it. The word "sparing" indicates an anthropomorphism. God repents of the evil which He said that He would do unto them (3:10). That God spares the city in the sense of preserving it unto His purpose, is the idea of the text.

But, let it be understood: to ask the question, "Is God gracious, in the sense of blessing," is not to get an answer to a really significant question. It is only when we ask "In sparing Nineveh, to whom is God gracious," that we ask a

very pointed inquiry. Before we turn to an answer, let us examine a parallel situation in the Bible record.

God has revealed to Abraham that He would destroy Sodom and Gomorrah on account of their grievous sins (Gen. 18:16-33). Abraham, in deep humility, and in love for the election of grace, pleaded for the righteous in Christ, living in the city; pleading for fifty; later for ten. God, in answer to Abraham's prayer for mercy, promised not to destroy the cities for the sake of the righteous in the city, even if there be only ten. Note here, that God promised that He would spare these plains cities for the sake of the righteous elect, in Christ, in the cities. Therefore, the conclusion is certainly reasonable, that the Lord, through the mouth of His prophet, spares Nineveh, its inhabitants, and its much cattle means that the Lord spares the city for the righteous, in Christ, in its population. That is, the elect, in Nineveh, are the reason for the city being spared.

A very important reason why it is to be concluded that the text indicates there is no support for a theory of "common grace," lies in the nature of grace itself. Grace, is a spiritual-ethical concept. Grace is rooted in ethical perfection. (For an excellent development of the whole concept of grace, see the "Standard Bearer," volume 31, September 1, 1955, p. 462, 463).

Because grace is rooted in ethical perfection and goodness, it has its origin in God Himself. God is the gracious and good God; He is the Infinitely Perfect One. As God, He wills to seek Himself as the highest good in the sphere of absolute ethical perfection. This is His blessedness. This blessedness, He Himself, wills. When He wills to bless the creature, He wills to be gracious unto the creature by bringing him into communion and fellowship with Him, to partake of His blessedness — not essentially, of course; but ethically — spiritually. Only the elect in Christ may be the recipients of His blessedness to save, and His grace. By nature, the elect are worthy of hell; not grace. This is spiritual and ethical. Therefore, the nature of grace itself excludes an interpretation of the text, by which the sparing of Nineveh and its cattle is to be understood as an operation of the grace of God. Only when the question is asked, "To whom is God gracious" when He spares Nineveh, are we to get a satisfactory answer to Jonah's words.

In conclusion, it may be said that God spares Nineveh because of its elect remnant, and the cattle, because it belongs to the sphere of the creation which God has made, in order to fulfill His Counsel concerning the salvation of His Church, in Christ.

J. McCollam

Let me no more my comfort draw
From my frail grasp of Thee:
In this alone rejoice with awe —
Thy mighty grasp of me.

— Selected

CONTRIBUTIONS

The Promise of God is only unto the Elect. Historically the Believers

Let us now discuss the objections that are being raised against the doctrine that the promise is only unto the elect.

It is said that the promise cannot very well be only to the elect for if it were it could not be preached, seeing that the human proclinator of the promise does not know who the elect are. But this objection is not valid. In the first place it is not correct to say that the human proclinator of the promise does not know who the elect are. For election is the sovereign cause and fountain of the church as a new creature in Christ Jesus and of all the blessedness that is her portion in Christ in time and eternity. What it means is that the elect are historically the believers, the poor in spirit, they that mourn, they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, the pure of heart, the peacemakers, they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake, they that are reviled and slandered and persecuted for Christ's sake. These people are not hidden. They are as conspicuous as a light upon a candlestick, as a city upon a hill. They focus upon themselves the attention of angels, men and devils.

It is not true therefore that the human proclinator of the Gospel, of the promise of the Gospel, does not know who the elect are. He does know. The devil knows. The enemies of Christ know. If they didn't know, how could they revile, slander, and persecute the elect, that is the believers. If the devil and the wicked know, why should the human proclimators of the promise not know?

True it is that the human proclinator of the promise does not know infallibly whether a man that confesses Christ is truly a believer. But neither is this necessary. For the true preacher of the Gospel is Christ. It is He Who by His Spirit makes room in the hearts of His people for the Gospel, binds His promises on the hearts of His people and causes them to live by them. And Christ knows who His elect are. They were given Him of the father before the foundation of the world. And for them He laid down His life. This people alone, when they were dead in their sins, hath God quickened together with Christ, and hath raised up together, and made sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come He might shew the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward this people, and this people alone the promise, assures that the promised salvation is their priceless possession. It is to the poor in spirit, to them that mourn, to the meek, to such as hunger and thirst after righteousness, to the merciful, to the pure in heart, to the peacemakers, to such as are persecuted for righteousness sake, that He declares that the kingdom is theirs, that they shall be comforted, that they shall inherit the earth, that they shall be filled, that they shall obtain mercy, that they shall

see God, and that they shall be called the children of God (Matt. 5:3-9). How could it be otherwise, seeing that they alone have a right to the promise.

If Christ gives His promise only to His people, may the human proclinator of the Gospel proclaim that God's promise is unto all soul for soul? Certainly not. Nor is he placed under this necessity by the fact that he does not know infallibly who the believers are. Christ knows infallibly, and this is sufficient.

That the human proclinator of the Gospel, despite the fact that he does not know infallibly who the believers are, must nevertheless assure the believers only that theirs is the promise is also the plain teaching of our Confessions. In reply to the question how the kingdom of heaven is opened and shut by the preaching of the Holy Gospel, the Heidelberg catechism replies, "Thus when according to the command of Christ, it is declared and publicly testified to all and every believer, that, whenever they receive the promise of the Gospel by a true faith, all their sins are really forgiven them of God, for the sake of Christ's merits . . ." Let us take notice, the human proclinator of the Gospel, according to the command of Christ, declares and publicly testifies to all and every believer. Here, too, it could be objected that this is impossible for the human preacher, seeing that he does not know infallibly who the believers are. But our Reformed Fathers were not confused by this Arminian reasoning, for they fully understood that the real preacher of the Gospel is Christ.

It is further objected that, if it must be declared and testified unto the believers that the promise is theirs and theirs alone, there can be no proclamation of the Gospel unto all soul for soul as there should be. Now it is true, of course, that the Gospel must be proclaimed, published unto all creatures soul for soul. But this in no respect militates against the teaching that in the proclamation of the Gospel it must be testified to the believers that theirs alone is the promise. We must consider wherein proclamation of the Gospel to all men soul for soul consists. Let us hear our Confession on this point, definitely Canons of Dort, Second Head of Doctrine, Art. 5. It reads, "Moreover the promise of the Gospel is, that whosoever believeth in Christ Jesus, shall not perish but have everlasting life." The pronoun "whosoever" means "any," and therefore "all, every." But there is no "if" or conditional clause concealed in this statement, as if its teaching were this, "The promise of the Gospel is that any and all persons shall have everlasting life, on the condition that they believe." Nor may the statement be taken to mean, "The promise of the Gospel is, that any and all that believe shall have eternal life, irrespective of who they be, reprobate or elect." To construe this statement in either of these two ways is to make it to teach nonsense not only but abominable heresy as well. The meaning of the statement is, that the promise of the Gospel is that any and all that believe shall have life everlasting irrespective of rank and station and nationality." Underlying this statement is the true universal-

ity of the New Testament Dispensation. Seeing that Christ has redeemed His people from the curse of the law, the blessings of Abraham are now come on the gentiles through Jesus Christ, Gal. 3:14, and this is fulfilment of the promise that in Abraham all the families of the earth should be blessed. Paul repeatedly gives expression to this fact and truth. To the congregation at Rome he writes, "I am a debtor both to the Greeks and to the barbarians, both to the wise and the unwise." (Rom. 1:14). The epistle to the Colossians contains this statement, "And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ is all and in all." (Col. 1:11).

God will surely save believers, any and all believers. Not one of them shall perish. All shall have eternal life, life in glory, a life that they already now possess in principle and of which their faith is the fruit, the expression. "For he that believeth in the Son, hath eternal life" (John 3:16). Such, according to the above-cited article of faith is the promise. Concisely stated it is this, that God will surely save the believers. And if this is the promise, then it is only to the believers and they alone may be told that they possess it. For if the promise is that God saves the believers, how can it be the possession of unbelievers, of such who are not saved of God? This is only possible, if the realization of the promise depends on man and not on God.

Rightly considered, therefore, the meaning of the above-cited article of faith is this: The promise to the believers is, "that they shall have everlasting life." For the same idea is clearly expressed in the 8th article of the Third and Forth Heads of the Doctrine of the Canons. Here the statement occurs, "He, moreover, seriously promises eternal life and rest to as many as shall come to Him." Here, too, the promise and its blessed content is limited to the elect, historically the believers. These articles, it is plain, contain our doctrine. Yet in 1924 we were expelled from the communion of the Christian Reformed Churches, because we refused to repudiate this doctrine, and these were some of the articles that were quoted against us. The question is now whether the fact that the promise is unto the believers, and that they alone may be told that the promise is theirs, makes impossible a proclamation of the Gospel unto all nations and unto all persons soul for soul. Not according to the article of faith with which we are here occupied. For the article continues, "This promise (the promise to the believers that they shall not perish but have everlasting life) together with the command to repent and believe, shall be declared and published to all nations, and to all persons promiscuously and without distinction, to whom God of his goodpleasure sends the Gospel."

What then, according to this article of faith must be declared unto all nations, and to all persons soul for soul? Not that Christ as to His intention died for all soul for soul; not that He well-meaningly offers Himself to all; not that

the promise is unto all; not that He promises all that He will save them on the condition that they believe, and that they have everlasting life. Further, according to the article of faith under consideration, all persons soul for soul must be commanded to repent and to believe in Christ. And, finally, according to the other article of faith quoted above, the penitent ones must be told that God seriously promises eternal life and rest to as many as come unto Him; and (H. Cat. Lords Day 31) and the impenitent and unbelieving must be told that they "stand exposed to the wrath of God, and eternal condemnation, so long as they are unconverted: according to which testimony of the Gospel, God will judge them, both in this, and in the life to come."

This, according to our Confession is the full-orbed Gospel preaching. And this full-orbed Gospel preaching we Protestant Reformed have. And therefore the contention of our opponents that we preach only for the elect is utterly false, as well as their contention that, seeing that in our proclamation of the Gospel, we limit the promise and its content to the elect, historically the believers, we can only preach to the elect. It is hard to believe that they do not know any better. We cannot but believe that they do not know better. Yet, year in and year out they continue to repeat their old accusations.

The trouble with our opponents is, that they are not satisfied with what our Confessions understand to be the full-orbed Gospel preaching. They want and also do have more than this. They teach in addition that Christ well-meaningly offers Himself to all men soul for soul and that the preaching of the Gospel is grace for all persons head for head, thus grace also for the reprobated, necessarily implying that Christ died for all and that the will of man is free in the Arminian sense. So it goes with one that is not satisfied with what our Confessions understand to be the full-orbed Gospel preaching, and in his Gospel preaching goes beyond the limits thereof. Such a one finds himself sailing in Arminian waters.

The promise is always particular, that is, it is unto the elect, the believers alone. And being God's promise, it is from the nature of matters unconditional, that is, it is not a promise with an "if" as is the case with the promise of a mere man. For God there can be no "ifs." For He is God. He doeth all His goodpleasure. But the proclamation of this unconditional, particular, infallible and sure promise is general, that is it is and must be declared and testified to all persons soul for soul. This is the teaching of our Confessions regarding the Gospel and its proclamation. And to this teaching we Protestant Reformed strictly adhere.

There is one more objection to the conception that the promise is only to the believers—the objection of the Liberated. Let me expose and analyze it in connection with the promise as we have it in the beatitude, "Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God." Jesus is here speaking to the elect, historically the pure of heart, the believers. He pronounces them blessed and promises them that they shall see God. This is the promise as set before us in this

particular beatitude of a sermon of Christ that is known as the sermon on the mount. And let us notice, too, that it is unconditional. We see then how true it is that the promise, wherever it occurs in Holy Writ, is always God's unconditional oath unto the elect, historically the believers.

Now according to the Liberated this word of Christ is prediction, prophecy but not promise. So, in proclaiming this beatitude, the human preacher of the Gospel is proclaiming prophecy but not promise. Such is the view. The promise, it is said, is always conditional and is given to all, that is to all the baptized head for head, and as this is not the case with the word of Jesus here under consideration, it is prophecy, prediction but not promise. Let us understand the Liberated position well. Here is an infant child, born of Christian parents, whose name is Henry. If the word of Christ in question read, "Henry, I am thy God, and therefore Henry, thou shalt see me, on the condition that you believe," it would be promise. But since it reads as it does, since it tells the pure of heart but not Henry that they shall see God, it is prophecy, prediction but not promise. Hence, it cannot be used to assure *Henry* that God is his God, and that he shall see God, if he believes. For that we need a promise personally for Henry, a word of God that contains the name of *Henry* in it and addressed not to the believers, the pure of heart in general but definitely to *Henry*. Is there such a word of God? Yes, say the Liberated. And that word of God is the promise, the conditional promise, the only real promise, that God by the mouth of the minister of the Gospel speaks, gives to Henry in the moment of his baptism. And, according to the Liberated, that word of God is this: Henry, I declare and testify unto you that I am your God, that I love you, that I give to you the right to all the blessings of salvation, that thus thou art my heir—heir of the kingdom—and I assure you that I shall place in your actual possession all these blessings of Christ's cross and thereby save you, on the condition that you believe.

But may not Henry be a reprobate? The Liberated agree that he may. Nevertheless this is God's declaration and promise to Henry, and not only to Henry, of course, but to all the baptized soul for soul, elect and reprobate alike.

But, certainly, in the light of all that has been presented, such a conception of the promise raises many questions. First, where in the whole of the Scriptures is such a word, promise of God to *Henry* to be found? Nowhere of course. We do not find in the Scriptures the names that we received from our parents at birth. In giving his people His promises, in assuring them that He will save them, He calls them by the names—the new names—that He has given them, such as believer, new creature in Christ, pure of heart, mourners, peacemakers etc. Second, if all the baptized soul for soul receive of God the right to the blessings of salvation, which would have to mean that all of them are justified in Christ, how is it to be explained that many of them perish in their sins? There can be but one answer: either God can't save them or He is a liar. Third, the promised blessings must in-

clude faith. If so, we have God promising also faith on the condition that the baptized one believes. But this does not make sense. This is also realized and therefore it is said that faith is not included in the promised salvation but as unpromised is bestowed upon the elect who therefore believe and are saved. But this raises but another question. Since faith is of the very substance of salvation, how can God promise salvation without promising faith? So the questions continue to multiply here. We may be thankful therefore that those who went out from us recently did not succeed in introducing this liberated conception of the promise into our churches. For it is plainly Arminian.

But one will say, are we not confronted here with a difficulty nevertheless. Seeing that my given name, whatever that name may be, John, James, or Henry does not occur in God's promises, seeing that He calls His people only by their new name given them of Him, how does God assure *me*, that is, how do *I* come to know that I am His child and belong to His people? In this way. With you by His grace hiding yourself in Christ as your only hope of salvation, and laying off sin and putting on Christ, He so sanctifies His unconditional Gospel to your heart that the conviction is born in your heart that you are His child, a believer, a pure of heart. And then His Gospel speaks to you personally. For then you know that you belong to that people that he calls by the name believer, pure of heart, etc. In the words of Paul, the Spirit itself, always speaking through the Scriptures, beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.

A word in conclusion. To repudiate this pure doctrine that the promise is God's unconditional oath to the elect, historically the believers, is to break with the truth all the way down the line, and to take the Arminian position regarding election, reprobation, the scope of the atonement of Christ, and the moral capacities of the natural man devoid of the life of regeneration. The teaching that the conditional promise of God unto all soul for soul goes hand in hand with the Arminian doctrine that God saves men on the condition that they believe and that, being all knowing, but not sovereignly so, He chose all such men of whom He foresaw that they would fulfil that condition by supplying their own faith. It goes hand in hand with the Arminian false doctrine that God justifies a man on the condition that he believes. It goes hand in hand with the Arminian doctrine that Christ as to His intention died for the whole humanity soul for soul, and that Christ now well-meaningly offers himself to the whole of humanity head for head. It goes hand in hand with the Arminian doctrine that the will of the natural man is morally free to believe or not to believe as he chooses. It goes hand in hand finally with the Arminian doctrine that grace is resistible, and that at any time after his regeneration the true believer can fall away from grace utterly and perish in his sins after all. Let us then hold fast the truth that the promise is God's unconditional oath to the elect, historically the believers.

G.M.O.

Missionary Notes

To properly understand the labors of the undersigned here in Loveland, Colorado, there are a few pertinent facts, which should be kept in mind.

First of all the reader should understand the Church Political status of this congregation here at the foot-hills of the Rockies.

The name of this congregation is literally "The Reformed Hoffnungs Gemeinde of Loveland." Such is its official name on the document drawn up in 1904. (Incidentally, herewith the reader may know that the rendering of this name in the former "Missionary Notes" is faulty, where the addition "Protestant" slipped in through no fault of this writer). As such this congregation was one of the churches resorting under the Nebraska Classis of the Northwest Synod of the Reformed Church of the United States of America. This must not be confused with the Reformed Church of America. They are wholly different churches. The latter is of Holland descent, descending from the State Church in The Netherlands, while the former is composed of the Reformed brethren out of Germany. And it was, of course, to this church that these brethren and sisters in Loveland, Colorado once belonged.

It should be noted that the Nebraska Classis which we mentioned in the former paragraph, was a sister Classis of the Eureka Classis, better known to us. Together with the Iowa Classis, Eureka Classis and possibly others the Nebraska Classis belonged to the Northwest Synod of the Denomination, known as the Reformed Church of the United States of America.

However, since the Nebraska Classis merged with the Evangelical Church and has thereby lost its indentify as a Classis, this church here at Loveland is the only church which is left of that Classis. This congregation did not acquiesce to this merger and therefore retained its indentify as the Reformed Hoffnungs Gemeinde of Loveland, Colorado.

In so doing they rejected the doctrinal position of the merged church, known as the Evangelical and Reformed Church which does not only have the Heidelberg Catechism as their doctrinal Standard, but also has as its Standards the Augsburg Confession of 1529 and the Small Catechism of Luther. This the small but courageous group in Loveland refused to accept. They insisted that the only Standard in the Congregation was to be the Heidelberg Catechism. Fact is, that the Articles of the Constitution of this Congregation read that those who adhere to this doctrinal Standard shall be considered to be the congregation, even though they be but two in number.

It is on the basis of this Constitution that during this past year the Congregation had the courage to tell the Evangelical and Reformed partisans together with their leader, the Rev. Max Schoenhaar, that they would look for a

man of Reformed persuasion, one who loved the doctrine contained in the Heidelberg Catechism, to teach them and their children.

D. V. we shall have more to say about this in a next installment.

G.L.

AS TO BOOKS

(Continued from page 53)

Een Monument Der Afscheiding (A Monument of the Separation), by Rev. W. De Graaf. Published by J. H. Kok, N. V., Kampen, the Netherlands. Price f.8.90.

This is a very interesting book. It describes the origin, the history and the struggle of the Theological School in Kampen, the Netherlands, and in connection with it, naturally, relates a good deal of the history of the churches of the Separation of 1934. Interesting this book is, especially for those of us whose origin is personally in the old country, who lived through, at least, the latter part of this history and of the struggle for the Seminary at Kampen. Many of the names that are mentioned in this book will be familiar to us. Who does not remember the names of Brummelkamp, Lindeboom, Bos of Bedum, Westerhuis of Groningen, who was for years my minister, Bavinck and Biesterveld? Who does not remember the sad impression the last two mentioned made on the churches of "Kerk A" when they resigned from their professorship in Kampen to go to the Free University of Amsterdam?

Indeed, a very interesting book, written in a style that is easily accessible to all that still read Dutch.

H. H.

IN MEMORIAM

The Men's Society of the First Protestant Reformed Church hereby wishes to extend its sincere sympathy to our president, the Rev. G. M. Ophoff, in the recent lose of his mother

MRS. ETTA OPHOFF.

Psalm 31:7: "I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy: for thou hast considered my trouble: thou hast known my soul in adversities."

Richard H. Teitsma, Secretary

IN MEMORIAM

The Eunice Society of First Church, Grand Rapids, expresses its sympathy to our Bible Teacher, Rev. G. M. Ophoff in the loss of his mother,

MRS. E. OPHOFF

May our God comfort him through His Word. Isa. 26:3.

Mrs. R. H. Meyer, President
Mrs. Geo. Spruyt, Secretary

REPORT OF CLASSIS EAST

In session October 5, 1955

In the Fourth Prot. Ref. Church.

Rev. G. Vos, president of the July Classis, led in devotions. We sang Psalter No. 374. He read Ezekiel 9 and offered prayer.

All the churches were represented with proper credentials and by two delegates with the exception of Creston which was represented by one deacon.

After Classis was declared constituted, the Rev. C. Hanco, following the order of alphabetical rotation, took the chair, while the Rev. G. Vos transcribed the minutes.

A brother who appears at Classis as delegate for the first time signed the Formula of Subscription.

The Stated Clerk read the minutes of the previous Classical meeting which were approved as read.

The churches of Creston and Kalamazoo requested Classical appointments. The request was granted and it was decided to give each minister three appointments for the next three months. The committee appointed to make the schedule later reported which schedule was adopted as follows:

Creston — Oct. 16, R. Veldman; Oct. 23, J. McCollam; Nov. 6, C. Hanco; Nov. 13, G. Lanting; Nov. 20, M. Schipper; Dec. 4, H. Hanco; Dec. 11, G. Lanting; Dec. 18, R. Veldman; Dec. 25, C. Hanco (one service); Jan. 1, C. Hanco (one service); Jan. 8, G. Vos.

Kalamazoo — Oct. 16, G. Lanting; Oct. 23, M. Schipper; Oct. 30, G. Vos; Nov. 6, H. Hanco; Nov. 13, R. Veldman; Nov. 20, J. McCollam; Nov. 27, G. Vos; Dec. 4, C. Hanco; Dec. 11, M. Schipper; Dec. 18, J. McCollam; Jan. 8, H. Hanco.

A request from Hope Church that Classis examine Candidate H. Hanco was received for information. Also a report of the Classical Committee which had arranged the schedule for examination. Classis decided to follow the schedule proposed as follows:

Rev. G. Vos in Theology and Anthropology.
Rev. C. Hanco in Christology and Soteriology.
Rev. M. Schipper in Ecclesiology and Eschatology.
Rev. R. Veldman in Knowledge of Scripture.
Rev. J. McCollam in Knowledge of Confessions.
Rev. G. Lanting in Controversy.
Rev. G. M. Ophoff in Practica.

Elder J. Rust closed our morning session with prayer.

Afternoon Session

After singing Psalter No. 316, Rev. M. Schipper led in prayer.

Classis continues the examination of Candidate Hanko and when this is finished the delegates ad examina, the Revs. J. Heys and H. Veldman of Classis West and the Sermon Critics, the Revs. G. Lanting and J. McCollam render their reports which are received for information.

A motion is passed that Classis declare that since brother Candidate Herman Hanko has shown, both by the sermon he preached before Classis and his examination conducted by Classis, that he is able to perform the labors of a pastor and teacher, Classis advises Hope Prot. Ref. Church to proceed with his ordination in the office of Minister of the Word and the Sacraments. This motion passed unanimously.

It was further moved and carried that the Candidate sign the Formula of Subscription, after which his father and chairman of Classis, Rev. C. Hanko, addressed his son, Candidate Hanko in well chosen words committing him in the name of Classis to the blessing of the Lord in his work in the ministry. Classis then sang a doxology after which the Rev. G. Vos offers prayer.

Classis then proceeded to finish other matters of business before it.

The Stated Clerk gave his report of correspondence, which was received for information.

The Finance Committee, elders S. Newhof and H. De Jong, read their report which Classis received and it is decided to send same to the treasurer for payment.

An instruction from one of our churches requesting advice concerning local matters was received for information, and Classis rendered its advice.

The Stated Clerk was instructed to thank the ladies of Fourth Church for their splendid catering services.

Classis decides to meet D.V. at Hope Church next time, i.e., the first Wednesday in January.

Questions of Article 41 of the C. O. were asked and answered satisfactorily.

After the minutes were read and approved, Rev. C. Hanko thanks Classis for its cooperation under his leadership.

We sing Psalter No. 370, and the Rev. R. Veldman closes our meeting with thanks to God.

Rev. Marinus Schipper, Stated Clerk
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